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Report of UNDP on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit in 2020

Summary

In line with General Assembly resolution 59/267 of 23 December 2004, and as reiterated in resolution 62/246 of 3 April 2008, the present report provides a synopsis of UNDP management responses to the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) and draws attention to the recommendations directed to the legislative bodies of United Nations system organizations.

The present report focuses on the seven JIU reports relevant to UNDP issued in 2020. Of the total of 48 recommendations issued in the reports, 38 are addressed to UNDP: 24 to UNDP management and 14 to the Executive Board as the legislative body of UNDP. The present report provides UNDP management responses to the relevant recommendations and includes an update of the implementation status of recommendations contained in reports issued by the JIU in 2019 and 2018.

Elements of a decision

The Executive Board may wish to take note of the present report, including the management responses to the 14 recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit intended for consideration by the Executive Board.



I. Overview of Joint Inspection Unit reports issued in 2020

1. In 2020, the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) issued eight reports, of which one was a single-organization report and seven were system-wide. The present report provides a summary of the seven system-wide reports issued by JIU, at the time of the present report, which are of relevance to UNDP. This report includes the UNDP management responses to the 38 recommendations in the reports directed to UNDP (out of 48 recommendations contained in the reports), as well as the implementation status of relevant recommendations issued in 2019 and 2018. The report draws attention to JIU recommendations made in 2020 for consideration by the legislative body of UNDP and to the proposed management responses (reported in annex II to this report). All annexes to this report are available on the [Executive Board website](#). The complete JIU reports, additional annexes and comments of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) can be obtained through the JIU website (<http://www.unjiu.org>) or through the hyperlinked titles of each report in chapter II of this report. Comments of the CEB available at the time of drafting of the present report have been included. The JIU review report with symbol indicating the year 2019 was in fact issued in 2020.

2. The seven reports are: (a) Review of contemporary practices in the external outsourcing of services to commercial service providers by United Nations system organizations ([JIU/REP/2019/9](#)); (b) Review of the state of the investigation function: progress made in the United Nations system organizations in strengthening the investigation function ([JIU/REP/2020/1](#)); (c) Policies and platforms in support of learning: towards more coherence, coordination and convergence ([JIU/REP/2020/2](#)); (d) Common premises in the United Nations system: current practices and future prospects ([JIU/REP/2020/3](#)); (e) Enterprise risk management: approaches and uses in United Nations system organizations ([JIU/REP/2020/5](#)); (f) Multilingualism in the United Nations system ([JIU/REP/2020/6](#)); (g) Review of mainstreaming environmental sustainability across organizations of the United Nations system ([JIU/REP/2020/8](#)).

II. Synopsis and review of relevant Joint Inspection Unit reports and recommendations in 2020

3. The management responses to the relevant recommendations in the reports are provided below. Annex I contains a statistical summary of the reports issued by JIU in 2020, and annex II contains proposed management responses to recommendations directed to the Executive Board as the legislative body of UNDP. Annexes III and IV provide information on the implementation status of recommendations issued in 2019 and 2018.

A. Review of contemporary practices in the external outsourcing of services to commercial service providers by United Nations system organizations ([JIU/REP/2019/9](#))

4. This JIU review assesses the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of utilizing the option of external outsourcing and whether legislative, policy and regulatory frameworks enable the consideration of the option of external outsourcing.

5. UNDP welcomes the review and notes that it offers a useful overview of the current status of external outsourcing in the United Nations system. UNDP aligns with the CEB general comments in the Note by the Secretary-General to this JIU review ([A/75/551/Add.1](#), paragraphs 3 and 4). UNDP notes that the coordination of certain actions by the Procurement Network of the High-level Committee on Management, in particular within the framework of harmonization and mutual recognition initiatives, will be essential to avoid duplication of efforts and allow United Nations entities that currently do not extensively use outsourcing to benefit from the expertise existing throughout

the United Nations system. UNDP also underscores that the absence of a clear definition of ‘outsourcing’ may compromise timely follow-up actions, noting that the development of a common approach through the Procurement Network would be essential for the implementation of the recommendations.

6. Six of the seven recommendations of the review are directed to UNDP. Recommendations 1, 3, 4, 5 and 7 are directed to the Administrator. Recommendation 2 is directed to the Executive Board for consideration and is discussed further and commented on in annex II.

7. Recommendation 1. The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should task the relevant offices with developing, through consultations with relevant internal stakeholders, by the end of 2021, a common organization-wide definition of outsourcing and further concretize it by developing approaches and procedural guidelines on the subject matter. UNDP will work with other United Nations organizations on this issue and align with the definition of ‘outsourcing’ to be adopted by the United Nations system. UNDP aligns with the CEB comments to this recommendation in the Note by the Secretary-General to the JIU review ([A/75/551/Add1](#), paragraph 11), which states that it is important for the work to be carried out through the Procurement Network, as that will ensure agreement on a system-wide definition to serve as a baseline that each entity can further develop in accordance with its specific needs and processes, with a view to the harmonization of practices. Bearing that in mind, UNDP notes that recommendation 1 is under consideration.

8. Recommendation 3. The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should instruct all requisitioning offices to actively work towards assessing their use of sources of supply from vendors in developing countries and economies in transition, and increase it, as applicable, based on such assessment, with the provision that such activities shall not contravene policies established by organizations to ensure effective competition. Regardless of contract values when delivery of goods and works are concerned, UNDP always insists that after-sales services be made available at country level. This implies the requirement that suppliers (national or international) have a local presence in the country where goods and works will be delivered. Hence direct or indirect sourcing from vendors in developing countries and economies in transition is thereby ensured in such cases. Additionally, UNDP has a policy in place that promotes procurement from local service providers, as referenced in clause 14 on national competition in the [procurement methods policy](#). Bearing this in mind, UNDP accepts recommendation 3 and notes that it has been implemented.

9. Recommendation 4. The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should encourage all offices to ensure that, by the end of 2021, the sourcing of any strategic, sensitive or high-value service and related goods from a commercial service provider is preceded by the conduct of a clearly documented strategic analysis that includes short and long-term considerations and costs, and that the analysis has been reviewed and approved by the appropriate authority, prior to a formal decision on the sourcing option. UNDP already has this requirement in place in its policy on [long-term agreements and cooperation with United Nations entities](#) and in its [guidance note on the long-term agreements policy](#), and it is verified as part of procurement committee reviews. Ex-ante reviews are conducted for certain high value and complex procurement categories. Bearing that in mind, UNDP accepts recommendation 4 and notes that it has been implemented.

10. Recommendation 5. The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should instruct all offices to ensure that, by the end of 2021, strategic, sensitive and high-value commercially outsourced services under their purview are subject to periodic review, including risk assessments, to ascertain whether appropriate risk management measures are developed by the relevant functions in each organization. UNDP already has a risk management policy in place both at the [planning](#),

[and sourcing of requirements](#) and during [contract management](#). The PROMPT planning tool and the contract management module in the UNDP corporate enterprise resource planning system serve as monitoring tools, as does its enterprise risk management system for UNDP programming, including procurement. Bearing that in mind, UNDP accepts recommendation 5 and notes that it has been implemented.

11. Recommendation 7. The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should instruct all offices to ensure that, by the end of 2021, following any decision to source a service and related goods of strategic, sensitive or high value from a commercial service provider, the requisitioning office should develop clearly detailed guidelines for managing vendor transition, including corresponding backup arrangements, and ensure that solicitation documents clearly outline the responsibility of the vendor as regards transitional assistance and knowledge transfer to the organization and incoming vendor. UNDP already has this requirement in place in its policy on [long-term agreements and cooperation with United Nations entities](#), specifically regarding the duration of long-term agreements: clauses 12 and 13 on procurement processes to replace long-term agreements. Bearing this in mind, UNDP accepts recommendation 7 and notes that it has been implemented.

B. Review of the state of the investigation function: progress made in the United Nations system organizations in strengthening the investigation function (JIU/REP/2020/1)

12. This JIU review examines the current state of the investigation function in United Nations system organizations and progress made in strengthening the function vis-à-vis previous JIU reviews, commonly accepted investigation norms, and professional standards. The review analyses the ability of organizations' investigation functions to address new demands and deal with major risks that may arise in the United Nations system.

13. UNDP appreciates the review and its findings, noting that it is compliant with the review's recommendations. Seven of the ten recommendations of the review are directed to UNDP. Recommendation 2 is directed to the Administrator. Recommendations 1, 5, 6, 8, 9 and 10 are directed to the Executive Board for consideration and are discussed further and commented on in annex II.

14. Recommendation 2. The executive heads of United Nations system organizations who have not yet done so should ensure that the heads of internal oversight offices periodically review and, where necessary, update their investigation policies and guidance on the basis of new developments, the jurisdiction of the administrative tribunals, lessons learned and good practices. In doing so, due attention should be paid to ensure coherence with applicable provisions of other existing relevant rules, regulations and policies. The Office of Audit and Investigations periodically updates investigations guidelines and standard operation procedures. UNDP accepts recommendation 2 and notes that it has been implemented.

C. Policies and platforms in support of learning: towards more coherence, coordination and convergence (JIU/REP/2020/2)

15. This JIU review assesses the adequacy of the current policies, programmes and approaches in support of learning in the United Nations system and the extent to which interagency and system-wide collaboration respond to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The review examines the thematic orientation of training courses, as well as of other forms of contemporary learning, and their relevance for the current priorities and needs of United Nations organizations. The review also assesses the specific roles and expertise of various providers of learning services used in the United Nations system

internally and from external sources and examines the potential of e-learning platforms and other technology-based learning tools.

16. UNDP appreciates the review and notes that UNDP is ahead in many of the review's six (of nine) recommendations directed to UNDP. Recommendation 1, 2, 3, 6 and 7 are directed to the Administrator. Recommendation 8 is directed to the Executive Board for consideration and is discussed further and commented on in Annex II.

17. UNDP aligns with the CEB general comments in the Note by the Secretary-General on this review ([A/75/713/Add.1](#), paragraph 5) that the review is heavily focused on formal learning programmes and does not fully capture the dynamic and informal aspects of the future of learning.

18. Recommendation 1. The executive heads of United Nations system organizations, if they have not already done so, should establish a minimum set of key performance indicators and associated targets for the efficiency of learning programmes and their effectiveness in support of business outcomes, which the organizations should monitor and report upon to the governing bodies. UNDP notes that learning content is continuous and falls into two types: micro-learning (self-learning) and macro (formal) learning. Micro-learning through podcasts, videos, articles or games takes no more than 10 minutes on average. Macro-learning is longer and is utilized for learning a whole new domain or to obtain a certification. While the scope of the proposed recommendation is limited only to formal (macro) learning programmes and excludes micro-learning, the analysis in the review is that most United Nations organizations are moving towards continuous learning, both by offering formal (macro) programmes and enabling self-learning (for example, by curating content) and by creating an ecosystem that enables continuous learning and development in the flow of work. The UNDP Talent Development Hub (an internal corporate website created through SharePoint) offers both macro and micro-curated learning content. The UNDP performance indicator framework is the integrated results and resources framework (IRRF) that measures and reports annually on UNDP progress against its strategic plan to the Executive Board as part of the Administrator's annual report. The IRRF contains the organization's performance indicators in development and in management, including in learning, which are published annually on the [Executive Board website](#). Bearing this in mind, UNDP management accepts recommendation 1 and notes that it is in progress.

19. Recommendation 2. The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should integrate the evaluation findings on learning into the learning management systems and use them effectively to inform decision-making processes on future learning activities. In recent years, the field of learning and development has moved towards 'continuous learning', a paradigm of learning beyond training that allows learners to access resources at the point of need and find compressed nuggets of content that can help them with specific tasks or workflows. Today at UNDP, driven by employee access to mobile smartphones, increased bandwidth in country offices, social networking such as Yammer and LinkedIn, employees are learning through video, social interactions, network content sharing, massive open online courses, and recommendations from others.

20. UNDP envisions a learning space that serves as a one-stop innovation hub and knowledge creation space aligned with the 2030 Agenda: the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, proposes a bold UNDP approach that responds to the integrated and transformative nature of the 2030 Agenda. Such a significant refocusing of approach generates a range of challenges and risks, including inter alia 're-skilling' and redeploying staff capacities to provide the range of services needed; generating sufficient support and collaboration from other United Nations organizations to provide truly integrated multidimensional solutions; and mobilizing the resources needed to establish and operate effective country platforms. This also incorporates features for ongoing feedback on content, participation and people and is the future of learning platforms.

Bearing this in mind, UNDP management accepts recommendation 2 and notes that it has been implemented.

21. Recommendation 3. The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should, in consultation with the United Nations Sustainable Development Group, examine the existing options for a comprehensive joint curriculum or at least system-wide quality assurance of courses related to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, by the end of 2021. UNDP aligns with the CEB comments in the Note by the Secretary-General on this recommendation ([A/75/713/Add1](#), paragraphs 16, 17 and 18), noting that while the proposed measure could in principle be useful, organizations need to explore its feasibility, given other priorities, before committing to delivery by the end of 2021. UNDP recognizes that there have been United Nations systemwide initiatives in this regard such as the United Nations Leadership Framework (United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, High-level Committee on Management), the leadership culture assessment (by the United Nations System Staff College and McKinsey & Company), and the coordinating roles of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research and the United Nations System Staff College. Bearing this in mind, UNDP notes that recommendation 3 is under consideration.

22. Recommendation 6. The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations, if they have not already done so, should establish criteria for the more systematic use of external platforms, based on judicious curating of their courses and realistic learning objectives. As noted in the analysis of the review, UNDP is one of the leading organizations in the usage of external platforms, including artificial intelligence (AI) platforms, and has already started to establish criteria on how to engage with external providers. UNDP would welcome an opportunity to research future learning platforms beyond learning management systems and potentially jointly work with other United Nations entities to host a new platform such as a learning experience platform. UNDP accepts recommendation 6 and notes it has been implemented.

23. Recommendation 7. The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should, through inter-agency agreements, recognize relevant learning programmes followed on external platforms, for which appropriate credentials are presented, and reflect that recognition in the learning management systems. UNDP aligns with the comments of the Secretary-General and the CEB on this recommendation ([A/75/713/Add1](#), paragraphs 31), noting that it would be important to define what data need to be captured (such as a short learning game compared with a masterclass on the Sustainable Development Goals on an external platform) and to consider the technical and administrative constraints and costs regarding mutual recognition. As a matter of principle, UNDP already recognizes participation in learning and development activities outside of the United Nations, provided they have appropriate credentials. Bearing this in mind, UNDP accepts recommendation 7 and notes it has been implemented.

D. Common premises in the United Nations system: current practices and future prospects ([JIU/REP/2020/3](#))

24. This JIU review analyses common premises development by reviewing progress in carrying out legislative mandates; assessing the impact of current United Nations reform on efforts to expand common premises; and drawing lessons from experience to date on the organizational arrangements required to support the common premises agenda system-wide. UNDP welcomes the review and notes that it stands ready to continue supporting the common premises' initiative. UNDP strives to share its premises to achieve better synergies, coordination, financial savings, and overall efficiencies. UNDP has various types of offices whose number changes subject to host government agreements, lease arrangements and project durations. While numbers of offices keep changing, when possible UNDP shares 74.8 per cent of these offices with other United

Nations entities. UNDP has been managing common premises in the absolute majority of cases.

25. UNDP aligns with the CEB general comments in the Note by the Secretary-General on this JIU review ([A/75/730/Add1](#), ref: paragraph 5) that the review provides useful analysis of common premises in terms of current practices and potential future prospects. At the same time, the review's eight recommendations are broad and encompass topics beyond common premises, including statements on United Nations reform. As a system-wide issue, action on common premises is beyond the mandate of any single organization. Host governments' commitment to common premises is the practical enabler, a fact the recommendations should have reflected. Executive heads or legislative organs are not the drivers of common premises. Rather, it is host governments together with the broader United Nations system through the respective United Nations mechanisms, a fact the language of the recommendations should clarify.

26. Of the review's eight recommendations, seven are directed to UNDP. Recommendations 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8 are directed to the Administrator. Bearing the above in mind, UNDP wishes to note that in essence the recommendations are directed to the Secretary-General and to the United Nations Sustainable Development Group rather than to the Administrator. Recommendation 1 is directed to the Executive Board for consideration and is discussed further and commented on in annex II.

27. Recommendation 2. The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should work together in the framework of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group to amplify, by the end of 2022, the objectives of common premises, addressing programmatic, public image and environmental sustainability considerations, as well as efficiency gains, and also set out the modalities for tracking results and reporting thereon. This recommendation advocates for a broader vision of common premises that incorporates elements of programme, public image, sustainability, and efficiency gains. Such a broader vision should be the mandate of the Secretary-General and the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination. It may not be a feasible approach because establishing common premises is already defined as the narrower objective of achieving greater utility of available resources through: (a) cost efficiency through reduction of operational costs; (b) effective utilization of shared resources; (c) enhanced security; and (d) unified presence at the national and subnational level. Moreover, it is important to note that programmes and projects drive common premises, not the other way around. On the accessibility of common premises, UNDP aligns with the United Nations system's response that calls for a broader policy on accessibility in United Nations premises to be implemented across all organizations to ensure coherent responses and standards ([A/74/217/Add1](#)). Implementing this recommendation falls under the work of the Business Operations Strategy and the review of the back-office function from a common premises angle, which may be considered by the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG), though not by the end of 2022. As a member of UNSDG, UNDP will be guided by the results of this review to implement the recommendation and notes that this recommendation is under consideration. UNDP also aligns with the CEB comments in the Note by the Secretary-General on this recommendation ([A/75/730/Add1](#), ref: paragraphs 11 and 12).

28. Recommendation 3. The Secretary-General and the other executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should, by mid-2021, work together in the framework of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group to re-examine the focus on a target of 50 per cent of common premises with a view to prioritizing efficiency gains. This recommendation is directed to the Secretary-General. It is not in the purview of UNDP nor is it for UNDP to accept or not to accept it and UNDP considers it not relevant.

29. Recommendation 4. The Secretary-General and the other executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should work together in the framework of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group to expedite the compilation of the database component of the envisaged common premises platform by mid-2021 and ensure that periodic reporting to the General Assembly includes information on the status of the database and how the common premises platform is being used to contribute to the realization of efficiency gains and any other common premises objectives. This recommendation is directed to the Secretary-General. Noting the previous efforts of the 57 organizations with common premises, compilation of a common premises database would have to consider organizational specificities, business requirements and substantial information technology investment and maintenance costs. Factoring the complexity of such an endeavour, the United Nations Development Cooperation Office is best placed to take the lead. UNDP will support and collaborate in this work, noting that this recommendation is directed to the Secretary-General and is not relevant to UNDP.

30. Recommendation 5. The Secretary-General and the other executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should work together in the framework of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group to review lessons learned from experience with public-private partnerships for common premises and formulate, by the end of 2022, measures that address the capital financing requirements of initiatives regarding common premises, including the possibility of a centrally administered mechanism, for consideration by the General Assembly if required. For UNDP country presences, governments are required, as per the standard basic assistance agreements, to provide office premises. Regarding the specific case of public-private partnerships for common premises, these initiatives should therefore be led by the host government as the appropriate accountabilities and mechanism to deal with public-private partnerships remain with the host government. Public-private partnerships face many challenges, including time horizons given that the nature and purpose of United Nations programmes' presence in a given geographical area may be relatively shorter than the timeline for a public-private partnership commitment. As a result, public-private partnerships for common premises tend to be an option of last resort. UNDP agrees that an approach which can resolve the financing for the construction of premises in a way that recognizes the primacy of the role of the host government and the disparate needs of the United Nations system (including its funds, programmes and specialized agencies) would be beneficial to the United Nations system. Equally reflective of the need for effective solutions that are workable in the country context and aligned with host government requirements, UNDP would caution against and does not agree with seeking central administration of public-private partnerships for in-country common premises and hence does not accept this recommendation.

31. Recommendation 7. The Secretary-General and the executive heads of the United Nations system organizations with premises in the field should study the feasibility of a unified mechanism for real estate management in the field and report on the findings of that study to the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session. This recommendation is directed to the Secretary-General. It is not in the purview of UNDP nor is it for UNDP to accept or not. United Nations organizations with premises report to different governing bodies and have different mandates and modalities for funding their premises. In addition, some of the premises are either government assets (fully or partly) or follow almost similar arrangements. UNDP remains available to collaborate with the appropriate and designated entity should such a feasibility study be conducted, noting that this recommendation is directed to the Secretary-General. It is not for UNDP to accept or not. UNDP considers this recommendation not relevant.

32. Recommendation 8. The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should work together in the framework of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group to improve, by the end of 2021, the inter-organizational arrangements for support

of common premises by strengthening the oversight of common premises by the United Nations Sustainable Development Group, clarifying the role and authority of its inter-agency Task Team on Common Premises and Facility Services and directing an appropriately capacitated Development Coordination Office to support them in carrying out the common premises workstream. That support work should include analysis of priorities for future action, making arrangements for proactive support of country teams at all stages of project life cycles and drawing linkages to other facets of business operations. UNDP is committed to fully collaborating should the decision be made to clarify and strengthen the functions of the Task Team on Common Premises and Facility Services. As for the relocation of the task team to the Development Coordination Office, UNDP remains open to study the modus operandi in the best interest of all United Nations organizations and notes that this recommendation is under consideration.

E. Enterprise risk management: approaches and uses in United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2020/5)

33. This JIU review examines the status of implementation, utilization and integration of enterprise risk management (ERM) practices across United Nations system organizations since the last JIU review (JIU/REP/2010/4) and identifies good practices and lessons to guide ongoing and future initiatives. The review has four focus areas: (a) status of current risk management practices across United Nations system organizations; (b) integration of risk management into management practices and decision-making; (c) potential and actual uses and benefits of risk management practices within the organization; and (d) status of risk management usage by governing/legislative bodies in their oversight and decision-making role.

34. UNDP welcomes the review and its findings, noting that it is compliant with the review's recommendations. All four recommendations of the review are directed to UNDP. Recommendations 2 and 3 are directed to the Administrator. Recommendations 1 and 4 are directed to the Executive Board for consideration and are discussed further and commented on in annex II.

35. Recommendation 2. By the end of 2021, executive heads should undertake a comprehensive review of their ERM implementation against JIU benchmarks 1 to 9, as outlined in the present report. UNDP is compliant with this recommendation. The UNDP 2019 enterprise risk management policy and implementation plan are aligned with JIU benchmarks one to nine regarding: (a) adoption of a systematic and organization-wide risk management policy and/or framework that is linked to the organization's strategic plan; (b) a formally defined internal organizational structure for enterprise risk management with assigned roles and responsibilities; (c) a risk culture fostered by the 'tone at the top' with full commitment from all organizational levels; (d) legislative/governing body engaged with enterprise risk management at the appropriate levels; (e) integration of risk management with key strategic and operational business processes; (f) established systematic, coherent and dynamic risk management processes; (g) effective use of information technology systems and tools for enterprise risk management; (h) communication and training plans to create risk awareness, promote risk policy, and establish risk capabilities for the implementation of enterprise risk management; (i) periodic and structured review of effectiveness of enterprise risk management implementation for continuous improvement. UNDP accepts recommendation 2 and notes that it has been implemented.

36. Recommendation 3. By the end of 2021, members of the High-level Committee on Management of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination should ensure that its Cross-Functional Task Force on Risk Management is continued as a viable mechanism to further promote and facilitate inter-agency cooperation, coordination and knowledge sharing and to explore shared risks associated with United Nations reform efforts. UNDP aligns with the CEB comments in the Note by the Secretary-General on this recommendation (A/75/718/Add.1, paragraphs 11 and 12) and acknowledges JIU recognition of the role of the High-level Committee on

Management (HLCM) Cross-Functional Task Force on Risk Management. UNDP stands ready to continue supporting and contributing to interagency collaboration through the work of the task force. UNDP notes that recommendation 3 concerns the whole United Nations system and is for HLCM consideration. UNDP will be guided in its implementation of recommendation 3 by HLCM work mechanisms and processes. Bearing that in mind, UNDP notes that recommendation 3 is under consideration.

F. Multilingualism in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2020/6)

37. This JIU review assesses the status of implementation of multilingualism across the United Nations system, identifies gaps and highlights opportunities for the system to effectively pursue multilingualism as a core value.

38. UNDP appreciates the review's comments on the implementation of multilingualism across the United Nations system. The review has seven recommendations of which six are directed to UNDP for action. Recommendations 3, 5 and 6 are directed to the Administrator. Recommendations 1, 2 and 4 are directed to the Executive Board for consideration and are discussed further and commented on in annex II.

39. **Recommendation 3. The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations that have not yet done so, should, where appropriate, introduce or enhance, by the end of 2022, their policies for attracting new translators and interpreters and retaining talented and skilled language professionals, including the preparation of succession plans with specifications for required languages and language combinations, as well as the expansion of outreach programmes.** UNDP outsources language services and has ensured the recruitment of new individual translators and companies through long-term agreement modalities and has retained talented language professionals. UNDP has maintained agreements for over 13 years with senior translators familiar with United Nations content who are preferred for the translation of official documents and highly technical reports. However, as the organization evolves, creative translation and transcreation of digital content, media and marketing products are in high demand. During the last tendering process to recruit new translators, translators with externally diverse translation experience have been selected to translate digital communications and other type of products in the six United Nations official languages. To meet interpreting needs, UNDP also established agreements with companies that provide virtual conference services in different language combinations. Bearing that in mind, UNDP considers recommendation 3 not relevant.

40. **Recommendation 5. The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should request the High-level Committee on Management of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) to establish a working group on the preparation for adoption, by the end of 2022, of a United Nations system language framework for language teaching, learning, assessment, and certification in the six official languages of the United Nations, which could be based, inter alia, on the results of the work already undertaken by the United Nations Secretariat in this area.** UNDP recognizes the leadership of the Coordinator for Multilingualism of the United Nations, as well as the existence of the United Nations system-wide network of focal points for multilingualism, and cautions against the risk of establishing duplicative mechanisms and processes. The Coordinator for Multilingualism, as per their terms of reference, "serves as a facilitator to attain a coordinated, consistent and coherent approach to multilingualism at the United Nations system level through the CEB and coordinates joint measures with the CEB secretariat to support a comprehensive and coordinated approach on multilingualism within the United Nations system."

41. The Secretary-General's reform agenda has repeatedly underscored the need to use existing structures and refrain from creating new ones. The existing United Nations system-wide multilingualism structures (the Coordinator and the network of focal

points) are already well placed to lead and undertake United Nations system-wide multilingualism-related actions, including the recommended actions on “preparation for adoption, by the end of 2022, of a United Nations system language framework for language teaching, learning, assessment, and certification in the six official languages of the United Nations” without the need to establish a new working group under the HLCM. The network of focal points can draw from the work of entities from across the United Nations system and channel its recommendations through the HLCM and its sub-mechanisms, including its networks, in finalizing the framework for endorsement by the CEB. Bearing this in mind, UNDP notes that recommendation 5 is forwarded to the HLCM secretariat, and UNDP considers it not relevant.

42. Recommendation 6. The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations, in their capacity as members of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, should direct the High-level Committee on Management to develop a system-wide, comprehensive and coordinated approach to multilingualism as a core value of the United Nations system organizations. As mentioned in the management comments to Recommendation 5, existing United Nations systemwide multilingualism structures – the Coordinator and the network of focal points – are well placed to lead and undertake United Nations system-wide multilingualism-related actions without establishing duplicative mechanisms and processes, in alignment with the Secretary General’s reform agenda to use existing structures and refrain from creating new ones. Bearing this in mind, UNDP notes that recommendation 6 is forwarded to the HLCM secretariat, and UNDP considers it not relevant.

G. Review of mainstreaming environmental sustainability across organizations of the United Nations system(JIU/REP/2020/8)

43. This JIU review examines the status of implementation of key system-wide initiatives related to the management of environmental sustainability in the United Nations system. UNDP appreciates the review and its presentation of the UNDP Greening Moonshot Facility and its experiences greening its operations. On adopting travel ceilings, as recommended in paragraph 171 of the review, UNDP notes that it has embedded a culture of effective decision-making by which managers assess the criticality of travel to mandate implementation prior to mission approval. If face-to-face is not essential for mandate implementation, alternative methods are used. The COVID-19 crisis has demonstrated that alternative methods of working (primarily virtual) are effective and will be part of the ‘new ways of working’ post-COVID-19. However, setting ‘travel ceilings’, as suggested by the review, would create an administrative burden for travel while ignoring the differing mandates of staff. A travel ceiling would ultimately be arbitrary in nature and could inadvertently work counter to the purpose of minimizing travel. Furthermore, targeted dashboards, as suggested by the review, will effectively name and shame those who have a legitimate need to travel while not addressing cases where travel is minimal, but in aggregate significant, though not critical to the organization’s mandate. Overall, UNDP is compliant with the review’s recommendations. Of the review’s 10 recommendations, eight are directed to UNDP. Recommendations 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9 and 10 are directed to the Administrator. Recommendation 2 is directed to the Executive Board for consideration and is discussed further and commented on in annex II.

44. Recommendation 1. The executive heads of United Nations system organizations that have not yet done so should, by the end of 2022, develop an organization-wide policy for environmental sustainability in the areas of internal management functions. Noting that internal management and programming cannot always be clearly differentiated in all operations, discussions are underway on a policy to mandate and mainstream climate neutrality and environmental sustainability throughout UNDP operations, including the possibility of a greenhouse gas emissions levy to incentivize and enable cost recovery for both measures. Bearing this in mind, UNDP notes that this recommendation is under consideration.

45. Recommendation 3. The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should, by the end of 2022, devote adequate resources in specific budget plans, including by better utilizing existing available resources, to mainstreaming environmental sustainability in their respective organizations, and report on the implementation to their legislative organs and governing bodies from 2023. With the corporate Greening Moonshot Task Force and Facility in place, dedicated financial resources and management structures have been implemented and reporting to the Executive Board is already taking place. Bearing this in mind, UNDP accepts this recommendation and notes that it has been implemented.

46. Recommendation 4. The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations that have not yet done so should, by the end of 2022, task procurement offices with incorporating specific provisions for integrating environmental sustainability considerations into procurement policies, procedures, manuals and guidelines, including through the relevant inter-agency mechanisms, as necessary. UNDP has a [sustainable procurement policy](#) and has issued a [practitioner's guide to sustainable procurement and environmental procurement](#). UNDP has extensively incorporated environmental sustainability in the new [construction works policy](#) and the [construction guidance note](#), including the social and environmental screening procedure and environmental impact assessment. The social and environmental standards are also incorporated into the general terms and conditions of contracts. Clauses 8 and 9 of the [vehicle management policy](#) were updated in March 2020 to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from UNDP operations: electric vehicles are now the default for the acquisition of representation vehicles and, where electric vehicles are not feasible, hybrid vehicles are considered the first alternative before internal combustion engine vehicles. The ceiling for the acquisition of electric or hybrid vehicles is changed to \$45,000 while that of internal combustion engine vehicles remains at \$38,000. Environmental considerations are incorporated in the request for quotation and invitation to bid on a pass/fail basis while they are weighted in the request for proposal. UNDP has been implementing solar energy photovoltaic systems and established long-term agreements for their procurement for projects in UNDP country offices and partners since 2015. Over 9.0 megawatts have been produced in almost 1,100 sites globally for a budget of \$30,450,000. The beneficiaries of these projects are United Nations country offices, ministries of health (clinics, hospitals, health facilities), ministries of education (schools) and national utilities. UNDP implements its [Solar for Health](#) initiative that supports governments to increase access to quality health services through the installation of solar energy photovoltaic systems, ensuring constant, cost-effective access to electricity while mitigating the impact of climate change and advancing multiple Sustainable Development Goals. Bearing this in mind, UNDP accepts this recommendation and notes that it has been implemented.

47. Recommendation 5. The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should, by the end of 2022, ensure that all recruitment and selection processes, as well as performance appraisal systems, incorporate and give adequate weight to environmental sustainability understanding and behaviours, and report on the implementation to their legislative organs and governing bodies from 2023. UNDP has made training on sustainability (Greening the Blue) mandatory for all personnel. Completion of mandatory trainings is expected to be discussed during the annual performance management and development dialogue between supervisors and staff. UNDP is currently updating the Greening the Blue training and, in parallel, the People Development Governance Group is currently reviewing all mandatory trainings to optimize their effectiveness and delivery mechanisms. As part of its People for 2030 strategy, UNDP is beginning the process of overhauling its recruitment and selection processes. This will entail a new recruitment marketing strategy designed to attract and select candidates with values matching the organization's mission, including the promotion of sustainable development and the Sustainable Development Goals. At the same time, the roll-out of video interviews will significantly reduce the need for travel by panel members and candidates and thus carbon emissions. Bearing this in mind, UNDP accepts this recommendation and notes that it is in progress.

48. Recommendation 6. The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should, by the end of 2022, with the support of the resident coordinator system and the United Nations country team mechanisms, strengthen the coordination between the headquarters and field agencies, as well as among field agencies, in pursuing measures to reduce the environmental impact of field presences, and report on the implementation to their legislative organs and governing bodies from 2023. UNDP has been monitoring and reporting on the environmental footprint of all its offices since the launch of the Greening the Blue initiative in 2009. Most country offices have dedicated focal points and all offices have been asked to establish Greening Moonshot task forces to develop office-level greening plans. In addition, the Greening Moonshot secretariat facilitates exchanges between offices utilizing an intranet space, Yammer, webinars, among others. As noted in the management comments to recommendations 2 and 3, regular periodic reporting to the Executive Board is already taking place. Bearing this in mind, UNDP accepts this recommendation and notes that it has been implemented.

49. Recommendation 9. The executive heads of organizations of the United Nations system should ensure that, by the end of 2022, information and communications technology services' actions and projects comply with environmental sustainability considerations, including ensuring that greenhouse gas emissions are at a level compatible with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Paris agreement. UNDP has developed and follows United Nations system best practices, including through the UNDP Smart Facilities concept, energy efficiency, and the internet-of-things, and: (a) promotes the UNDP Smart Facilities concept within the United Nations system as well as in government institutions and local communities, soliciting feedback from customers and other interested parties to continually improve processes and services; (b) monitors performance through performance metrics to evaluate progress; (c) keeps UNDP management fully informed of issues and risks as they arise in country offices and actions taken to manage those risks; and (d) uses the ISO 9001 quality management system for all unit processes everywhere, every time, without exception. The concept uses a seven-step green energy solution process to address the needs of United Nations offices, which has been adopted as a best practice by the UNSDG. UNDP is using a concept from the Smart United Nations Facility, which builds on principles of its Smart Cities initiative and the fourth industrial revolution, to build local capacity and incitement by leveraging technology as the engine of development and environmental sustainability.

50. Continuous monitoring of power consumption is achieved through 1,300 internet-of-things sensors deployed in most UNDP offices. Advanced analysis of this data allows quick identification of energy efficiencies and optimization of energy usage. The information and communication technology hardware footprint and greenhouse gas emissions in UNDP premises have been reduced by over 75 per cent by adopting cloud-computing and reducing the local information and communication technology infrastructure through a compact energy efficient solution (OneICTbox) to replace local data centres. Bearing this in mind, UNDP accepts this recommendation and notes that it has been implemented.

51. Recommendation 10. The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should, by the end of 2022, make all official documentation, publications, brochures, and communication and advocacy materials available online, including through online conferencing applications or other information technology means, and report on the implementation to their legislative organs and governing bodies from 2023. UNDP official documentation is available online through the UNDP website or the Executive Board website. UNDP has been utilizing Zoom and Microsoft Teams for meetings and online conferences, DocuSign for signing official documents electronically, and Microsoft Office 365 tools to develop, store and share documentation. UNDP reports annually to its Executive Board on the

organization's digital transformation. Bearing this in mind, UNDP accepts this recommendation and notes that it has been implemented.

III. Status of UNDP implementation of Joint Inspection Unit recommendations

52. In 2020, of the 38 JIU recommendations directed to UNDP, 19 (50 per cent) are accepted and implemented, two are accepted and in progress (5 per cent), five (13 per cent) are under consideration, three (8 per cent) are not accepted and nine (24 per cent) are not relevant. Of the three recommendations not accepted, two are addressed to the Executive Board (remarks are provided in annex II of this report). They include recommendation 5 on the review of the state of the investigation function: progress made in the United Nations system organizations in strengthening the investigation function ([JIU/REP/2020/1](#)); recommendation 4 on the review of enterprise risk management: approaches and uses in United Nations system organizations ([JIU/REP/2020/5](#)); and recommendation 5 on common premises in the United Nations system: current practices and future prospects ([JIU/REP/2020/3](#)), which is addressed to the Administrator. Of the nine recommendations not relevant, six recommendations are system-wide and are not the sole remit of UNDP. One appears in the review of policies and platforms in support of learning: towards more coherence, coordination and convergence ([JIU/REP/2020/2](#)) (recommendation 8); three in the review of common premises in the United Nations system: current practices and future prospects ([JIU/REP/2020/3](#)) (recommendations 3, 4 and 5); and two in the review of multilingualism in the United Nations system ([JIU/REP/2020/6](#)) (recommendations 5, and 6). The remaining three recommendations that are not relevant appear in the review of multilingualism in the United Nations system ([JIU/REP/2020/6](#)) (recommendations 1, 2 and 3) which are not actionable for UNDP, as UNDP mainstreams multilingualism throughout its work (recommendations 1 and 2) and outsources language services (recommendation 3).

53. In accordance with resolution 60/258, in which the General Assembly requests the Joint Inspection Unit to enhance dialogue with participating organizations and strengthen implementation of its recommendations, UNDP presents the summary of its implementation status of relevant JIU recommendations from its 2018 and 2019 reports in annexes III and IV of the present report. Full narrative updates are provided in the web-based JIU follow-up system accessible to Member States.

54. UNDP has implemented 20 recommendations (95 per cent) of the 21 relevant recommendations (20 accepted, one under consideration) directed at UNDP by the Joint Inspection Unit in 2019. The one recommendation under consideration is system-wide and is not under the sole remit of UNDP.

55. UNDP has implemented 25 recommendations (81 per cent) and is pursuing five (16 per cent) of the 31 relevant recommendations (30 accepted and one under consideration) directed at UNDP by the Joint Inspection Unit in 2018. Of the five recommendations that are in progress, three are system-wide, are not of the sole remit of UNDP, and relate to efficiency and effectiveness in administrative support services. Two recommendations relate to enhancing accessibility for persons with disabilities to conferences and meetings, specifically on implementing measures to improve accessibility-related matters under the new [United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy](#).

56. UNDP is committed to following up on implementing the remaining recommendations relevant to it and to continuing its contribution to the various future initiatives of the Joint Inspection Unit.