



**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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**Organizational matters**

**Report of the second regular session 2021  
(30 August to 2 September 2021, New York)**

Contents

<i>Chapter</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Organizational matters .....	2
<i>UNDP segment</i>	
II. UNDP strategic plan, 2022-2025 .....	2
III. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters.....	7
IV. Structured funding dialogue.....	7
V. Country programmes and related matters .....	8
<i>UNFPA segment</i>	
VI. UNFPA strategic plan, 2022-2025 .....	8
VII. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters.....	12
VIII. Structured funding dialogue.....	14
IX. Country programmes and related matters .....	14
<i>UNOPS segment</i>	
X. UNOPS strategic plan, 2022-2025 .....	15
XI. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters.....	15
I. Organizational matters (continued).....	18



## I. Organizational matters

1. The second regular session 2021 of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS continued to be held virtually, on an exceptional basis, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, from 30 August to 2 September 2021.
2. The Executive Board adopted the agenda and workplan for its second regular session 2021 (DP/2021/L.3), as orally amended, and approved the report of the annual session 2021 (DP/2021/26). The Board took note of the draft annual workplan for 2022 (DP/2021/CRP.2) and approved the tentative workplan for the first regular session 2022.
3. Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at the second regular session 2021 appeared in document DP/2022/2, which was available on the [Executive Board website](#).
4. The Executive Board agreed in decision 2022/22 to the following schedule for future sessions of the Executive Board in 2022:

First regular session:	31 January to 4 February 2022
Annual session:	6 to 10 June 2022
Second regular session:	30 August to 2 September 2022

### Statement by the President of the Board

5. The President of the Executive Board stressed that to meet prevailing development and humanitarian challenges the UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS strategic plans, 2022-2025, up for Board approval at the session had to be ambitious, creative and innovative. Only in that way could they serve to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, counter the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, and meet the growing needs and expectations of Member States, while operating with limited financial resources. In 2021, she affirmed, the Bureau of the Board had fulfilled its commitment to ensure strategic, inclusive, transparent, fruitful consultations, with some 20 informal consultations dedicated to the three organizations' respective strategic plans, in addition to regional consultations and bilateral engagements on various aspects of their work. As a result, the UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS strategic plans were ambitious, robust and forward-looking, and represented a delicate balance of the differing needs of an ever more diverse membership. It was therefore the role of the Board to send a strong message of unity by endorsing the strategic plans and reaching consensus on the decisions up for adoption. The President said the United Nations funds and programmes were among the most powerful instruments to meet the Sustainable Development Goals and build back better and greener, saving lives, helping eradicate poverty and improving the conditions of billions of people. The Board would continue to fulfil its supervisory role of United Nations development system activities, ensuring it responded to the needs of programme countries.

### UNDP segment

## II. UNDP strategic plan, 2022-2025

6. In his opening remarks ([available on the UNDP website](#)), the UNDP Administrator said that the current extraordinary times demanded extraordinary measures. The world was facing an existential crisis laid bare by the COVID-19 pandemic crisis and the climate emergency. As human and environmental systems became ever more interdependent, risks accumulated and eroded humanity's collective resilience. But the pandemic, he said, had also opened up space for new approaches and policies and offered lessons on the way forward and doing things differently. Development itself was changing, he emphasized. To address the systemic challenges all people faced, communities had to collaborate towards mutual goals and co-invest in public goods, built

on equal partnerships rooted in shared interests, experiences and multilateral responses. #NextGenUNDP was making UNDP fit-for-purpose internally through its People 2030 strategy, its new data strategy, the adoption of a more proactive, dynamic approaches to risk management that incentivized innovation and accountability, its dedication to operational excellence, and its investments in hard-to-measure transformative change through a new enterprise resources planning platform that promised greater efficiency, results and resources planning, and monitoring and impact measurement.

7. The new UNDP strategic plan, 2022-2025, (DP/2021/28) up for Board approval, reflected that evolution. UNDP had advanced its thinking, rediscovered its voice as a thought-leader in development, become more transparent and accountable, and deepened its engagement in the United Nations development system, bolstering its collective ability to deliver as United Nations reforms intended, together with all its partners. The subsequent four years would be starkly different, with UNDP being more ambitious than ever: (a) expanding human capabilities through which 100 million people could escape multidimensional poverty; (b) helping 800 million people exercise their democratic right to vote, many for the first time; (c) supporting access to clean energy for 500 million people; and (d) promoting the investment of over \$1 trillion of public expenditure and private capital in the Sustainable Development Goals.

8. The Administrator stressed that in all its work UNDP was dedicated to its core mission – eradicating poverty and supporting sustainable development for all. To drive its new strategic plan, 2022-2025, UNDP would support *three directions of change*: (a) structural transformation towards more inclusive, green and digital transitions; (b) leaving no-one behind, grounded in a rights-based approach centred on human agency; (c) building resilience in the face of systemic uncertainty and risk; and it would use *its core expertise*: six signature solutions on poverty and inequality, governance, resilience, environment, energy and gender equality; all of which would be *powered by three enablers* for scale and speed: strategic innovation, digitalization and development financing.

9. As part of this drive, the Administrator said UNDP would be adopting a new approach to crisis and fragile settings. Here, its priorities would be: (a) *understanding systemic, multidimensional risks* so it could build resilience and human security; (b) *prioritizing prevention*: addressing the root causes of existing crises and helping to prevent those in the future; (c) *investing in data and analytics*, early warning and horizon scanning, and using foresight to uncover future trends and change drivers and protect and promote development pathways; (d) *designing and implementing gender-responsive, risk-informed development solutions* that bring different sectors together towards collective outcomes, strengthened by greater coherence among humanitarian, development, human rights and peace and security partners; and (e) *developing a new business model* that was fit-for-purpose for complex delivery environments.

10. Across the board, delegations expressed strong support for the new UNDP strategic plan, 2022-2025, and commended UNDP for the highly inclusive, transparent, engaging consultation process throughout its development. The new strategic plan, 2022-2025, highlighted UNDP comparative strengths and its unique combination of global and local presence, sector competence, partnerships, and integrated whole-of-society approaches. They welcomed and shared the UNDP analysis of the prevailing development landscape, planetary emergency and increased poverty, where the COVID-19 pandemic crisis both exposed and reinforced existing inequalities within and between countries, and where multilateralism was under pressure. They said the new strategic plan, 2022-2025, was well-tuned to those trends and positioned UNDP as a crucial international development partner, in accordance with the intentions expressed by Member States in the 2020 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system ([A/RES/75/233](#)).

11. A group of delegations on behalf of the Bureau of the Board welcomed the new strategic plan, 2022-2025, and expected UNDP with its broad mandate and global presence to lead a large part of United Nations multilateral efforts on the ground in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. They stressed that UNDP was a crucial player in the global development architecture; a development-based approach had therefore to remain its priority. They were pleased to see that eradicating poverty and hunger in all its forms and dimensions remained the heart of the new plan and the main purpose of structural transformation in achieving long-term solutions. That was especially crucial for the most vulnerable countries that required tailored support to grow new businesses, entrepreneurship and jobs and ensure opportunities for the burgeoning youth population, women and girls. They also welcomed the UNDP shift toward targeted actions to tackle the interconnected problems of climate change, the blue economy and disaster risk reduction, and supported the UNDP vision for a ‘tectonic’ shift in the development paradigm to bridge the gaps created by COVID-19 and galvanize digitalization at a pace and scale to help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. And they reiterated the importance of predictable regular (core) resources.

12. A second group of delegations expected democratic governance and human rights to continue to be the UNDP backbone and expected UNDP to continue to lead by example, providing thought leadership and implementing capacity support. They commended UNDP for its overall approach to human development within planetary boundaries, mitigating and adapting to climate change, protecting biodiversity and ecosystems, and ensuring just and equitable development for all. They encouraged UNDP to continue to seek and support holistic solutions that combined adaptation and mitigation efforts and supported its special attention to least developed countries, small island developing states, and the most vulnerable countries when supporting climate resilience and climate change adaptation. They viewed sustainable blue economies as part of integrated solutions to climate adaptation and food security and expected an increase in joint programming with other United Nation organizations to reduce fragmentation of climate and environmental projects. They called on UNDP to manage its environmental footprint in the strategic plan, 2022-2025. They expressed concern with the lack of gender-equality design in programming and in dialogue with partners and called on UNDP to take concrete measures to prioritize gender equality and empowerment of women and girls in the new plan.

13. A third group of delegations welcomed the notable degree of interlinkages and complementarities across the United Nations development system and among UNDP, UNFPA, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), as reflected in their strategic plans and common indicators in their integrated results and resources frameworks, which would greatly help to establish a new generation of United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks. They commended the organizations’ efforts to identify areas of joint engagement and to align their contributions to results achieved collectively, making connections and complementarities visible and measurable and contributing to a stronger, more effective United Nations development system. They called on UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN-Women to leverage their comparative advantages for coordinated, effective system-wide collaboration and agency-specific contributions to meeting needs on the ground, under effective resident coordinator leadership, to achieve collective results effectively and efficiently. They called on the organizations to monitor and report on results achieved collectively, particularly in building capacities and enabling environments to achieve long-term development results from a system-wide perspective, based on leveraging comparative advantages for greater coherence, efficiency and effectiveness.

14. A fourth group of delegations recognized that the strategic plan, 2022-2025, was an agency-owned document that did not fully capture all concerns and priorities of Member States, but they stressed that the plan served as a global framework that would enable UNDP to best fulfil its mandate and support countries in delivering on their national development needs and priorities.

They strongly encouraged UNDP to work in close cooperation with the other United Nations funds and programmes and relevant United Nations entities to align programming with the country-specific Cooperation Frameworks, in close consultation with national Governments, to adequately respond to country needs and priorities.

15. Other delegations welcomed the UNDP response to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis and recovery efforts and encouraged it to continue initiatives to create employment, bolster health care system, promote research, science and technology, address the specific vulnerabilities of least developed countries, small island developing states, and middle-income countries, and increase utilization of local experts in programme and project interventions. They called on donors and partners to tackle vaccine access and equity, support and advocate for a conflict-sensitive lens in UNDP programming, increase Sustainable Development Goals financing, and adopt approaches that prioritize prevention, stabilization, transformation and sustainability. They called on donors and partners to consider increasing funding without heavy earmarking to enable UNDP to enjoy the flexibility and predictability to deliver programmes to support the building of prosperous, structurally transformed economies that leave no one behind. They stressed the key importance of national ownership and leadership in requesting assistance based on national needs and priorities as nationally determined.

16. In response, the UNDP Administrator said that lessons in developing previous strategic plans showed the value of engaging Member States early in the process. UNDP therefore began developing the new strategic plan, 2022-2025, in close cooperation with partners more than a year in advance. This facilitated a shared understanding of the prevailing global development context and identified shared opportunities to act. Out of this emerged the prominence of eradicating poverty which, he said, together with tackling inequality which remained the core of UNDP work and the fulcrum of its new strategic plan. Recognizing the inadequacies of trickle-down economics, UNDP worked holistically through integrated approaches and digitalization to focus on creating livelihood opportunities, enabling people to develop assets, and facilitating access to markets, working closely with Governments and the private sector. In doing so, UNDP was able to connect those various elements and to yield multiple outcomes in the fight against poverty.

17. The UNDP ongoing COVID-19 response was woven into the new strategic plan and focused on helping countries capitalize on the moment to transition to more inclusive, greener and digital economies. Ensuring vaccine access was central to those activities. UNDP had teamed up with the University of Oxford and the World Health Organization (WHO) to create a dashboard for vaccine equity, with the purpose of demonstrating the implications and costs of failing to vaccinate billions of people. Such data-driven approaches were key in UNDP innovative work to explore the potentials of citizen science and crowdsourcing to engage people in the development process and drive UNDP holistic development design. Central to this was the significant UNDP investment in digitalization, as it worked with partners to devise a development approach to digitalization focused on designing digital ecosystems and ensuring digital readiness at country level to address national development priorities.

18. On the funding and financing front, the Administrator said UNDP had seen significant shifts in 2020. That included an unexpected increase in core funding and a 43 per cent increase in government contributions from programme countries to non-core funding. UNDP remained focused on engaging Member States to put the organization on a more strategic financing track and in raising partners' interest in the UNDP 'core campaign'. That included ensuring that partners and their constituents understood the UNDP value proposition and galvanizing a positive narrative of multilateralism as effective and efficient, thereby countering misconceptions and encouraging investments in the United Nations. Central to that effort was a more refined understanding of UNDP comparative strengths and advantages, which Member States recognized in the new strategic plan, and which were grounded in integrated approaches and solutions to

challenges such as climate change, poverty reduction and the blue economy, in full alignment with United Nations reform and the principles of the 2020 quadrennial review. The Administrator reiterated that UNDP was committed to joint engagements and results while underscoring the importance of being strategic and relevant in a constrained resource environment. That meant pursuing targeted partnerships at country level with resident coordinators and United Nations country team members, in which UNDP had invested significantly. When considering progress through joint engagements and results, it was therefore important to take into account such targeted initiatives as they were more traceable and measurable.

19. The Administrator emphasized that United Nations norms and values were an integral part of the UNDP mandate. UNDP would always engage with partners based on the human rights and governance principles embodied in the Charter while being fully committed to addressing countries' nationally defined priorities and needs through partnership. As part of this, gender equity remained a top priority, as reflected in the new strategic plan, 2022-2025. Throughout its work, and with other United Nations entities, UNDP implemented programmes that contained both explicit and implicit investments in gender equity. That said, UNDP investments in gender equity were lower than forecasted. In the new strategic plan, UNDP would up its investments in gender equity, continuing to mainstream it throughout programming; the new enterprise resource planning system would allow UNDP to measure the impact on gender equality of programmes in areas such as climate, governance or digitalization. And to reduce its environmental footprint, UNDP would continue to implement its environmental management plan, including the Greening Moonshot initiative, and was on target to meet its goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 25 per cent by 2025 and 50 per cent by 2030.

20. On the larger humanitarian front, the Administrator stressed the importance of tackling complex situations on the ground through a holistic approach that went beyond the three pillars of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, learning from the experiences in vulnerable settings where conflict had become a dominant variable and where the international response was often reduced to a narrow set of engagement points. In the current Afghanistan crisis and others, UNDP and United Nations organizations were a major asset as they had already built a significant presence on the ground and with the support of the international community could continue together their work through the transition period ahead.

21. The Director, Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, UNDP, confirmed that in response to the crisis in Afghanistan UNDP national teams were fully deployed on the ground and continued to work closely with civil society partners and local contractors. As soon as conditions permitted, UNDP would send in an international support team. In anticipation of the impending crisis, UNDP had pivoted to eight area-based, geographically specific portfolios focused on essential services, working in narrower operating spaces throughout the country though mainly in the capital, Kabul. Together with other United Nations organizations, UNDP activities focused on livelihoods, based on the drivers of displacement, and extreme vulnerability, including through a human security lens. UNDP welcomed the request that it lead on the economic drivers and stabilization and early recovery. Using a direct implementation modality, UNDP would be better able to report to member States on its activities in the country.

22. The Executive Board adopted decision 2021/14 on the UNDP strategic plan, 2022-2025.

### III. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

23. The Director, UNDP Bureau for Management Services, presented the UNDP integrated resources plan and integrated budget estimates, 2022-2025, (DP/2021/29) and the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the UNDP integrated resources plan and integrated budget estimates, 2022-2025 (DP/2021/30).
24. Delegations made no comments on this item.
25. The Executive Board adopted decision 2021/15 on the UNDP integrated resources plan and integrated budget estimates, 2022-2025.

### IV. Structured funding dialogue

26. The Director, Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy, UNDP, presented the report on the structured dialogue on financing the results of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, (DP/2021/31) and its annexes (annex 1: detailed annual review of the financial situation, 2020 and annex 2: progress against entity-specific commitments to the Funding Compact). Also tabled was the annual review of the financial situation of the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), 2020 (DP/2021/32).

#### *Structured dialogue on financing the results of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018-2021*

27. A delegation welcomed the improvements to the report and the UNDP harmonized approach with UNFPA, UNICEF and UN-Women, which was informative and effective. The delegation expressed support for the UNDP call for an overall increase in funding to core resources to reach the 30 per cent target (from 13 per cent). Noting that UNDP was on track to attain its four-year management efficiency target of 7.33 per cent, and noting that meeting that target translated to increased programme delivery while decreasing institutional expenditures, the delegation encouraged UNDP to maintain its focus on the management efficient ratio. It sought clarity and details on the breakdown of costs UNDP incurred for United Nations development system coordination and the resident coordinator system, and whether the current percentage would remain the same going forward.

#### *Annual review of the financial situation of UNCDF, 2020*

28. A delegation underscored the unique UNCDF role in mobilizing financing for the least developed countries, including throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and in response to climate change. It expressed strong support for increasing core resources to UNCDF and a healthier core/non-core resources ratio to ensure the Fund had the flexibility to fulfil its mandate and play its part in helping partners and countries achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The delegation welcomed the strong UNCDF performance in innovative financing instruments, demonstrating how UNCDF remained fit-for-purpose, made efficient use of scarce resources, and leveraged domestic and international private capital for sustainable development in least developed countries. Noting the call for UNCDF to be ambitious in its strategic framework, 2020-2025, and to focus on its key comparative advantages in the United Nations system, including on financial inclusion, the delegation encouraged UNCDF to devise a plan that allowed and encouraged United Nations development system entities and other actors to partner with UNCDF and capitalize on its innovative financing capabilities to enhance the impact of the United Nations development system in least developed countries. The delegation welcomed the continuing and deepened dialogue with UNCDF on the funding of its next strategic framework, including a shift in emphasis from highly earmark to more regular, flexible resources.

29. In response, Director, Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy, UNDP, welcomed the support expressed for more flexible and core funding which UNDP needed to reach its 30 per cent target. She said that UNDP planned to take a closer look at the funding model for United Nations development system coordination. UNDP had understood early on that the 1 per cent levy to fund the resident coordinator system would carry high administrative costs. To offset this situation, UNDP was and would continue to do its utmost to channel resources to programming.

30. In response to a query, the Chief Financial Officer, UNDP, highlighted that the high administrative costs of administering the 1 per cent levy for the resident coordinator system were largely a result of staff costs incurred when administering contributions received at headquarters, regional and country levels and then channelling them back to the United Nations Secretariat.

31. The Executive Board adopted decision 2021/16 on the UNDP structured funding dialogue.

## **V. Country programmes and related matters**

32. The Associate Administrator, UNDP, provided an overview of the country programme documents for Botswana, Cameroon, Comoros, Eritrea, Madagascar, Zimbabwe, Bangladesh, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Albania, and Guatemala; the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Gambia, Montenegro, Morocco, Niger, Sao Tome and Principe, South Sudan, and the Sudan; the first, two-year extension of the country programme for Djibouti; and the second, one-year extensions of the country programmes for Lebanon and Libya.

33. In turn, the regional directors for Africa, Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia and the Pacific, provided details from the regional perspective.

34. The Executive Board approved, in accordance with its decision 2014/7, the country programme documents for Botswana (DP/DCP/BWA/3), Cameroon (DP/DCP/CMR/4), Comoros (DP/DCP/COM/3), Eritrea (DP/DCP/ERI/4), Madagascar (DP/DCP/MDG/4), Zimbabwe (DP/DCP/ZWE/4), Bangladesh (DP/DCP/BGD/4), Lao People's Democratic Republic (DP/DCP/LAO/4), Albania (DP/DCP/ALB/3) and Guatemala (DP/DCP/GTM/4).

35. The Executive Board took note of the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for The Gambia, Montenegro, Morocco, Niger, Sao Tome and Principe, South Sudan, and the Sudan, as approved by the Administrator, and presented in document DP/2021/23.

36. The Executive Board approved the first, two-year extension of the country programme for Djibouti, and the second, one-year extensions of the country programmes for Lebanon and Libya, as presented in document DP/2021/23

## **UNFPA segment**

## **VI. UNFPA strategic plan, 2022-2025**

37. In her opening remarks ([available on the UNFPA website](#)), the UNFPA Executive Director stressed that the new UNFPA strategic plan, 2022-2025, (DP/FPA/2021/8) was ambitious, as called for by the urgency of the moment. It was important to accelerate progress towards the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action because recent events had shown how hard-won gains could be unwound in the face of crisis, with the COVID-19 pandemic taking a tremendous toll on women, girls, young people, and the most vulnerable communities. UNFPA had been focused on investing in health, family planning and education for a better future grounded in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the

Sustainable Development Goals. UNFPA had been working hard to protect and promote sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, achieve gender equality, fight gender-based violence, and help countries close the data gaps for informed decision-making. In doing so, it contributed to global efforts to address emerging trends, including demographic shifts, migration, rising inequalities, and the threat of climate change. In recognition and response to those challenges, UNFPA created its new strategic plan. The accompanying annexes detail how UNFPA planned to monitor and report on progress, the theory of change that underpinned the plan, the revised business model, and the global and regional programmes that supported the work of UNFPA in pursuit of the strategic plan results. The Executive Board members and Member States helped to co-create the new strategic plan, which would be operationalized in line with national policies and the principle of national ownership through the UNFPA country programme documents.

38. The Executive Director said that despite notable gains progress was still far too slow to meet the 2030 Agenda. The COVID-19 pandemic remained a pervasive threat to sustainable development. The new strategic plan was a call to action to finish the work of the ICPD Programme of Action and achieve the three transformative results. The new plan built on the lessons of the previous strategic plan, 2018-2021, the voluntary national commitments made during the twenty-fifth anniversary of the ICPD, and the COVID-19 response. In the new plan, UNFPA would: (a) prioritize protecting and promoting human rights, focused on those furthest behind; (b) ramp up partnerships, including with the private sector, civil society organizations, international financial institutions and the media, and through South-South and triangular cooperation; (c) move from funding to financing for development; (d) step up efforts to transform unequal gender power structures and harmful social norms and engage men and boys more in that effort; (e) mainstream resilience-building and adaptation and ensure complementarity among development, humanitarian and peace-responsive efforts, in line with its comparative advantages; and (f) strategically prioritize countries with the most urgent and, in some cases, unique needs.

39. The Executive Director underscored the Fund's commitment to United Nations reform as per the 2020 quadrennial comprehensive policy review to ensure coherent, effective support to Member States. UNFPA would continue to work at all levels to enhance inter-agency collaboration and contribute its expertise for enhanced programmatic results. It was focused on joint accountability to ensure country programmes were derived from the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks. UNFPA would continue to work toward greater use of common business operations for more efficient delivery of collective operational activities.

40. Internally, UNFPA continued to reinvigorate, reimagine and transform itself to become more agile, flexible and innovative while working to reduce its environmental footprint and broaden its partnerships to meet emerging demands, and in doing so, attract and retain high-calibre staff. Innovation and digitalization were the key accelerators of the three transformative results and in closing the digital gender gap. That included effectively and efficiently delivering high-quality supplies. The new Supply Chain Management Unit would help UNFPA to assume its leadership role in ensuring reproductive health commodity security. On the humanitarian front, UNFPA remained deeply engaged. It would continue to deliver its services in Afghanistan and defend the hard-won rights of Afghan women and girls, ensuring reproductive health services and supplies were accessible to all. UNFPA provided comparable humanitarian assistance in Haiti, Ethiopia, Myanmar and Lebanon and some 60 other countries with crises around the globe.

41. The Executive Director said UNFPA surpassed its resource targets for the previous four years. Still, the resources outlook for the remainder of 2021 was mixed. Reductions in official development assistance were hurting the UNFPA Supplies programme. Core resources projections for 2021-2022 were expected to be 2 per cent lower than in 2020. Though slightly

reduced, co-financing continued to form the largest share of overall revenue; more than 40 per cent of which was earmarked for humanitarian action this year. The UNFPA Individual Giving Campaign was helping to catalyse financing, while consistent, predictable core contributions remained the paramount goal. UNFPA was determined to work with partners to close the financing gap and called on the Board for its support in encouraging Member States to increase their funding to UNFPA. The Executive Director stressed that UNFPA was committed to expanding open dialogue on sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights.

42. Delegations commended UNFPA for the transparent and inclusive consultation process and dialogue with Board members and regional groups when developing the strategic plan, 2022-2025, which they said was detailed, comprehensive, ambitious and forward-looking. Board members strongly endorsed the new strategic plan and called on all members to follow suit. Delegations expressed support for the UNFPA transformation agenda to make it fit for purpose, agile, flexible and innovative in programme delivery and in leaving no one behind, and they supported UNFPA endeavours to expand its donor base and partnerships. They commended the Executive Director and UNFPA staff globally for their determination and progress in implementing the current strategic plan, 2018-2021, despite the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

43. One delegation, speaking on behalf of the Bureau of the Board, expressed appreciation that UNFPA had reflected strategic lessons learned from the current strategic plan, 2018-2021, towards achieving the three transformative results, and encouraged UNFPA to continue drawing lessons from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the attainment of the three transformative results as it implemented the new strategic plan, 2022-2025. They called on UNFPA to continue implementing the audit recommendations and the recommendations from the Advisory Committee on Audit and Budgetary Questions while strengthening its internal controls and oversight capacity.

44. A group of four delegations strongly welcomed the rights-based foundation of the new strategic plan and stressed that the UNFPA mandate came with a responsibility to advance human rights granted to all women and girls, in particular their sexual and reproductive health and rights, and they strongly supported the UNFPA intention to strengthen its normative work in all countries where it was present. The group expressed support for the organization's differentiated approach to prioritize support for countries that were lagging the most in achieving the three transformative results. They stressed that the three transformative results could not be achieved without effective humanitarian interventions and that UNFPA was well-positioned to bridge the gap between development and humanitarian action. They therefore supported increased investment in the UNFPA humanitarian response capacity.

45. A cross-regional group of delegations stressed that the strategic plan was an agency-owned document and that while it might not fully capture all concerns and priorities of the various Member States, it nevertheless served as a global framework that would enable UNFPA to best fulfil its mandate and support countries in delivering on their national development needs and priorities. The group strongly encouraged UNFPA to work in close cooperation with the other United Nations development system organizations to align its programming with the Cooperation Frameworks, in close consultation with Governments, to adequately respond to national needs and priorities.

46. Another group of delegations commended UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN-Women for identifying areas of joint engagement and for aligning their respective contributions to results achieved collectively, thereby making connections and complementarities visible and measurable, and contributing to a stronger, more effective United Nations development system. The group called on the four organizations to leverage their comparative advantages for coordinated and

effective system-wide collaboration through their agency-specific contributions to meet programme countries' needs under the effective coordination and leadership of the resident coordinator to achieve collective results more effectively and efficiently. They expected the four organizations, in light of their common and complementary indicators, to monitor and report on results achieved collectively, particularly in building capacities and creating enabling environments to achieve long-term development results from a system-wide perspective, based on the understanding of leveraging comparative advantages for greater coherence, efficiency and effectiveness. The group called on the four organizations to use the midterm review of their strategic plans to take stock of and adjust partnership modalities and agency-specific contributions in areas of joint engagement.

47. In other interventions, delegations stressed that in the new strategic plan UNFPA should prioritize the critical aspects of the ICPD Programme of Action, such as women and children living in extreme poverty, strategies for resilience, sustainable development, literacy and education, ensuring the right to access to reproductive health care services, improving maternal health, and reducing preventable maternal death. There was concern with the use of several non-consensual terms in the new strategic plan. Delegations underscored the importance of multilateralism and fully demonstrating the spirit of solidarity and cooperation, in jointly supporting the United Nations development system organizations to better adapt to the new situation created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

48. Other delegations welcomed the UNFPA lifecycle approach, which corresponded to demographic trends within countries. They acknowledged the importance of considering migration, asylum, refugees and displacement among the seven factors in leaving no one behind. They appreciated the new strategic plan's shift to include mental health issues, digitalization, climate change, demographic developments and provision of high-quality comprehensive sexual and reproductive health information and services as part of universal health coverage. It was stressed that health, including sexual and reproductive health, was a human right, and that the realization of universal health coverage was essential to protect the health of all people and ensure human security. There were calls for universal access to COVID-19 vaccines. A delegation called on UNFPA to continue to address population development, taking into account cultural and demographic changes, including declining birth rates and aging populations. They welcomed the plan to advance UNFPA humanitarian action and expand its humanitarian response, including positioning UNFPA as the lead gender-based violence coordinating agency and champion for the protection from sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment. They recognized the essential role of UNFPA supplies in humanitarian settings in protecting the most vulnerable.

49. In response, the UNFPA Executive Director said its new People Strategy would help UNFPA develop talent, build ladders for staff to advance and help retain staff. The Division of Human Resources would invite personnel to provide input and suggestions on how to function in the new working environment demanded by the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout that effort, UNFPA would remain a champion of diversity as it enhanced its field support and programmes in fragile contexts in light of COVID-19 disruptions so that it could continue to ensure 'last-mile' delivery of services and equitable distribution of essential sexual and reproductive health medicines, including through better forecasting. United Nations reforms were a major asset in the strategic plan, 2022-2025, and key in helping UNFPA remain ambitious in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. UNFPA actively engaged with United Nations development system organizations to develop common indicators fully aligned with the 2020 quadrennial comprehensive policy review. This would help UNFPA capture and publicize results, give visibility and advocate for its work, and thereby help it to expand its donor base.

50. The Executive Director said the UNFPA strategic plan, 2022-2025, was the framework for overall programming and gave UNFPA the flexibility to work under the guidance of national

priorities. The new plan aimed to reflect the diverse needs and priorities of the Board membership. While it did not constitute agreed language, the new strategic plan's operational parameters would always align with the principles of national ownership and be reflected in country programme documents as nationally determined and agreed. Ensuring 'no one is left behind' was central to the new plan and reflected a demographic population dynamic mega-trend that the Secretary-General identified as one of the big potential leverage points towards the 2030 Agenda. The three transformative results provided a clear focus, helped identify vulnerable populations and allowed UNFPA to work with them based on their needs. Similarly, investing in disaggregated data revealed those in danger of being left behind and helped UNFPA pre-position its services and supplies to be on the ground quickly and when needed. Further, its work to strengthen national early warning systems helped UNFPA, together with partners, to address the disproportionate impact of disparities on women, girls and vulnerable populations. From the perspective of climate change, the new strategic plan included a value proposition to address the climate impact on women, girls and young people and sexual and reproductive health, ultimately to build resilient health systems working closely with local communities in developing early warning and early action and with other United Nations organizations on adaptation. UNFPA would actively engage in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference (COP 26) and the Doha Development Round to mainstream gender and sexual and reproductive health perspectives.

51. The Executive Director noted that UNFPA pursued a flexible, tailored approach to its engagements with countries. It worked in high-fertility settings providing sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights services and supplies, helping countries to reap the benefits of the demographic dividend. It also assisted countries with aging societies. To address ageing demographics, regional offices were leading robust programming in support of older persons. That included the 2016 launch of low-fertility programmes and, in 2020, the opening of a dedicated office in Seoul for its global programme on aging and low fertility, in partnership with the World Health Organization and other United Nations entities, as part of the United Nations Decade of Healthy Aging, 2021-2030. In all its areas of work, UNFPA remained committed to delivering in quantifiable ways; it endorsed a 'zero tolerance' to all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment. During its Inter-agency Committee Championship on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment, UNFPA had increased the intensity of engagement in countries to lay out its strategic vision for ending sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment.

52. The Executive Board adopted decision 2021/17 on the UNFPA strategic plan, 2022-2025.

53. After the adoption of decision 2021/17, one delegation strongly stated the position that it did not consider the UNFPA strategic plan, 2022-2025, a negotiated document as it contained a number of non-internationally agreed terms. The delegation stressed that its agreeing to adopt the decision on item 6 did not imply its acceptance of the terms contained in the strategic plan, 2022-2025, which it said were not internationally agreed and not in conformity with its national laws and regulations.

## **VII. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters**

54. The UNFPA Executive Director presented the integrated budget, 2022-2025, (DP/FPA/2021/9) and the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the UNFPA integrated budget, 2022-2025 (DP/FPA/2021/12). In her remarks, she noted the new integrated budget was fully aligned with the UNFPA strategic focus on achieving the three transformative results by 2030 and was based on high-quality population data and evidence. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the integrated budget was marked by considerable uncertainty about factors affecting the Fund's work. Mindful of that challenge, UNFPA

endeavoured to set the strategic course for four years while staying nimble and realizing that course corrections might be necessary. As a result, the conservative income projections underlying the integrated budget were deliberately prudent while reflecting the ambitions of the new strategic plan. Those projections took into account the announcement of funding reductions by one major donor, as well as the re-engagement of another major donor. UNFPA was actively working to attract contributions in several areas, including United Nations pooled funds, financing from international financial institutions, such as multilateral development banks and the private sector.

55. The Executive Director said that the lion's share of integrated budget resources would be allocated to programmes in support of the achievement of the strategic plan outcomes and outputs. The gross institutional budget was proposed at \$839.9 million. While this was an increase compared to the mid-term review institutional budget of \$756.2 million, the proportion of total resources utilized for the institutional budget would decrease from 17.7 to 16.2 per cent, hence making more resources available for programmes. Key strategic investment areas included field leadership and operational support, investments in the Individual Giving programme, strengthened and decentralized human resources management, corporate partnerships and resource mobilization, and continued investments in the independent oversight functions. The institutional budget anticipated reductions over four years, stemming from the information and communications technology transformation project, cost classification realignments, and operating efficiencies, among others. The integrated budget envisaged 88 per cent of total resources would be spent in the field during 2022-2025. The Executive Director thanked the Advisory Committee for Administrative and Budgetary Questions for its report, and noted that most of the recommended reporting already took place, albeit in separate documents to the Executive Board. She appealed to Board members to bring to fruition the ambitions of the new strategic plan, as reflected in the integrated budget. She encouraged all partners to contribute multi-year core funding, the only fully flexible and responsive funding mechanism available to UNFPA.

56. In the sole intervention, a delegation supported the UNFPA planned resource allocations and its appeal for increased voluntary contributions to regular resources. The delegation sought clarity on how UNFPA calculated the 5 per cent increase in the allocation for United Nations development system coordination activities and inquired on the potential future cost savings from United Nations reform, which were not included in the integrated budget.

57. In response, the UNFPA Executive Director explained how UNFPA had devised income projections over the strategic plan period, 2022-2025, and increased the amount relative to the midterm review of the strategic plan, 2018-2021. UNFPA income projections for 2022-2025 did register an increase, compared to 2018-2021, but showed a slight decrease of 0.3 per cent, compared to actual levels for 2018-2021. In terms of actual contributions, therefore, UNFPA did not project growth in contributions for 2022-2025. While the pandemic and the budget cuts by Member States weighed negatively, UNFPA remained committed to attracting funding from a range of new sources. She stressed that in the strategic plan, 2022-2025, UNFPA sought to be ambitious while saving costs and being prudent, given the uncertainties arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, the ongoing economic crisis, and the effects of funding cuts. In that context, UNFPA placed a high priority on investing in staff capacities to serve, including in humanitarian settings, through its People Strategy, partnerships, relationship-building and data-driven learning.

58. The Executive Board adopted decision 2021/18 on the UNFPA integrated budget, 2022-2025.

## **VIII. Structured funding dialogue**

59. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) presented the report on the UNFPA structured funding dialogue, 2020-2021 (DP/FPA/2021/10), which was followed by a detailed presentation by the Chief, UNFPA Resource Mobilization Branch, focused on the resources needed to achieve the three transformative results as part of the UNFPA strategic plan, 2022-2025.

60. In the sole intervention, a delegation welcomed the improved format and harmonized approach UNFPA had taken in reporting on the structured funding dialogue. It noted the Fund's overall success in meeting the structured funding dialogue objectives and targets but expressed concern with the overall trend of declining core contributions within the United Nations system and the decline in contributors to regular resources. The delegation encouraged UNFPA to maintain its efforts to attract core resources. It also commended the Fund's positioning to leverage full support of its existing funding architecture to support the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and encouraged UNFPA to continue those efforts. The delegation expressed appreciation for its use of flexible funding modalities to mobilize timely humanitarian action at the outset of crises and in underfunded emergency responses.

61. In response, UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) highlighted the Fund's ongoing concern with the levels of core funding, including the sharp reduction in donors to regular resources. UNFPA was actively engaged with Member States and a diverse range of partners to attract and broaden its funding base.

62. The Chief, UNFPA Resource Mobilization Branch, said UNFPA was focused on communicating with Member States and all partners the importance of core funding and the unique impact of core resources in achieving results on the ground.

63. The Executive Board adopted decision 2021/19 on the UNFPA structured funding dialogue.

## **IX. Country programmes and related matters**

64. In her statement to the Board, the Deputy Executive Director (Programme) gave an overview of the country programme documents for Albania, Bangladesh, Botswana, Comoros, Guatemala, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Madagascar and Zimbabwe; the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for the Central African Republic, Chad, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Gambia, Iran, Mongolia, Morocco, Niger, Sao Tome and Principe, South Sudan and Sudan; and the second one-year extensions of the country programmes for Lebanon, Libya, Tajikistan and Zambia.

65. In turn, the regional directors for Asia and the Pacific, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, East and Southern Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean provided details from a regional perspective.

66. The Executive Board approved, per its decision 2014/7, the country programme documents for Albania (DP/FPA/CPD/ALB/5); Bangladesh (DP/FPA/CPD/BGD/10); Botswana (DP/FPA/CPD/BWA/7); Comoros (DP/FPA/CPD/COM/7); Guatemala (DP/FPA/CPD/GTM/8); the Lao People's Democratic Republic (DP/FPA/CPD/LAO/7); Madagascar (DP/FPA/CPD/MDG/8); and Zimbabwe (DP/FPA/CPD/ZWE/8).

67. The Executive Board approved the second one-year extensions of the country programmes for Lebanon, Libya, Tajikistan and Zambia, and took note of the first one-year extensions, approved by the UNFPA Executive Director, of the country programmes for the Central African Republic, Chad, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Gambia, Iran, Mongolia,

Morocco, Niger, Sao Tome and Principe, South Sudan and Sudan, as contained in document DP/FPA/2021/11.

## UNOPS segment

### X. UNOPS strategic plan, 2022-2025

### XI. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

68. In her opening remarks ([available on the UNOPS website](#)), the UNOPS Executive Director said the new UNOPS strategic plan, 2022-2025, responded to the urgent need for new approaches, renewed ambition, and robust action to address the immense scale of needs and demands of the moment. The new plan set out UNOPS ambitions to help build a better future and support national priorities to deliver at scale on the Sustainable Development Goals. UNOPS work, she stressed, was based on partnerships and UNOPS was intent on building on its successes to date to refine the quality of its services. She drew attention to UNOPS work on the COVID-19 pandemic, the new strategic plan, 2022-2025, the importance of quality infrastructure, public procurement, the Sustainable Investments in Infrastructure and Innovation (S3i) initiative, its organizational priorities, and its business model.

69. The Executive Director paid homage to the eight UNOPS colleagues who had lost their lives due to COVID-19. She commended UNOPS staff across the globe who continued to work in extreme and unpredictable situations to assist countries and communities – delivering vital health infrastructure and strengthening health systems, procuring medical supplies and equipment, and supporting vaccination roll-out. UNOPS was determined to redouble its efforts to tackle the pandemic and the inequalities it had exacerbated. The new strategic plan, she said, was the blueprint for action and was firmly rooted in UNOPS mandate, the current global context, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. That included lessons from the COVID-19 and climate change emergencies. It focused on how UNOPS could better support national priorities and further strengthen national capacities to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, including by bridging the financing gap and reducing inequalities. Three areas were at the core of the new strategic plan: quality infrastructure, improved public procurement, and the S3i initiative.

70. The Executive Director said that infrastructure offered vast possibilities. It helped countries get back on track to meet the Sustainable Development Goals, mitigate and adapt to climate change, and accelerate pandemic recovery. In the face of the climate emergency, more than ever infrastructure had to be sustainable, resilient and inclusive. She highlighted UNOPS collaborative research with the University of Oxford and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) on the influence of infrastructure in addressing climate change and in achieving the Paris Climate Agreement. Scale was key for successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda and public procurement played a vital role by accelerating the shift to low-carbon economies, recovering from the pandemic's socioeconomic impact, tackling corruption and reducing inequality. UNOPS worked to support national and local institutions to tackle corruption, build better public services and accelerate progress towards the Goals at scale while saving millions of dollars, which could in turn be invested in national priorities. She stressed that increasing private sector investment was crucial in bringing initiatives to scale, a challenge the S3i initiative took on. By facilitating public and private finance to large scale infrastructure projects and making UNOPS seed investments where necessary, S3i helped address critical national needs in affordable housing, renewable energy and health.

71. The Executive Director said that throughout its work UNOPS was committed to human rights, gender equality, diversity, inclusion and the most vulnerable. She highlighted that UNOPS has achieved gender parity internally and was committed to broadening its approach to expand diversity and inclusion. And to bolster its self-financing business model, the new strategic plan

would continue to focus on digitalization to ensure systems and processes were optimized and fit-for-purpose. It would drive efficiencies and transparency while UNOPS continued to prudently manage its finances, in accordance with the recent Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) review of UNOPS.

72. Overall, Board members strongly endorsed the new strategic plan, 2022-2025, and expressed appreciation for the extensive consultations organized with Member States during its preparation. They recognized that the new plan was fully aligned with the 2020 quadrennial review and broader United Nations reform efforts. They reiterated their support for UNOPS unique self-financing, demand-driven business model; mandate in climate-resilient infrastructure, sustainable procurement, and project management; and ability to address unexpected challenges such as COVID-19 through innovation. They recognized UNOPS readiness and ability to work and reach the most vulnerable and unreachable in remote areas and fragile settings. They expressed their continuing support for UNOPS private sector collaboration and public-private partnerships as drivers for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and welcomed the continued rise in demand for UNOPS services.

73. A delegation, speaking on behalf of the Bureau of the Board, welcomed and strongly endorsed the new strategic plan, 2022-2025, which embodied the ambition and drive with which UNOPS delivered on its mandate to expand the capacity of countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals through its unique self-financing, demand-driven business model. They underscored UNOPS important contribution in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and expressed appreciation for UNOPS attention to the needs of vulnerable groups and the specific issues facing middle-income countries. The group welcomed the new strategic plan's focus on quality infrastructure and public procurement, enhancing infrastructure investments, particularly in the digital realm as essential for sustainable, resilient recovery. They stressed that UNOPS needed to ensure its infrastructure projects adhered to the highest international norms and standards and they expressed support for UNOPS continued pursuit of quality and innovation in its work and efforts at realizing efficiency gains, including through joint procurement.

74. A cross-regional group of delegations welcomed and strongly endorsed the new strategic plan, 2022-2025. They recognized that the new strategic plan was an agency-owned document that did not fully capture all concerns and priorities of the various Member States. They nevertheless stressed that the plan served as a global framework that would enable UNOPS to best fulfil its mandate and support countries in delivering on their national development needs and priorities. The group strongly encouraged UNOPS to work in close cooperation with United Nations organizations to align programming with the country-specific Cooperation Frameworks, in close consultation with national Governments, to adequately respond to country needs and priorities. They stressed the need to develop new approaches to overcome current and future obstacles to achieving the 2030 Agenda and building back better.

75. In other interventions, delegations drew attention to UNOPS response and recovery work and efforts to build resilience to climate change, while underscoring the importance of multilateralism and international cooperation. They expected UNOPS to continue to work with the COVAX facility to help countries procure medical supplies, promote investments in health infrastructure, and strengthen health care systems. In that effort, UNOPS should continue to strengthen its cooperation with Member States, United Nations organizations and other partners. They called on UNOPS to continue to respond to the growing demand to help vulnerable and least developed countries strengthen quality infrastructure, financing and procurement, especially in education, health and digitalization, as well as in ensuring fair, equitable, transparent public procurement. They welcomed and sought details on UNOPS evidence-based approach to infrastructure and its plans to shift from direct support to capacity strengthening. They encouraged UNOPS to continue to mainstream gender in its investment decisions so that women and girls could reap the benefits. They drew attention to UNOPS work in affordable housing, including in densely populated urban areas, and in renewable energy through its S3i initiative and its

channelling of private and public sector investments in social and environmental impact projects and in job creation for youth.

76. Other delegations highlighted the transformational impact of UNOPS work that put countries in a better position to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Noting that the new strategic plan responded to the anticipated rise in demand for UNOPS services, they called on UNOPS to explore ways to rapidly systematize climate screening and climate-friendly approaches and accelerate incorporation of critical social safeguards in all its work, including against sexual exploitation and abuse. They emphasized the importance of the social, environmental, human rights and gender dimensions, which they said should not be seen as implementation indicators but as policy priorities. They welcomed and underscored the centrality of United Nations development system reform in the new strategic plan and the need for UNOPS to continue to engage with United Nations entities to ensure reform implementation, including through a division of labour on the ground, which would optimize UNOPS work on infrastructure. They strongly encouraged increased synergies and cooperation between United Nations organizations to implement a solid One-UN approach to ensure an efficient, effective collective response. They welcomed the recent MOPAN assessment of UNOPS and expected UNOPS response to include plans to address areas identified for improvement.

77. In response, the UNOPS Executive Director underscored UNOPS commitment to aligning all its work with nationally defined priorities and needs according to the principles of national ownership. UNOPS was also committed to United Nations development system reform and working closely with other United Nations organizations at the regional and country levels based on its comparative advantages and value-added. UNOPS was deeply engaged with United Nations development system mechanisms to better align inter-agency work and expand standardized approaches. She said the experience of flexible delivery and innovation approaches in response to the COVID-19 pandemic had fed into the new strategic plan, 2022-2025. In developing the new plan, UNOPS was guided by the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda adopted at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development. UNOPS developed the three pillars of its new strategic plan with the aim of ensuring greater impact and continued high quality services in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. That included placing social and environmental dimensions, including on gender and gender parity, at the heart of the new plan. The Executive Director said that while it had embarked on an ambitious programme to report on climate and social indicators transparently through the Global Reporting Initiative, UNOPS was committed to a deeper analysis showing its 'green' approach to quality infrastructure and its health and safety initiative to ensure safe project sites. UNOPS was prepared to work with Member States to address the recommendations of the MOPAN assessment.

78. The Director, Implementation Practices and Standards, UNOPS, said UNOPS was working with the United Nations system to capitalize on each organization's comparative advantages in advancing the delivery of sustainable resilience and infrastructure. Examples included UNOPS partnering with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs on important aspects of infrastructure asset management to improve the quality of infrastructure and services from design to decommissioning. Another was UNOPS work supporting climate resilience in collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the University of Oxford. Such activities allowed UNOPS to design tangible projects, explore potential investments and help partners identify funding opportunities through sustainable infrastructure financing that in turn helped finance infrastructure investments that were resilient, sustainable and inclusive. He said the UNOPS evidence-based approach to infrastructure development relied on data and fact-based planning to inform decision-making by considering climate change and potential shocks to infrastructure with the understanding that infrastructure operated in the context of society, economy and environment. UNOPS prioritized an inclusive approach to decision-making that relied not only on engineers and finances but also gender, diversity and environmental experts and most importantly the community and people UNOPS

served. It was aligned to long-term national infrastructure plans, anchored within the nationally determined development vision, so that Governments could efficiently use existing assets or prioritize new projects and effectively use scarce, financial resources to deliver maximum social economic benefits to communities and people.

79. The Chief Executive, UNOPS Sustainable Investments in Infrastructure and Innovation (S3i) Initiative, stressed that quality was paramount in the three pillars of UNOPS work: affordable housing, renewable energy, and health infrastructure. When identifying partners, UNOPS focused first and foremost on quality in all aspects of its work, which was central to its commitment to Governments and to the communities and people it served.

80. The Executive Board adopted decision 2021/20 on the UNOPS strategic plan, 2022-2025.

81. The Executive Board adopted decision 2021/21 on the UNOPS budget estimates for the biennium 2022-2023 and annual statistical report on United Nations procurement, 2020.

## **I. Organizational matters (continued)**

82. Following the adoption of decisions, delegations reiterated their appreciation for the well-organized, constructive consultation process in the run-up to the formal presentations of the three organizations' strategic plans, 2022-2025.

83. A delegation encouraged Member States to practice flexibility during decision negotiations to facilitate consensus. It also requested that the Board revisit the planning of informal meetings to foster efficiency, allow time for adequate discussions, and also consider workloads of delegations. The delegation inquired about the selection process for decision facilitators, encouraged equitable geographical distribution, and stressed the importance of transparency.

84. In response, the Deputy Secretary of the Board said that session work plans were guided by the standing agenda items as mandated by the Board and its relevant decisions as well as by its rules of procedure. Consultations and briefings were determined by the formal agenda items, with each item typically accompanied by an informal consultation in advance of the formal session of the Board. Board members and observers could also request briefings on topics of interest. The Bureau of the Board reviewed the list of informal consultations and briefings, after which they were circulated to the Board and observers and posted on the Executive Board Secretariat website.

85. The President of the Executive Board clarified that facilitators were nominated by the regional groups of the Board. She emphasized that all efforts were always made to ensure equitable geographic representation of facilitators, including a concerted push for equal regional distribution for the second regular session 2021. She highlighted that the process in developing the strategic plans, 2022-2025, was lengthy and benefitted from over 68 informal consultations, 20 of which were dedicated to strategic plan discussions, without counting the regional consultations and decision negotiations. She stressed that the consensual adoption of decisions on the strategic plans at the session was proof there was more that united than divided Member States.