

*ECOSOC Operational Activities for Development Segment
Dialogue with Heads of UN Funds and Programmes
22 February 2016*

Mr. Vice-President,

Distinguished Members of the Economic and Social Council,

Colleagues and friends,

I am pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin, Executive Director of UNFPA.

Agenda 2030 presents us with a unique opportunity, and responsibility, to work together for a world of equality and inclusion, better health, education and sustainability.

As we strive to meet the Global Goals, the world is experiencing major demographic transformations ranging from population growth, with a large youth component, and increasing ageing, urbanization and migration. We are faced with a collective challenge to empower and enable all people to achieve their potential, sustain inclusive economic growth while safeguarding the environment and managing climate change.

Agenda 2030 reaffirms the recognition in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development that human beings must be at the center of sustainable development, with a focus on women, young people and vulnerable groups, leaving no one behind. UNFPA will sharpen its strategic focus on sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights; and together with partners, we will continue to support countries to achieve universal access to sexual and reproductive health, a key target under SDG 3.

Full implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action both calls upon - and enables - countries to accelerate progress towards sustainable development. It makes the connections between population dynamics, sexual reproductive health and reproductive rights, migration, human rights and climate change, and provides concrete recommendations to reduce vulnerabilities and protect the most marginalized.

Mr. Vice President,

Agenda 2030 underlines the important role and comparative advantage of the "adequately resourced, relevant, effective and efficient UN System". The 2016 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review is therefore an opportunity for UN Member States to provide strategic guidance to the UN System to operationalize Agenda 2030 to achieve the change envisioned.

UNFPA advocates for the QCPR to be strategic, inclusive, focused on substantive and operational outcomes - with less emphasis on processes and systems. The QCPR should mandate the UN system to operationalize and be guided by the five underpinning principles of Agenda 2030 – namely universality, integration, human rights, equality and the data revolution.

Data is of particular importance because the people we need to reach most are the very ones we know the least about. The data revolution and the promise of new technologies to collect, analyze and visualize data have particular significance for how UNFPA delivers on its mandate. We will enhance our standing as a center of excellence in data for development. We will harness the data revolution in order to strengthen national data ecosystems that will provide a structured basis for decision making. These ecosystems, with human rights at the core, will include vital statistics such as birth, marriage and civil registration data to ensure that every individual has a legal status that enables him or her to seek and to exercise their rights.

We will also build on our over 45-year-partnership with national statistical authorities, and, through partnership with the private sector and civil society, to foster and promote innovation.

Measuring progress in achieving the SDGs will require a steady flow of high-quality, disaggregated, timely, authoritative and accessible data. To this end, UNFPA will facilitate partnerships to build data capacity within countries. We will support the establishment of costed roadmaps for national data ecosystems to enable the decision-making of development actors. We will implement the UNFPA Census 2020 Strategy providing “on-call” technical support to governments for the generation and use of geo-referenced census findings, including for SDG reporting. And, we will support regional centres of research excellence to strengthen capacity for sub-national analysis of population data to identify and monitor progress in redressing inequalities in key dimensions of health and well-being. As a result of these initiatives, Member States will be in a stronger position to ensure that “no one is left behind.”

On human rights, the rights of individual women, men and young people underpin the ICPD Programme of Action, guide UNFPA’s work and must be the cornerstone of the SDGs as there can be no development without human rights.

Putting rights up front for UNFPA means reaching the poorest, most marginalized 10-year-old girl ensuring that she stays in school; she is protected from violence, early marriage and other harmful practices; she has access to reproductive health information; and, that she is equipped with choices and opportunities to reach her full potential. When achieved, it means that she and millions like her, along with their brothers, grow up empowered, educated, and healthy and can be the drivers of a more sustainable future.

With the largest youth generation in history, it is time to invest in young people if we are to realize the ambitious Agenda 2030. UNFPA will continue to stand by the world’s

young people, particularly the most marginalized adolescent girls, and promote their access to youth-friendly services and information, to education and skills development opportunities, and to have a voice in decisions affecting them and their societies.

Through the analyses of population structures and poverty dynamics, UNFPA advocates for increased social investments in education and health – especially sexual and reproductive health – and employment for adolescents and youth. This is particularly important for disadvantaged girls. Investing in young people has the potential to influence the age structure of the population and generate a demographic dividend with a subsequent increase in economic growth.

Mr. Vice-President,

I would now like to turn your attention to what UNFPA views as the critical enablers and elements to support SDG achievement.

Let me start with **partnerships**. Results achieved by UNFPA were made possible only through engaging a broad set of partners. As the SDGs further raise the bar, requiring the UN system to step up and accelerate interventions, UNFPA is looking at how to leverage partnerships even more strategically, especially with the private sector.

Just by way of a few examples: we are working with mobile telecommunications companies to track medicine and contraceptive stocks and the spread of diseases. We are also working with a multinational consumer goods corporation¹ to strengthen in-country supply chain management, and with a major electronics, healthcare and lighting global company² on community life centers in Africa to deliver safe maternal and newborn health services. And, we are scaling up these interventions, and with greater focus on adolescents.

We will examine how we can build, together with the rest of the UN development system, multi-stakeholder networks to increase the availability and use of integrated sexual and reproductive health services, especially for youth and adolescents.

Together we need to ensure adequate and appropriate funding for the functions of the UN development system. Funding must incentivize and support greater integration, including across development and humanitarian work. The sustainability, flexibility and predictability of funding is critical for the UN system to successfully perform its functions, deliver results and ensure greater impact.

Business as usual is not an option, especially in middle-income countries, because of changing demands and evolved capacities. Recognizing these transformations early on, UNFPA's new business model - as part of the Strategic Plan 2014-2017 - makes a

¹ Unilever

² Philips

distinction between programme countries in terms of their needs and ability to finance development.

UNFPA is also promoting South-South and Triangular Cooperation for the implementation of the ICPD agenda. This has supported countries to share experience and know-how in areas such as censuses, expanding access to SRH services, preventing and responding to gender-based violence and increasing youth participation.

Mr. Vice-President,

Through the current QCPR, the UN system made important progress in streamlining common operations. A number of robust efforts have focused on the consolidation of operational capacities and harmonization and simplification of business processes. Indeed, we have come to fully appreciate, as mentioned by Helen Clark—that inter-organizational diversity is a source of strength. We are moving forward in recognizing each other's business processes. This mutual acceptance is a tenet that could be considered as part of the emerging QCPR and, as a consequence, a pillar of operational elements behind the 2030 Agenda.

In addition to this approach, which capitalizes on the comparative and collaborative advantages of our organizations, UNFPA has supported and led inter-agency coherence within the scope of the UNDG and the CEB, particularly the design and implementation of the Standard Operating Procedures, the Business Operations Strategy and the roll-out of in-country support service consolidation. An example is the Joint Operations Facility in Brazil. UNFPA has also coordinated common initiatives on behalf of the System such as the UN common accountability and oversight model, and has taken an active role in other system-wide initiatives, such as the International Aid Transparency Initiative and the definition of common data-sharing standards. UNFPA also coordinates key inter-agency projects to promote organizational effectiveness and is fully behind joint efforts to consolidate select business processes in shared service centers.

Another critical factor that we would wish to see become a guiding principle of the new QCPR is innovation. UNFPA is committed to bringing out-of-the-box solutions to the table in order to eliminate duplication, reduce costs and improve the quality of services.

Mr. Vice-President,

The Secretary-General, in his latest report on QCPR, calls upon the UN system to move beyond coherence and coordination towards a truly integrated response to achieve the SDGs.

Delivering together is not - and should not - be about mechanical processes, but about what really makes a difference.

When the UN speaks with One Voice, and does so on difficult issues, we are sometimes the only voice – and people listen. When we deliver as one, we can do more, we can do better, and we can deliver on our promises to the people we serve.

I thank you.

