

REFERENCE: EOSG/SLA/2025/5

Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

The Secretariat of the United Nations presents its compliments to the Permanent and Observer Missions to the United Nations and has the honour to request the nomination of candidates for the position of Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). This position is at the Under-Secretary-General level and is based in New York, USA.

The Executive Director of UNFPA is a member of the Secretary-General's [Senior Management Group](#), and serves as a role model for the United Nations Values (Inclusion, Integrity, Humility and Humanity) and Behaviours Framework (Connect and Collaborate; Analyse and Plan; Deliver Results with Positive Impact; Learn and Develop; Adapt and Innovate), and the desired behaviours of the [United Nations System Leadership Framework](#).

Background

Established by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 1973 and reaffirmed in 1993, UNFPA is the United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency responsible for delivering a world where every pregnancy is intended, every childbirth is safe and where the potential of every young person is fulfilled. Guided by the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), UNFPA focuses on three transformative results: end preventable maternal deaths; end unmet need for family planning; and end gender-based violence and harmful practices. Working with partners in more than 150 countries, across development and humanitarian contexts, UNFPA programmes are informed by data and evidence and human rights.

UNFPA receives overall policy guidance from the General Assembly and ECOSOC. It reports to its governing body, the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNFPA and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), on administrative, financial and programme matters.

In accordance with resolution A/RES/64/219 of 21 December 2009, the Executive Director of UNFPA shall be appointed by the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, for a term of four years. Additional information on the Executive Director of UNFPA is available on the following website:

<https://www.unfpa.org/>

Call for nominations and closing date

The Secretariat welcomes nominations to supplement the Secretary-General's search and consultations and would especially welcome the nomination of women candidates.

In accordance with the policy for the nomination of candidates of 11 December 2012 entitled, Policy on Human Rights Screening of United Nations Personnel, the Secretariat wishes to outline that it is the responsibility of the nominating Government to ensure that each candidate it nominates has not been convicted of or is not currently under investigation or being prosecuted for, any criminal offence, or any violation of international human rights law or international humanitarian law. In the case of nominees who have been investigated for, charged with, or prosecuted for any criminal offence, but were not convicted, the nominating Government is requested to provide information regarding the investigation(s) or prosecution(s) concerned.

The nominating Government is also requested to certify that it is not aware of any allegations against its nominated candidate, and that they have not been involved, by act or omission, in the commission of any acts that amount to violations of international human rights law or international humanitarian law.

Nominations must be submitted through the link to the Senior Leadership Vacancies online form located at the following web address: <https://www.un.org/sg/en/vacancies/index.shtml> by Monday, 2 June 2025 (midnight New York time).

All nominations will be treated with the strictest confidence, and short-listed candidates will be contacted directly to undergo an assessment process, reference and background checks, including human rights and conflicts of interest screening.

Duties and Responsibilities

The Executive Director provides strategic and visionary leadership for UNFPA, guiding the efforts of the organization to address the world's most pressing population and development challenges. This pivotal role demands strategic foresight to navigate emerging global issues and drive transformative initiatives to accelerate progress. The Executive Director directly supports the Secretary-General in advancing United Nations system reforms and advances essential institutional changes within UNFPA, ensuring the organization remains fit-for-purpose and can respond to an evolving development and humanitarian landscape. As a member of the Secretary-General's Senior Management Group, as well as of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG), the Executive Director contributes to strategic coherence across the United Nations system, contributing to the implementation of system-wide policies and initiatives. This role requires the Executive Director to serve as a powerful advocate for the UNFPA mandate on the global stage, engaging with governments, civil society, the private sector, philanthropy, and other key stakeholders. The position requires an inspirational and visionary leader with exceptional diplomatic acumen, political astuteness and a proven ability to manage large organizations and mobilize resources effectively on a global scale, including during challenging times.

1. Strategic Leadership and Vision: Formulating and Implementing the UNFPA Global Strategy in Alignment with Development Goals
 - Oversee the formulation, refinement, finalization and implementation of the strategic plans of UNFPA, ensuring alignment with the ICPD Programme of Action, the SDGs and the evolving global context.
 - Exercise strategic foresight to navigate geopolitical dynamics, foster a culture of innovation, adaptation, transparency and organizational resilience and guide the UNFPA response to global challenges and opportunities.
 - Provide intellectual leadership to promote new approaches and integrated action, encouraging collaboration across sectors, including the humanitarian-development-peace continuum.
 - Champion human rights and promote rights-based interventions that advance the ICPD Programme of Action.
 - Promote gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights as key pillars of sustainable development, supporting programmatic efforts to achieve lasting change and impact.
2. Programmatic Leadership and Impact: Driving Evidence-Based Interventions Protecting and Empowering Vulnerable Populations
 - Provide overall programmatic direction to the core mandate areas of UNFPA, ensuring the design, implementation and evaluation of effective, evidence-based interventions that protect and empower women, young people and marginalized populations, driving progress towards results.
 - Ensure the integration of population dynamics within sustainable development and humanitarian activities, promoting evidence-informed programming, policy advocacy, and partnerships.
 - Direct the UNFPA global humanitarian response, ensuring the effective and principled delivery of services and the protection of affected populations in crisis settings.
3. Resource Mobilization and Strategic Partnerships: Securing the Financial Sustainability of UNFPA and Building Collaborative Alliances
 - As part of a shift from funding to, funding *and* financing, develop and implement comprehensive resource mobilization strategies to diversify funding sources and strengthen the financial sustainability of UNFPA, securing funding from government donors, the private sector, foundations, individual philanthropists and innovative financing mechanisms.

- Cultivate strategic partnerships with State and non-State actors, engaging with Member States, building consensus on UNFPA mandate areas, and fostering an environment for political and financial support.
 - Navigate international development and humanitarian arenas, fostering collaboration, and building relationships across stakeholder groups.
 - Represent UNFPA in international, intergovernmental and inter-agency fora, articulating the organization's strategic vision, advocating for its policy priorities and communicating its global role.
4. Organizational Excellence and Operational Effectiveness: Directing UNFPA Resources and Operations Ensuring Accountability and Continuous Improvement
- Direct UNFPA resources and operations, setting standards for accountability, value for money and risk management, ensuring sound financial management and promoting continuous improvement in organizational effectiveness.
 - Lead organizational change initiatives to enhance the performance and agility of UNFPA and its capacity to deliver on its mandate; advance flexible organizational structures that adapt to rapidly changing needs and emerging challenges; and shape innovative organizational models that amplify the agency's overall agility and responsiveness in a dynamic global environment.
 - Foster a culture of adaptation throughout the organization, developing internal capacity, implementing systems and processes and ensuring alignment with organizational objectives.
 - Provide strategic oversight of UNFPA human resources, fostering a diverse and inclusive workforce and promoting a collaborative working environment.
5. United Nations System Reforms and Inter-Agency Collaboration: Contributing to a more effective, efficient and accountable United Nations system
- Provide advice and support to the United Nations Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General/UNSDG Chair in advancing United Nations system reforms, and more collaborative working methods with the wider United Nations system, in both development and humanitarian fora and settings, and contributing to the effectiveness of the Organization.
 - Guide institutional and systemic changes within UNFPA, in accordance with General Assembly mandates and with the strategic guidance of the Secretary-General, supporting national leadership and ownership and contributing to a more effective United Nations system.

Education, Skills and Expertise

The Secretary-General is seeking an individual with the following attributes:

- Demonstrated leadership experience with strategic vision and proven skills in leading and managing complex organizations, such as intergovernmental, international non-governmental or multinational private sector entities; including experience in leading large-scale organizational change initiatives and fostering a culture of innovation and accountability;
- Proven track record of successful resource mobilization and strategic partnership development, including demonstrable experience in engaging with non-traditional donors, such as the private sector and philanthropic organizations, and a substantial track record of diversified resource mobilization at a high level;
- Exceptional political and diplomatic skills, with proven experience engaging with Heads of State, high-level government officials and international stakeholders;
- Strong financial management and accountability experience, with a commitment to transparency and ethical practices and zero tolerance for any form of wrongdoing, fraud and corruption, along with a strong record on protecting against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment;
- Demonstrated expertise in population dynamics, sexual and reproductive health and rights and gender equality; with a deep understanding of the relevant global frameworks, policies and evidence-based interventions;
- Demonstrated intellectual leadership, creativity and proven ability to transform organizations, incubate new ideas and lead on new ways of working across silos and at the Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus in addressing the drivers of conflict, humanitarian action and developing effective institutions, capacities and resilience in a complementary and synergetic way for inclusive sustainable development and lasting peace;
- Proven track record of change management and accomplishments at the regional, national or international level with strong resource mobilization, political and diplomatic skills;
- Demonstrated ability to work harmoniously in a multicultural team and establish harmonious and effective working relationships both within and outside the organization;
- Proven ability to inspire, encourage, build trust and confidence and also build consensus, stimulate effective campaigns and drive collective action among a broad spectrum of people and organizations;
- High commitment to the values and guiding principles of the United Nations and good understanding of the United Nations system, including peacekeeping, human rights, humanitarian and development settings and challenges.

Languages

English and French are the working languages of the United Nations. For this position, fluency in English is required. A working knowledge of French or other United Nations official language will be an advantage.

Human rights screening

In accordance with the policy for the nomination of candidates, the Secretariat wishes to outline that it is the responsibility of the nominating Government to ensure that each candidate it nominates has not been convicted of or is not currently under investigation or being prosecuted for any criminal offence, including sexual exploitation and abuse, or any violation of international human rights law or international humanitarian law. In the case of nominees who have been investigated for, charged with or prosecuted for any criminal offence, but were not convicted, the nominating Government is requested to provide information regarding the investigation(s) or prosecution(s) concerned. The nominating Government is also requested to certify that it is not aware of any allegation(s) against its nominated candidate that they have been involved, by act or omission, in the commission of any act(s) that amount to a criminal offence, including sexual exploitation and abuse, or violations of international human rights law or international humanitarian law.

Individuals who are either nominated by Member States or who seek to serve with the United Nations in any individual capacity will be required, if short-listed, to complete a self-attestation stating that they have not committed, been convicted of, nor prosecuted for, any criminal offence, including sexual exploitation and abuse, and have not been involved, by act or omission, in the commission of any violation of international human rights law or international humanitarian law, including sexual exploitation and abuse.

Conflicts of interest screening

All United Nations staff members are expected to uphold the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. Senior leaders in particular, have the responsibility to serve as role models in upholding the Organization's ethical standards.

A conflict of interest occurs when, by act or omission, a staff member's personal interests interfere with the performance of their official duties and responsibilities, or call into question their integrity, independence and impartiality. Risk for conflicts of interest may arise from a staff member's engagement in outside (non-United Nations) employment or occupation; outside activities, including political activities; receipt of gifts, honours, awards, favours or remuneration from external (non-United Nations) sources; or personal investment. In particular, no staff member shall accept any honour, decoration, favour, gift or remuneration from any Government (Staff Regulation 1.2 (j)).

Where a real or perceived conflict of interest does arise, senior leaders are obligated to disclose this to the Organization without delay. In order to avoid real or perceived family influence or preferential treatment and conflicts of interest that could stem from such situations, the United Nations Staff Rules provide that appointments "shall not be granted to anyone who is the father, mother, son, daughter, brother or sister of a staff member" (Staff Rule 4.7 (a)).

Short-listed individuals will be required to complete a pre-appointment declaration of interests for senior positions to identify possible conflicts of interest that may arise and to proactively prevent and manage, as much as possible and in a timely manner, situations in which personal interests may conflict, or appear to conflict, with the interests of the United Nations, should the individual be appointed to this position.

The Secretariat of the United Nations takes this opportunity of reiterating to the Permanent and Observer Missions to the United Nations the assurances of its highest consideration.

22 April 2025