Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS

First Regular Session 2014

Item 6:

I. Joint UNFPA-UNICEF Evaluation of the Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (2008-2012)

Statement by Kate Gilmore
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Tuesday 28 January 2014
Monsieur Le Président,
Mesdames et Messieurs les Représentants au Conseil d’Administration,
Mesdames, Messieurs,

I would like to reiterate our welcome to Ms Andrea Cook, Director of the UNFPA Evaluation Office, and thank her for presenting the main results and recommendations of the Joint UNFPA-UNICEF Evaluation of the Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting. Let me use this opportunity to congratulate her on her appointment.

I will now briefly summarize the Management Response to this presentation.

I - Joint UNFPA-UNICEF evaluation of the joint UNFPA-UNICEF programme on Female Genital Mutilation and Cutting
Monsieur le Président,

We thank the evaluation offices of UNFPA and UNICEF, the joint evaluation management group and the external experts whose work together has gifted us with this important evaluation and recommendations. I am pleased to advise that our two agencies have accepted the majority of the Evaluation’s nine recommendations and have already begun the necessary implementation of key aspects of these.

Monsieur Le President,

As recommended by the evaluation, the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on FGM/C has entered its second Phase as of 1st January 2014, with continuity assured until 2017.
This next period will support the implementation of resolution 67/146 on *Intensifying global efforts for the elimination of female genital mutilations*, adopted during the United Nations General Assembly in December 2012. Indeed, the International Conference on FGM/C held in Rome in October 2013, organised by UNFPA and UNICEF and hosted by the government of Italy, reaffirmed high-level political commitment to the ending of FGM/C and set out agreement on the programmatic elements that the Joint Programme will be pursued in Phase II.

Phase II will build on the strengths and success stories of the first Phase. We will continue work to strengthen the capacity of governments and civil society organizations to pursue the abandonment of the practice of FGM/C. In order to engage government and other partners further, National launches of Phase II of the Joint Programme will be organised in the 17 countries where activities are implemented. We are placing particular emphasis in the roll out of Phase II on deepening engagement with local communities and with local advocates.

UNFPA and UNICEF will continue promoting culturally sensitivity and respect for human rights as the building blocks of the Joint Programme’s approach and advance the good working relationship between our two agencies, at global as well as at country level.

In this next phase, regional cooperation will also be strengthened through a more proactive role for regional partners and our Regional Offices which this year are preparing FGM/C related annual work plans for the first time and the key driver for this addition is the need to identify, better engage and assess the influence of cross-community and cross-border dynamics.
Monsieur Le President,

I am pleased to report that discussions are underway with donor countries to secure greater predictability in the funds allocated to the Joint Programme on FGM/C. We are very grateful to the governments of Norway, the United Kingdom, Spain, and Ireland who have already committed to support Phase II and have already allocated substantial funds for this next phase of the Joint Programme. And, naturally, would welcome very much additional contributions and commitment to support of this critical work in protection of women’s and girl’s human rights.

At national level, country partners to the programme are being encouraged to write Annual Work Plans (AWP) that will now cover a 2-year rather than one year cycle. And in the interest of holistic responses, we will ensure that there is due integration of effort towards abandonment of FGM/C into our relevant country programmes more broadly.

Regarding recommendation 8 on the need for UNFPA and UNICEF to improve our coordination efforts at global, regional and country level, this recommendation is only partially accepted based on the fact that the Joint Programme cannot control all implications derived from the existing financial systems of both agencies. It is also one of the reasons why the Phase II intends to engage Regional Offices even more in order to improve the institutional integration of FGM/C as part or regional and country programmes.
These planning as well regional and local leveraging steps will be bolstered by further work in Phase II on monitoring and reporting and — under benefit of our new strategic plan - on assessing how our theories of change about how best to promote individual and collection behavioural change connect to actual impact delivered for the millions of girls who face the human rights violation that is FGM/C and the millions and millions of women who then live with this suffering — with rights denied - throughout their lives.

**Monsieur Le President,**

Thank you for the opportunity to present to the UNFPA Executive Board the Management Response to this important evaluation. It is our sincere belief that thanks to the Evaluation’s findings Phase II is now a critical opportunity to strengthen the Joint Programme even further.

Merci, Monsieur Le President.