Second Regular Session of the Executive Board of
UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS on UNFPA Country Programmes

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UN Headquarters, ECOSOC Chamber

Introductory Remarks
for
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New York

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Mr. President, Excellency, Distinguished Members of the Executive Board

I am very pleased to provide some introductory remarks at this formal session on UNFPA Country Programme Documents. are Five new Country Programme Document Presented will be presented today for your approval.

The country programme for Angola, East and Southern Africa region, the country programmes for Congo, Liberia and Sierra
Leone, West and Central Africa region, and the country programme for Mexico, Latin America and Caribbean region.

The five country programmes respond to respective national development priorities and advance the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals, especially goals 3, 5, 10, 16 and 17. The programmes are tailored to implement the in-country UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, formerly UNDAF.

These programmes represent a combined total budgetary allocation of $102 million with about $29 million (or 28%) from regular resources. They were developed through a transparent, inclusive and participatory process with the full engagement of the respective Governments, United Nations Country Teams and critical national and development stakeholders. Furthermore, the programmes were informed by evaluation recommendations and lessons of the previous programme cycle.

The quality of the programmes were vetted by the UNFPA Programme Review Committee using improved internal quality assurance criteria. As advised by the Executive Board, a costed Evaluation Plan accompanies each of these country programme documents.

Mr President, Excellency, Distinguished Board Members,

As we commemorate the 25 years of ICPD Programme of Action, these country programmes speak to the unfinished business of the ICPD agenda, including the greater need for scale-up, and accelerated efforts and collective commitments to move forward the agenda.

The programmes align with the UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, and the results expected from these programmes will contribute directly toward the achievement of the three transformative results outlined in the Strategic Plan, such as (a) End preventable maternal deaths, (b) End the unmet need for family planning, and (c) End gender-based violence and harmful practices.

I take this opportunity to thank Members of the Executive Board for your inputs into the country programme documents. Your suggestions and comments enriched the documents.

Before I yield the floor to our regional directors to provide you with
snapshots of our in-country strategic engagement and the expected results of the new programmes, let me highlight some results achieved in the previous country programme cycles in these countries.

In the area of preventing maternal death, the UNFPA country programmes improved emergency obstetric and newborn care services in Sierra Leone and Liberia, especially during and in the aftermath of the Ebola Outbreak in 2014. In particular, in Sierra Leone, UNFPA contributed to the eradication of Ebola through the provision of training to 466 midwives, which represents 16% of estimated national need, and through the remuneration for over 5000 Ebola response workers who traced over 100,000 Ebola contacts.

The programmes carried out over 1,379 obstetric fistula surgical repairs and integration in Angola, Congo and Sierra Leone. UNFPA provided integrated sexual and reproductive health services to about 71,000 adolescent girls, women, young people with disabilities, and people living with HIV/AIDS in Congo.

In the area of family planning, in Mexico, the advocacy of UNFPA, informed a congressional resolution for centralized purchase of contraceptives advocacy and was instrumental in improving the national supply of Family Planning commodities and broadening of the mixed methods.

In Angola, UNFPA advocacy led to increased national budget for health, including contraceptives, and commitments to reach the budget target of 15% of the federal budget by 2022. UNFPA commodities supplies in the Congo contributed to averting about over 200 maternal deaths, over 71,000 unwanted pregnancies and over 1,300 unsafe abortions.

Regarding ending gender-based violence, UNFPA programme supported the development of the national strategy for the reduction of adolescent pregnancy and child marriage in Sierra Leone.

The programme reached about 27,250 young girls-at-risk of child marriage with improved health, social and economic asset-building programmes and championed the abandonment of female genital mutilation through memoranda of understanding signed with gatekeepers in 120 communities.

Mr President, Excellency, Distinguished Board Members,

We also present for your approval the extension of country
programmes of Afghanistan and Comoros, to align with the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, and extension of the country programme of Yemen, because of the protracted emergency in this country.

Mr President, Distinguished Members of the Board,

UNFPA stands ready to continue its support and work with respective governments on the implementation of these country programmes. On this note, I would like to thank you, Mr. President and Members of the Board, for your continuous support to the UNFPA mandate and your guidance to the Fund’s programming and operations.

I thank you.