Introductory Statement by

Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau of Management at the
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
on

Report on results achieved by UNCDF in 2014

UNCDF item, Executive Board 2015 Annual Session
8 June 2015

Mr. President (Chairman),
Distinguished Members of the Executive Board,

I am pleased to welcome you to the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) item of the Executive Board, which will focus on the UNCDF’s 2014 programmatic and operational results — as outlined in the 2014 Results-Oriented Annual Report — and perspectives for the future.

Before giving the floor to Ms. Judith Karl, UNCDF’s Executive Secretary, allow me to make some remarks.

UNDP and UNCDF are strongly committed to investing in our shared objective to assist programme countries to achieve sustainable and inclusive growth, particularly by focusing on solutions that benefit local economies and populations outside the capital cities. Together we build coherent strategies that leverage our division of labor, optimizing UNCDF’s capital mandate and ability to prove concept in innovative finance solutions that can be scaled up by international and national partners.
As per the UNDP strategic plan 2014-2017, UNDP relies on UNCDF’s capital mandate in specific areas of shared focus, particularly in Least Developed Countries (LDCs). The main opportunities for stronger links fall into seven main clusters: analysis using UNCDF’s diagnostic tools; inclusive finance for households and small enterprises; local development initiatives; energy access for the poor; climate adaptation for local infrastructure; digital delivery mechanisms for social protection schemes; and how each of these areas can contribute to driving women’s economic empowerment.

In this respect, let me to provide this Board with a concrete example of how UNDP and UNCDF were able to leverage our respective mandates and expertise in 2014 to maximize impact.

As you know from the UNDP briefing on Ebola Recovery last January, to strengthen the battle against Ebola, UNDP has been working with the authorities in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone to coordinate payments for thousands of treatment centre staff, lab technicians, contacts tracers and burial teams.

UNCDF promotes financial inclusion, including through digital finance, as a key enabler of poverty reduction and inclusive growth. UNCDF’s expertise in digital finance has been crucial for UNDP to support governments – which handle payrolls – and partners to continue to pay the workers’ salaries and incentives on time, but also to strengthen and develop systems that will expand access to affordable financial services after the emergency phase is over.

UNCDF brought expertise on the use of mobile money systems – including with support from the UNCDF-housed Better Than Cash Alliance and the UNCDF Mobile Money for the Poor initiative – and UNDP brought expertise in cash transfer systems, which together combined to ensure that the workers who were putting their lives on the line were reliably paid even when other basic systems had broken down. Reliable salary payments enabled workers to concentrate their energies where they were needed most: on delivering services, tracking cases, and putting in place the safety measures which were essential for halting the epidemic.

Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates,

UNDP and UNCDF share a common commitment to maximize aid effectiveness and demonstrate how smartly placed ODA, combined with strong partnerships, can serve to mobilize other critical foreign and domestic investment that unblocks barriers to inclusive growth.
UNDP believes that UNCDF’s capital mandate and its ability to use innovative finance as a vehicle to de-risk, prove concept, and scale up solutions are directly relevant to the Financing for Development and post-2015 agendas. UNCDF helps to identify innovative channels for finance in ways that benefit the “real economy,” bringing people and small businesses into more dynamic interaction with local infrastructure and opportunities for access to the benefits of growth.

Thank you.