Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS
2016 2\textsuperscript{nd} Regular Session

Item 3: UNDP Country programmes and related matters
Statement by
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Mr. President, Members of the Executive Board,

I am pleased to introduce the session on country programmes and related matters.

My statement will address three issues:

\textit{First}, appraise you of ongoing efforts to reform our programming to make UNDP more agile, effective, responsive and efficient.
Second, share some findings on the overall quality and trends of the CPDs we are presenting today, including their focus on support for SDG achievement and the strengths and weaknesses on quality;

Third, introduce the country programmes and extensions for your review and approval in this session.

UNDP’s programme countries and you – members of our Executive Board – rightfully have high expectations for UNDP’s programming. We must be agile and efficient, and deliver quality results in partnership with national governments, civil society, private sector, sister UN agencies and donors.
Our Strategic Plan reflects these aspirations. It commits UNDP to introduce rigorous quality standards and revise the programme management cycle to improve quality, robustness and performance, while reducing timeframes and administrative loads.

For the past two years, we have been informing you of our progress in our programming reforms. Earlier this year we introduced the Headquarters Programme Appraisal Committee to rigorously review each CPD before it goes to the Executive Board. We also launched new quality standards for programmes and projects. This is part of our response to meet these commitments, but our work is not yet done.
We are now working on an end-to-end review of our programming policies and procedures. This will eliminate unnecessary burden, ensure quality and effectiveness in diverse contexts, and introduce forward looking and innovative programme approaches.

We hope this review will be ready early next year. I look forward to updating you on the status of this reform effort in future Board sessions.

Regarding the quality and trends of the new Country Programme Documents, this is the first large group of CPDs presented to the Executive Board following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. Supporting national priorities to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals has shaped the design of each
programme. The mix of support provided to each country responds to the unique needs and priorities of the context. All support reflects UNDP’s offer on the SDGs and illustrates how we are using the MAPS approach – Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support.

To illustrate, 52 per cent of new CPDs support mainstreaming SDGs into national development plans; while 50 per cent focus on SDG acceleration, including through SDG localization.

Over 70 per cent of new programmes will support partners to strengthen national capacities to collect and analyze disaggregated data for SDG monitoring. This is crucial to develop rigorous, evidence-based SDG reports
while making well informed policy choices to accelerate progress.

During the EB session in June, several member states reinforced the importance of UNDP engaging with the private sector on SDG achievement, including as a potential source of resources. In response, I would like to briefly touch on the diverse range of strategies for Private Sector engagement that are identified in the programmes tabled for approval today.

The role of the private sector is fundamental to the achievement of the SDGs. The private sector is both a generator and consumer of resources. In order to leave no one behind, we need the market to integrate people
and contribute to growth and human development more broadly.

Identifying entry points for strategic engagement with the private sector is a core priority in CPD design. UNDP has made significant progress in defining, assessing and mitigating risks relating to partnerships with the private sector through a solid due diligence policy and process aiming to both enable private investments in development and to change business behaviors in line with our social and environmental standards.

The 27 CPDs presented to you today demonstrate the variety of strategies our country programmes are taking in partnering with the private sector:
- Nearly two thirds of the CPDs presented today will promote private sector financing and investment for development, especially for SDG achievement;

- Over half will work with the private sector to promote clean and innovative technologies and approaches for sustainable consumption and production, environmental sustainability and energy efficiency;

- One third will promote economic development, including youth employment, vocational training and entrepreneurship by partnering with the private sector;

- Finally, an important emerging area is corporate social responsibility and inclusive business, where 15
percent of the CPDs will focus efforts in their programming cycle.

The new CPDs presented to you today reflect the effort by Country Offices and national counterparts to develop meaningful programmes to advance sustainable development. All 27 CPDs going to this Board session went through rigorous quality assurance to ensure that, despite the high volume, what you have in front of you today meets our high standards for programming.

The Headquarters Programme Appraisal Committee offered an opportunity for Country Offices to receive feedback and to strengthen the formulation of their CPDs as needed. To note, half of the CPDs reviewed by the committee met all quality standards at
first review; the other half required deeper changes and more support from Headquarters and Regional Bureaux.

One notable area where additional support was provided was on robust integration of South-South Cooperation into the programmes. The standard we have set for ourselves is high. Specific opportunities for South-South and Triangular Cooperation must be described in the CPD with reflection of measurable results in the Results Framework. Following this additional support, 64 percent of new CPDs met this rigorous standard.

In addition, we continue to devote consideration to fully integrating sound theories of change and gender
into our programmes. While 75 percent of the CPDs included a clear gender analysis at the time of the initial review, the appraisal process led to notable improvements in the final CPDs related to identifying how women will benefit from our programmes, better targeting and stronger reflection of learning from evaluation.

The 27 CPDs being tabled for your approval today demonstrate how UNDP is adding value in a wide range of development contexts. Of these programmes:

- 70 per cent cover Middle or High Income Countries, showing UNDP’s continued relevance in a rapidly changing world.
- 6 programmes are in LDCs, where UNDP’s contribution is critical to enabling the
environment and strengthening capacities for implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

- And 3 programmes support countries in crisis or special development situations, highlighting UNDP's unique role in promoting peace, reconciliation and resilience.

Before we turn to the new country programmes that are being presented here today, I would like to introduce for your approval three country programmes that are seeking extensions:

For the Africa region: Malawi, which is seeking a two year extension to align with the national planning
cycle and nationalization of the Sustainable Development Goals.

For the Arab States region: Somalia, which is seeking a second one year extension to align the UNDAF with the national development plan, and Libya, which is seeking an exceptional third one year extension because the current conditions on the ground do not yet allow for the full roll-out of a new programme.

I would also like to present for your information the Sudan country programme in the Arab States region for which the Administrator has approved a one-year extension\(^1\) to facilitate alignment of the new UNDAF with the national development plan.

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\(^1\) One-year extensions are approved by the Administrator, and UNDP informs the Executive Board. However, second one-year extensions, two-year extensions and exceptional third-year extensions need to be approved by the EB.
We are introducing for your review and approval today the following twenty seven (27) country programmes:

For the Africa region: Côte d’Ivoire, Eritrea, Gambia, Mozambique, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Seychelles.

For the Asia Pacific region: Bangladesh, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Thailand, and Vietnam.
For the Arab States region: Bahrain, Lebanon, Morocco, and Saudi Arabia.

For the Europe and the CIS region: Albania and Montenegro.

For the Latin America and the Caribbean region: the sub-regional programme for Barbados and the OECS, and the country programmes for Belize, Brazil, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Peru, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

We look forward to your deliberations.