

## ***Joint Statement***

### **Executive Board of UNFPA**

### **Annual report on the UNFPA evaluation function 2023, Agenda Item 16**

### **ANNUAL SESSION 2024**

**5 June 2024, New York**

Mister President

I make this statement on behalf of Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Japan, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Türkiye, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and my own country, Switzerland.

We thank the UNFPA Independent Evaluation Office IEO for its annual report, the programme of work and budget of the Evaluation Office in 2024. And we thank the UNFPA senior management for the corresponding management commentaries.

We welcome UNFPA senior management's continued commitment to a strong and sustainably funded centralized and decentralized evaluation function, which it underpinned through targeted enhancements in the new evaluation policy.

And we would like to echo the management's compliment to the IEO for maintaining a good overall progress despite a rapidly shifting and challenging context. With its excellent performance in 2023, the IEO achieved almost all the targets of the key performance indicators, as for example regarding evaluation coverage, the quality of evaluation reports, the management response submission and implementation and the use of evaluation in programme development.

We share your analysis, that further improvements are needed for the decentralized evaluation system including for humanitarian evaluations. That said, we appreciate the measures taken such as the enhanced evaluation quality assurance system and the creation of a support team for technical assistance and capacity development for M&E staff. We would however be keen to hear UNFPA's assessment as to whether these

measures are sufficient to compensate for the understaffing of M&E specialists in some regions and if further measures are foreseen to mitigate resulting evaluation capacity limitations?

Adequate, predictable and sustainable resourcing is key for a strong evaluation function. We appreciate UNFPA senior management's continued commitment to provide the necessary financial and human resources and welcome the further increase of UNFPA's evaluation expenditure in absolute terms. We however encourage UNFPA to adhere to the recalculated evaluation function funding target of 1% to 1.6% of UNFPA's overall programme expenditure. In that regard we would be keen to receive an update regarding the Evaluation Pooled Fund, which aims to increasingly secure funds for the evaluation function also through non-core funded (including humanitarian) programming?

We welcome the IEO's continued engagement in the UNDS reform, the United Nations Evaluation Group and other system-wide and joint evaluation initiatives on the central, regional and country level. Also, the support of UNFPA to the System-wide Evaluation Office is highly appreciated.

We commend you for three major centralized evaluations and the respective management responses. We are looking forward to the discussion of the findings and recommendations of the "Formative evaluation of the organizational resilience of UNFPA in light of its response to the COVID-19 pandemic".

Let me close by re-iterating our strong commitment to the precious work of the IEO, which performs a key oversight function and contributes to institutional learning and increased effectiveness of UNFPA and of the UN Development System.

Thank you for your attention.