



Joint response of the Executive Board secretariats of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP on Executive Board working methods

Joint Briefing on 31 August 2018

Background

- 21 Dec. 2016: General Assembly resolution [71/243](#) on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations System (QCPR)
- Dec. 2017: Non-paper of the 2017 Presidents of the Executive Boards
- 31 May 2018: General Assembly resolution [72/279](#) on repositioning of the United Nations development system in the context of the QCPR
- 1 Jun. 2018: Informal discussion –“Reflections on improving the working methods of the Executive Boards” at the joint meeting of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP
- Aug. 2018: President’s Summary of the 1 Jun. 2018 joint meeting

Convergence of Views

- (1) Bureaux
- (2) Sessions
- (3) Participation
- (4) Field visits
- (5) Joint meeting of the Executive Boards

1. Bureaux

View: Making Board and Bureau related documentation available to a wider readership, as a means of fostering greater transparency regarding the work of the Boards.

Possible Actions:

- a) Board secretariat to work with each regional/electoral group President/Vice-President in support of strengthening information sharing and consultation mechanisms, e.g. through bi-monthly meetings of the Presidents.
- b) Definition of a set of similar agenda items common to all the Boards; coordination in defining dates for the elections; strengthening of coordination in setting up an individual calendar of informal meetings and briefings.
- c) Establishment of Bureau member terms and succession planning, e.g. Vice-President of current year to serve as President of the following year.

2. Sessions

View: Fostering a greater degree of transparency in Bureau and Board meetings, and identifying new and novel ways for members of regional groups to be briefed on Bureau proceedings.

Possible Actions:

- a) Reducing the number of days per session and/or the number of sessions per year: Changes in the number of formal sessions and their duration may be made by each Executive Board according to its respective rules of procedure. This could be balanced with any required informal briefings or consultations.
- b) Encouraging both focused regional group briefings in addition to Board-wide briefings, particularly in areas where more detailed technical discussions may be useful.
- c) Expanding access to Board-related documentation (also see 1).

3. Participation

View: Encouraging participation of the representatives of non-governmental and civil society organizations and the private sector in future joint meetings of the Boards.

Possible Action:

- a) Changing the criteria for partners allowed to participate in the Board meetings is a Member State prerogative, but the Secretariats may support the Bureau in encouraging more non-Member State participation should Board members wish to do so.

4. Field visits

Views:

- Limiting the number of annual field visits: one joint field visit and one individual Board visit;
- Promoting a higher level of participation in field visits, and striking a better balance between high-level and expert-level participation.

Possible Action:

- a) Changes may be made to the field visit guidelines of the respective Boards (i.e. types, frequency, rotation of field visits, composition of delegations) by the respective Executive Boards.

5. Joint meeting of the Executive Boards

View: Utilizing the joint meeting of the Executive Boards as an opportunity to discuss issues of common interest to all the Boards, including, inter alia, reports on (a) the status of implementation of the common chapter of the respective strategic plans; (b) audit, ethics and evaluation; (c) gender strategy; and (d) sexual exploitation and abuse and on sexual harassment.

Possible Actions:

- a) Selection of JMB topics could be directly linked to ongoing joint discussions (i.e. common chapter, cost recovery) or other areas of common interest to all Boards (i.e. audit, sexual exploitation and abuse, etc.).
- b) JMB may be transformed into an annual one-day joint session of the Boards to discuss these areas of common interest.

Draft decision – for discussion

“The Executive Board

Takes note with appreciation of the joint response prepared by the secretariats of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Children’s Fund, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the World Food Programme **to the 2018 joint meeting of the Executive Boards segment on working methods.”**

Next steps

- Discussion to advance the process on working methods
- Decision at each Board's second regular session
- Follow-up at the 2019 joint meeting of the Boards