

Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Joint Working Group

UNICEF, UN-Women, and UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS

1. Background

This Joint Working Group is established following the decisions made by the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS (Decision 2024/12, paragraph 15), UNICEF (Decision 2024/15, paragraph 15), and UN Women (Decision 2024/3, paragraph 14) to enhance governance, oversight, and risk management across the participating Executive Boards. The Joint Working Group will review, and coordinate the implementation of a total of 31 recommendations from the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) report, including 10 formal and 21 informal recommendations.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the Joint Working Group is to review the recommendations outlined in the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) report (JIU/REP/2023/7) and develop actionable strategies for their implementation, facilitating improved governance and oversight within the participating Executive Boards.

3. Membership

The membership of the working group will consist of up to 15 members from Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, and UN Women, with equal representation from the five regional groups. This request comes from paragraph 16 of Decision 2024/15 of the UNICEF Executive Board, which states that the Bureau, in consultation with the regional groups and in collaboration with the Bureaux of the participating Boards, will facilitate the nomination of Executive Board members or observers. Members will be confirmed by the participating Boards ahead of the First Regular Session of 2025.

4. Functions

The working group will:

- Develop its working methods through a cross-board and cross-regional consultative process, enabling effective operationalization.
- Establish a roadmap for its work, with clear timelines and milestones.
- Conduct a thorough review of all recommendations in the JIU report on governance and suggest additional recommendations stemming from other governance initiatives.
- Suggest preliminary implementation plans of short and medium-term recommendations.

5. Support from the Secretariats of the Joint Executive Boards

The Secretariats of the Executive Boards will coordinate internally to provide joint secretariat services to the working group under the direction of their respective Bureaux. This collaborative effort aims to ensure efficient communication and support throughout the working group's activities.

6. Deliverables

- The Working Group will provide regular reports to the Executive Boards on its progress.
- Upon conclusion of its activities, the working group will issue a comprehensive report to the Executive Boards for review and approval. This report will include the implementation plan for the recommendations, as defined in the previous section.
- Should any delays arise in the working group's proceedings, the chairperson will promptly inform the Executive Board Bureaux and seek guidance.

[1] The decision paragraph indicated here is from the UNICEF Executive Board as a reference point, as there were nearly identical decisions for the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS (decision 2024/12) and Executive Board of UN-Women (decision 2024/12).