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Field visits

**Report of the field visit by members of the Executive Board of UNDP,
UNFPA and UNOPS to Guinea, 10-15 April 2016**

I. Introduction

1. Members of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS visited the Republic of Guinea from 10 to 15 April 2016. Led by H.E. Ms. Bénédicte Frankinet, Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations and Vice-President of the Executive Board,¹ the delegation included Mr. Tumasie Blair Counselor, Permanent Mission of Antigua and Barbuda to the United Nations and Vice-President of the Executive Board; Ms. Edwige Agossou Ahoussoubemey, Counselor, Permanent Mission of Benin to the United Nations; Mr. Nikola Ivezaj, Second Secretary, Permanent Mission of Montenegro to the United Nations; Mr. Belal Abdo, Second Secretary, Permanent Mission of Yemen to the United Nations; and Mr. Andreas Danevad, Senior Adviser, Section for UN Policy, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The delegation was accompanied by Mr. Jordi Llopart, UNDP, Secretary of the Executive Board; Mr. Horst Rutsch, Senior Editorial Advisor, UNFPA; and Ms. Elle Wang, Partnerships Analyst, UNOPS.

2. The purpose of the visit was to: allow the Board members to observe the field operations of the three organizations and the work of the United Nations country team (UNCT) in Guinea; help them understand the relationship of the country programmes of the various organizations to national development priorities, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, bilateral development assistance and other relevant frameworks; provide insight into the implementation of policies and strategies of the organizations in the field; and discuss the impact and results of United Nations strategies and programmes with government and non-government counterparts at national, local and community levels.

3. The delegation expresses its gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Guinea for providing it with the opportunity engage in frank and substantive dialogue on key issues with senior members of Government, notably the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defence and the Minister of Planning and International Cooperation. It is also grateful to the Resident Coordinator and the members of the UNCT, particularly the representatives of UNDP, UNFPA

¹ Initially, the mission was to be led the President of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, H.E. Mr. Zohrab Mnatsakanyan, the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations; however, due to unforeseen circumstances he was unable to join the field visit to Guinea.

and UNOPS in the country, for the well-organized visit, the valuable insights they provided into their work, and the ready availability of staff throughout the visit. The delegation was impressed by the commitment and dedication of senior Guinean leadership officials at every level and of the UNCT staff in Conakry and throughout the country.²

4. The programme for the field visit included two main components:

- (a) Meetings in Conakry with the Prime Minister and other Government Ministers and high-level officials; the Resident Coordinator and the members of the UNCT, other United Nations system partners, key donors and the diplomatic community. Several meetings were also held with national non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including civil society, youth and women's organizations.
- (b) Site visits to various projects supported by UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS in Guinea, including the youth centres in Blue Zone Kaloum and Ratoma, Conakry; the project in support of women's empowerment in Dubreka; the health centre in Farmoryah; and the National Ebola Response Cell (NERC).

5. The delegation would like to thank everyone involved in the site visits, investing considerable time and effort to facilitate an essential part of the field visit; it acknowledges that it was not feasible to visit Nzérékoré Prefecture due to the discovery of new cases of Ebola in the area. The visits allowed the delegation to better understand the unique challenges and opportunities for the UNCT in Guinea, including in moving towards a 'Delivering-as-One' approach.

6. This report aims to briefly present key aspects of the field visit and summarizes the delegation's observations on three main issues: the development context in the Guinea; the impact of the Ebola virus disease on the country; and United Nations system coordination in the country, particularly the roles of the UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS. The report concludes with some observations and recommendations.

II. Development context

7. The Republic of Guinea, with a population of about 11 million people, is a fragile State, which faces several significant structural challenges: consolidation of the political process, national reconciliation and peacebuilding; implementation of institutional reforms, including in the security, justice and public administration sectors; maintaining 'zero Ebola' and transitioning to a rapid and effective implementation of the post-Ebola Recovery and Resilience Plan; and managing popular expectations regarding the pace of development and improvements in living standards. Currently more than 55 per cent of its population is living below the poverty line. Despite the recent transition from military to civilian rule, the overall security situation in Guinea remains fragile. Weak governance practices, endemic corruption (due to decades of authoritarian rule) and high levels of crime, along with a lack of institutional capacity at all levels, present key challenges for development. Improvement of basic service delivery has been slow, and the country did not achieve its Millennium Development Goal targets. Guinea ranks 182 out of 188 in the Human Development Index (2015).

8. Government spending on health is still very low (0.9% of GDP in 2015). Malaria is the leading cause of morbidity and mortality among children. While the under-five child mortality

² The leader of the delegation express her deep appreciation for the high level of commitment to the purpose of the field visit by all members of the delegation, and thanks the UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS colleagues who accompanied the delegation from New York.

has declined (from 163 per 1,000 live births in 2005 to 124 per 1,000 live births in 2012), maternal mortality remains one of the highest in Africa (724 per 100,000 live births in 2012).

9. Young people (aged under 35 years) represent three fourths of the population; over half (55 per cent) are under 20 years of age. Two in three girls (63%) are married before the legal age of 18 years (the fifth highest incidence in the world); one in four adolescent girls (aged 15-19 years) are already mothers; one in four girls and young women (aged 10-24 years) were victims of violence; HIV prevalence among young people (aged 15-19 years) is 1.5%. The proportion of women working in non-agricultural sectors remains very low, and the representation of women in management positions is still limited. In Government and other official institutions, gender equality is still low (below 25%).

10. Female genital mutilation and cutting (FGM/C) affects all women and girls regardless of regions, ethnic groups or religions, despite continued efforts from stakeholders on the ground. Alarming, 31 per cent of traditional practices are carried out by the health professionals. Progress has been made since 2008 through the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on FGM/C, which emphasizes human rights and social norm-based approaches. This has led to public condemnations of the practice by the President of the Republic, public declarations of abandonment of the practice by various communities, promulgation of five ministerial acts prohibiting the practice of FGM/C, as well as awareness-raising activities in primary and secondary schools, in midwife training, and other health-related communications.

A. Governance and peacebuilding

11. In 2010, Guinea held its first democratic presidential election, in which Mr. Alpha Condé was elected President, ending a legacy of 26 years of military rule in Guinea. After the legislative elections of September 2013, the President's party gained the majority of seats in the National Assembly, while opposition parties hold 53 out of 114 parliamentary seats. The incumbent president was elected for a second-term in the 2015. However, the political climate is still fragile; agreement has yet to be reached on the timing of local elections, originally scheduled for the first half of 2016.

12. The Government is trying to address the difficult economic legacy inherited from previous regimes, and has introduced several reforms to boost and diversify the economy. In 2011, it conducted, with the support of UNDP, UNFPA and the African Development Bank (AfDB), a prospective study: Guinea Vision 2035. Despite government efforts to accelerate development through private investment in productive sectors, including mining and agriculture, the weak infrastructure and lack of an enabling investment environment constitute the main obstacles and constraints in this endeavour. Currently, the Government is finalizing, with support from United Nations system organizations and international donors, its new national development plan, integrating the Sustainable Development Goals into its national goal targets. Since 2013, UNFPA is supporting the Government in the mobilization of resources, organization and implementation of the General Census on Population and Housing.

Security Sector Reform

13. The President of the Republic of Guinea has made security sector reform one of his main priorities, and has received unequivocal support from the United Nations system. The reform has been carried out against the background of democratic renewal, laying the basis for a sustainable development policy. The President monitors the implementation of the National Reconciliation Strategy, with a provisional committee for national reconciliation, chaired jointly by the Imam of the Grand Mosque and the Archbishop of Conakry, helping to develop a roadmap on how best to conduct reconciliation in Guinea.

14. A defence and security policy has been formulated, and actions are underway to enhance security services and the image of the police among the population. Several laws have been drafted for setting up sectoral technical committees on defence, security and the environment; other laws on military planning, which went into effect in 2015, focus on governing civil-military relations. Programmes were initiated in social cohesion, capacity building and community support, in line with the strategic plan; a Steering Committee, chaired by the Government was set up, for a total funding of \$3 million. This ongoing reform of the security sector has enabled the Government to curb the proliferation of weapons, link the army closer to the civilian population, and clarify the different functions of security services. Police reform is based on the concept of ‘community policing’, involving community leaders in helping the population understand the rationale of the police to protect them against crime. The biometric census of civil servants is another step taken to enhance governance and reduce public finance expenses.

15. The restructuring of the army as part of the consolidation of the democratization process has progressed well. The retirement of more than 4,000 military personnel has also reduced the huge salary budget that has weighed heavily on the national finances. The operational capacity of the Guinean army has been strengthened, with security, civil protection, and human rights protection and disaster management, particularly Ebola control, at the heart of this restructuring. International assistance has been key in these reform efforts, with the steering committee guiding coordination among the multinational partners, including the European Union and Japan as major contributors. The Government has received logistical support, as well as travel funding for regional experience sharing. With the technical support of UNFPA, the multilateral partners have helped to reintegrate, train and equip 320 youth (ex-military and ex-combatants) in the Paramilitary Nature Conservation Corps mandated to protect forests and indigenous people. Guinea now participates in peacekeeping operations, with a contingent of 850 soldiers in Mali, as part of United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali.

16. Despite the progress made, many challenges remain, including slow payment procedures of salaries. Implementation delays and adjustments due to the emergence of Ebola virus have slowed down some parts of the security sector reform, notably implementation of the 2015-2020 law on the five priorities for the security sector. Despite these difficulties, the Strategic Steering Committee has set up a number of medium-term and long-term measures to ensure that the support granted to the entire security system is in line with other United Nations reforms. The United Nations system has overseen the strengthening of gender capacity and also the mapping of legislative gaps.

B. Impact of Ebola

17. The outbreak of the Ebola epidemic in March 2014 quickly led to a sharp slowdown in economic activity, reducing investment and growth, and affecting the livelihoods of millions of people, particularly in the poorest communities. In the agricultural sector, harvests remain low because of the unavailability of seeds and agricultural labour, the lack of financial resources, and difficulties to access credit. Border closures with neighbouring countries, restrictions on external trade, and suspension or postponement of several infrastructure projects (including electrification) have severely affected the Guinean economy. According estimates, real GDP growth in 2015 was 0.1 per cent, representing a 3 per cent decline of GDP per capita. In this context, with the Government maintaining high levels of spending on the infrastructure development, the budget deficit has grown significantly.

18. The impact of Ebola outbreak on household living conditions has been devastating. It resulted in a sharp decline in revenues, especially for those dependent on the production of fruits and vegetables that were exported to neighbouring countries. Women, in particular, were

hit hard in this case as they represent 70 per cent of the producers. It also led to deterioration of the nutritional situation, especially among the most vulnerable groups.

19. The outbreak has hampered access to health centres (numerous health workers have died while some centres have been deserted), coupled with a general reluctance of the population to go to public care facilities for fear of infection. This drop in the use of basic health services has had a significant impact on the health of mothers and children. Women have been most affected, with 52 per cent of confirmed Ebola cases: a 13 per cent decrease of antenatal care coverage; an 11 per cent decline in deliveries in health facilities and a 12 per cent decrease in births attended by skilled personnel; a 51 per cent increase in maternal mortality in most affected areas. The proportion of young people (aged 15-35 years) infected with Ebola is 33.8 per cent.

20. The discovery of new cases of Ebola in Nzérékoré Prefecture in late March 2016, three months after the country had been declared free of Ebola in December 2015, is expected to affect the economic growth rate, estimated at about 4 per cent in 2016. These new developments might also slow down the implementation of the national post-Ebola Recovery and Resilience Plan, though it is still too early to determine the effect precisely. The resurgence of the Ebola disease has illustrated the strong mistrust of the population in the official health system, and has contributed to a slowdown in vaccination campaigns. Also, school attendance declined by 35 per cent in the localities affected by the outbreak.

21. In response to the Ebola outbreak, the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) was established on 19 September 2014 in General Assembly resolution 69/1 and in Security Council resolution 2177 (2014). The mission was tasked with overall coordination of UN Ebola response in the country. After the departure of the Ebola Crisis Manager in December 2015, the coordination of Ebola Phase III and beyond is now assigned to the Resident Coordinator, who is working with the National Ebola Response Cell and other partners in the management of new flare-ups that occurred in Nzérékoré region very recently. The UNCT is also providing strategic and leadership guidance to the Government of Guinea in its post-Ebola recovery efforts, which has provided an opportunity to reassess United Nations support to the overall national development process.

Response to the Ebola Crisis

22. The outbreak of Ebola virus epidemic in the country in March 2014 severely disrupted and constrained government plans and strategies. The widespread chaos and the resultant restrictions of movement in the affected regions have negatively affected the implementation and the delivery of programmes under the UNCT. However, UNDP, UNFPA, UNOPS and the other United Nations agencies managed to maintain their programmatic activities while providing assistance to the national Ebola response.

23. In strengthening multisectoral coordination and effectiveness of the response, the UNCT has put in place a strong emergency response team. UNDP contributed to the strengthening of coordination among the different entities to combat the Ebola epidemic and helped to reinforce the national coordination unit, particularly by providing expertise and targeted support actions relating to community engagement, payment of medical personnel and health workers and NGOs involved in the response, and management of medical waste. Decentralized coordination of the response to the Ebola epidemic was also strengthened through the deployment of volunteers in prefectures located in the most affected areas.

24. UNFPA played a key role in response to the Ebola virus disease through: monitoring of Ebola contacts tracing using smart phones by community workers; establishment of village committees to raise awareness and sensitize people about how to prevent transmission of the disease; strengthening of health facilities in the most affected districts through deployment of midwives, capacity building of health personnel, provision of medical equipment and ambulances.

25. UNOPS technical support to the National Ebola Coordination Unit focused mainly on maintenance of health centres, including possible design improvements. Minor changes can be carried immediately out on the four sites, with little or no impact on existing budget or programme (such as modifications to plumbing and windows to improve sanitation and ventilation). More significant technical design changes are unlikely to be carried out on the existing sites without significant disruption or cost.

III. Sites visits

26. The delegation visited three sites: (a) Dubreka – Centre d'appui à l'autonomisation des Femmes, which focuses on supporting the empowerment of girls and women; (b) the Farmoryah health centre, which was one of the most visited Ebola treatment centres since the outbreak in March 2014; and (c) Maison des jeunes de Ratoma, a youth centre that focuses on youth advocacy, engagement and knowledge building.

Dubreka – Centre d'appui à l'autonomisation des femmes

27. During the site visit, led by the Minister of Social Affairs, the delegation noticed the great sense of involvement of the girls and women at the centre. With the support of UNFPA, the centre provides income-generating life skills training in a number of different areas for girls and women so that they can be independent and self-sufficient; the centre itself generated funds through the sale of textiles and soaps made by the students. In this context, the delegation learned that after the girls graduate, some are supported through microfinancing to start their own businesses or collaborate with others. Furthermore, a number of graduating girls regularly return to the centre to assist teaching the newcomers. However, the delegation noticed that the centre lacks reliable electrical power critical for facilitating the teaching of sewing lessons and computer classes.

Farmoryah health centre

28. During the site visit, the delegation learned that Farmoryah faced one of the worst outbreaks of Ebola during 2014 and 2015. In an effort to assist in tackling the Ebola outbreak, UNOPS concentrated on the infrastructure development of health centres while UNDP played an advocacy role with the local authorities, and the UNFPA assisted with the provision of human resources and medical equipment. It is important to mention that WHO played a central role in the Ebola response in this area.

29. The health centre was rehabilitated and refurbished with new equipment in 2015. It is continuously open, with day and night shift rotation. Nurses and midwives from other areas in Guinea were brought in to ensure the centre was fully staffed. UNFPA continues to support the staff, provide equipment and commodities, and assists in conducting training for midwives.

30. The delegation was informed that there has been a dramatic increase in patients seeking medical attention at the centre, compared to previous years before the rehabilitation of the centre, reflecting the community's faith in the quality of services provided at the health centre. Initially, when Ebola first surfaced, community members would not go to the clinic to seek medical attention but preferred to see local healers; many believed that the centre was the cause of the outbreak because of the dire conditions of the old facilities. The Farmoryah community assists in keeping the health centre clean and in good condition.

31. Due to the provision of high-quality equipment, commodities and supplies, following the refurbishment and rehabilitation of the centre, Farmoryah has seen a sharp decrease in neonatal and maternal mortality. The centre has also witnessed a significant increase in women seeking prenatal care. The delegation learned that the centre is following a strict protocol in

suspected cases of Ebola; this has, by all accounts, dramatically decreased person-to-person exposure.

Engagement with youth associations

32. The delegation finds that even though Guinea is a nascent democracy with only six years of democratization, its NGOs and civil society organizations are vibrant, dynamic and with a large youth participation. Many of the UNCT projects are largely implemented by NGOs, whose affiliates are mostly young people, for whom the projects provide sources of income. Youth engagement is mostly focused on the consolidation of peace and reconciliation process, electoral process, managements of conflicts, family planning and Ebola recovery. NGOs might constitute a pool of talents from which capacities can be found for helping in the implementation of priority actions, given the poor institutional capacities. The UNCT outsources the assessment of NGOs to an independent company, which scales them according to their capacity to work in the field, ability to manage expectations, and management of donor funds.

33. While the Government provides no funding for NGOs, except through joint projects with international donors, it is notable that NGOs are supportive of governmental policies. The delegation notes that there is an exemplary relationship between youth associations and the UNCT, especially in areas related to the mobilization and training of youth. Visible high-level of inclusivity of the youth and NGOs was manifested particularly during the Ebola crises and electoral process. The delegation was briefed by leading national NGOs on their work in the field, mainly focused on sanitization campaigns, post-Ebola recovery, empowerment of women, and democratic governance. The UNCT has helped to establish several 'blue zones' in the country, including in Conakry; these constitute youth centres for recreation, gathering and training, as well as providing a space for greater civic participation.

34. The delegation noticed the strong presence of UNFPA, and the relationship between a number of NGOs and civil society organizations and UNFPA, which has been a strong supporter of empowering these organizations, particularly youth associations and women's associations. UNFPA contributes to the socioeconomic reintegration of 2,800 former youth army volunteers through training in civic practices, peacebuilding and income-generating activities. However, despite the successful cooperation in family planning with youth associations, there is an increasing need and demand for adequate health and reproductive education. NGOs and CSOs called for assistance in maintaining 'Ebola free' status, and requested additional help in mobilizing resources for technical and logistical support to be better prepared in case of new outbreaks.

35. The delegation has been informed that since the launch of last UNDAF, more than 100,000 young boys and girls, including over 1,000 formerly involved with the military, have found employment. However, in view of the alarmingly high unemployment rate, NGOs have called for the establishment of socioeconomic centres to provide training for small entrepreneurs. The delegation noticed that NGOs are not ready to raise their voice in the fight against corruption; instead, they have requested that the UNCT conduct training for political parties, military and police officers to address the issue of corruption.

Engagement with women's associations

36. The delegation heard first hand from a range of women's organizations on the progress made on gender equality, empowerment of women and youth, as well as the very good relations between the national counterparts responsible for gender issues and the UNCT. Women's organizations shared their experiences in the electoral, post-Ebola and other processes, and emphasized the importance of their role in conflict prevention and reconciliation processes.

37. Although the level of participation of women in the governmental institution is not as low as expected compared with some neighbouring countries (21% in Government, 22% in Parliament, 26% in public administration), there is a need for establishing a programme for political and economic empowerment of women. The leaders of women's associations have called for the transformation of the National Office on Women into a National Directorate of Women Empowerment, which would have more institutional power in carrying out necessary reforms in the promotion of women's rights, gender equality and protection of children. The delegation also heard calls for the need of further training programmes for women entrepreneurs, especially in the area of small cross-border business.

38. While the delegation registered a notable progress concerning the promotion of gender equality in education, there is an urgent necessity for the implementation of 2030 Agenda concerning gender-based violence. The delegation was informed that an alarming 95 per cent of women were victims of domestic abuse and violence. During the meetings with women associations, great attention was given to the issues of female genital mutilation, with calls for stronger campaigns to counter the harmful practices.

IV. The United Nations country team in Guinea

39. The UNCT, under the overall leadership of the Resident Coordinator, appears to be a trusted partner of the Government. The partners³ meet regularly at the UN Common House to exchange information and coordinate their activities with the Government and with donors and other partners. The UNCT has established eight thematic groups to structure the dialogues with the Government. The various United Nations agencies have, within their relevant thematic areas, lead responsibilities for support to capacity development on the government side.

40. The peacebuilding component aims to strengthen social cohesion and national unity, through conflict prevention and the promotion of dialogue. The strategy focuses on actions related to conflict prevention, including the reform of the security sector, advocacy and capacity building of structures and institutions to prevent and resolve conflicts, support for national reconciliation and the promotion of a permanent and constructive dialogue with the active participation of women. This component ties in with the reform of the security sector, with funding from the Peace Building Fund. The inclusive growth programme aims to support national efforts in eradicating poverty and promoting sustainable and inclusive economic and social development. It aims to help the authorities, both national and local levels, to tackle poverty through the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of macro-economic and sectorial policies, and through programmes that promote development and poverty reduction.

UNDP plays a critical role in matters related to governance and peacebuilding in Guinea.

41. UNDP promotes democratic governance and peacebuilding, and provides support for the electoral process, security sector reform, national reconciliation, public administration reform and modernization, and strengthening of institutional and human capacities. It assists the Government in strengthening the rule of law and in promoting public transparency and integrity. It assists the Government in establishing more democratic and resilient institutions, helping the different social actors, including media leaders and security forces, to respect the principles of democracy and rule of law. UNDP efforts are focused on supporting the capacity development of the newly elected National Assembly.

³ Currently, the resident United Nations organizations in Guinea are: UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, UNHCR, UNAIDS, UNFPA, WFP, FAO, UNIDO, IOM, World Bank and IMF. Non-resident United Nations agencies with a presence in Guinea include UNESCO, UNOPS and IFAD.

42. With the support of the Peacebuilding Fund, UNDP has contributed to the pursuit of peaceful political dialogue, through awareness-raising and advocacy at all levels, mobilizing and coordinating support from partners, and providing technical expertise, including through the deployment of international experts – for the coordination of elections in Conakry and the other seven administrative regions of the country. UNDP also helped to set up and equip a security force for the legislative elections, and contributed to advocacy efforts for a peaceful climate after the announcement of the election results, especially through engagement with political leaders and local NGOs.

43. UNDP plays a leading role in supporting security sector reform through the development of a coordination framework with a group of stakeholders, including the Government of Guinea, France, USA, European Union, and ECOWAS. The focus has primarily been on supporting ‘community policing’ to make it more responsive to citizens’ concerns. UNDP and the European Union have also reinforced the Ministry of Justice through the provision of international technical assistance. As a result of this support, the Ministry has developed a capacity reinforcement strategy.

44. Concerning public administration, UNDP has supported the High Commission for Public Reform by designing a programme for modernizing public institutions; this led the President to create the Ministry of Public Reform to oversee implementation of this initiative, which has been jointly supported by the World Bank, AfDB and European Union. UNDP provides substantial technical support to the National Agency against Corruption, training and equipping its technical staff and designing a website and a dedicated ‘green phone number’ that allows citizens to report corruption cases. In partnership with Open Society for West Africa, UNDP has helped to draft a law for the prevention and combatting of corruption in Guinea. These efforts are complemented by its partnership with media and civil society organizations, focused on investigation, monitoring and denunciation of corruption cases; this partnership includes strengthening the technical capacities of 22 civil society organizations whose 215 members promote citizen control of public actions throughout Guinea.

45. In local governance, UNDP has been reinforcing the Government’s decentralization strategy. This includes strengthening local capacities through inclusive management training approaches, reinforcement of local economies and promotion of innovative financing, the promotion of public-private partnerships, and support of local dynamics for economic development. UNDP has focused on promoting employment and reducing the vulnerability of youth and women, developing multifunctional platforms to improve the conditions of life and work of women, and strengthening the capacity of local authorities to support their own development. Women have been one of the key beneficiaries of UNDP support, both at national and local levels. UNDP financially supported some 476 projects led by youth and women, which have generated nearly 136,000 employment opportunities through microfinance institutions. Since 2007, some 30 per cent of the 33,000 jobs created through its programmes have gone to women; and more than 50,000 women in the Lower Guinea and Middle Guinea regions have enjoyed access to energy services through the installation of 19 multipurpose platforms, alleviating the burden of agricultural production.

46. UNDP also provides technical assistance to the development of the National Planning on biodiversity and implementation of the Strategic Plan of the Convention on Biological Diversity 2011-2020, and to the implementation of the National Resilience and Adaptation Initiative for Climate Change in the coastal zones. UNDP is implementing a project to reinforce the resilience of livelihoods of the farming communities at Gaoual, Koundara and Mali, which aims to strengthen the capacities of local and community authorities to integrate climate change into planning tools and developing investment at decentralized levels.

UNFPA plays critical role in data availability and analysis, gender equality and reproductive rights, maternal and newborn health and family planning.

47. UNFPA support the Government on population dynamics through a number of initiatives: (a) analysis and dissemination of the results from the 2012 population and housing census; (b) preparation for the 2017 demographic and health survey; (c) operational research on health, gender, and adolescents and young people; (d) skills development for the incorporation of population issues in national plans and programmes; and (e) strengthening the national information management systems. The major partners in these efforts are the Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Health and Public Hygiene, European Union, African Development Bank and the United States Agency for International Development.

48. UNFPA assists the Government of Guinea in formulating national legislation on gender equality, reproductive rights, HIV/AIDS, gender-based violence and female genital cutting, making sure they are in line with international conventions; further, it helps to disseminate them through national structures, women's networks and associations. UNFPA efforts aim to support in: creation of institutional, legislative and regulatory environments promoting and protecting equality and equity; promotion of reproductive rights and equal access to reproductive health; combatting gender-based violence and eradicating female genital mutilation and cutting; engaging men in reproductive health programmes; and capacity building in health care.

49. UNFPA provides support in maternal and newborn health through: development and implementation of a national plan for scaling-up high-impact interventions in maternal and newborn health, with a focus on basic emergency obstetric care at the peripheral level and comprehensive care at the referral level; facilitation of access to sexual and reproductive health services through community participation, fostered by the establishment mutual health organizations; prevention and treatment of obstetric fistula; strengthened capacities of the three midwifery training schools, incorporating obstetric care in the training curricula. Major partners include the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Affairs, Promotion of Women and Child Development, UNICEF, WHO, World Bank, French Solidarity Fund, United States Agency for International Development.

50. UNFPA is the main partner in Guinea concerning family planning; it supports the implementation of the reproductive health commodity security plan, including contraceptives and condoms. Key strategies include strengthening national capacities in logistics management, system monitoring, information gathering and retro-information; and advocacy for the effective mobilization of funds earmarked under the relevant budget line. UNFPA also support the enhancement of national capacities for the implementation of community-based family planning activities. This is achieved through support to: improving the quality of services by ensuring that the performance-based services management process is mainstreamed; mainstreaming long-term contraceptive methods, including implants; and community-based interventions aimed at bringing maternal and newborn health services closer to communities. Major partners include the Ministry of Health and Public Hygiene, Ministry of Finance, WHO, World Bank, France, and the United States Agency of International Development.

51. UNFPA provides substantial financial and technical support for the empowerment of women and girls and towards the national response against gender-based violence. This is achieved by: training the service providers (health personnel, social workers, defence forces, security and judiciary); rehabilitating centres for the treatment of gender-based violence victims; training girls and women from disadvantaged backgrounds on income-generating activities. UNFPA has contributed to a number of Government actions on the empowerment of women: assisting in the formulation of the Economic Empowerment and Gender Policy; implementing the Special Programme for Free C-section, initiated by the President of the Republic to reduce maternal and infant mortality; assisting in setting up gender and equity units

in key line ministries; supporting the establishment of 16 integrated centres (in health centres) and 15 integrated units (in police and gendarmerie offices) for prevention and management of gender-based violence; guiding the National Campaign on Family Planning; supporting the renovation, construction or equipment of training centres for girls and women; and assisting in the implementation of the second Action Plan of Security Council resolution 1325 on women and peace and security.

UNOPS plays an important role in rehabilitation of health facilities in Guinea

52. UNOPS contributed the emergency Ebola response in Guinea by assessing existing health facilities for rehabilitation and retrofitting them to better address the challenges faced by the Ebola epidemic. In total, 41 existing health centres were rehabilitated using local construction companies, with contract management and site supervision provided by the UNOPS infrastructure team. In addition to rehabilitation of existing facilities, some new components were included, such as fencing, and solar energy. The works were started during the height of the Ebola crisis in order to provide a safer working environment for national and international medical teams.

53. The Construction of Rural Health Centres Project, funded by the Islamic Development Bank, aims to provide completely new facilities in selected locations. The building programme is coordinated by the National Ebola Coordination Unit and the four centres implemented by UNOPS are part of a larger programme of constructing new facilities, some of which are already completed, with more planned in the next few months. Each of the four health facilities are comprised of two self-contained units – *centre de santé amélioré* (CSA) and *centre de traitement épidémiologique* (CTE), alongside some shared facilities, such as a maintenance workshop and staff residences. The CSA provides conventional health services and treatment – antenatal and postnatal care, delivery, vaccination, outpatient consultation and inpatient care, while the CTE is dedicated for the treatment of conditions that have an epidemic or infectious nature, such as Ebola and cholera. In each location, the units have been laid out in accordance with the specific site conditions, but there is always a dividing wall between the CTE and the remaining facilities. In view of the particular context of each location, some components have been amended, so that at the two most remote sites (Banankoro and Guecke), only two staff residences, instead of three, will be provided to offset the higher cost of construction, while at Matoto (an urban site close to Conakry), the residences will be replaced by additional in-patient hospitalization.

V. Observations and recommendations

A. Observations

Guinea faces a number of development challenges similar to those of post-conflict countries.

54. The new Government of Guinea, which has existed for about a hundred days, faces a great deal of development challenges, especially in the absence of coordination at the national level and among international partners. The Government has taken steps to remedy this situation but lacks many of the human, financial and institutional capacities to design and formulate projects and programmes. It also faces difficulties in relation to prioritization.

55. Although the country has never witnessed a civil war, the delegation finds that Guinea is in reality in a fragile situation, with similarities to countries emerging from conflict. The consequences of 26 years of military rule, the civil unrest, and the Ebola outbreak have left their imprint on the current situation. The delegation noticed that there is a necessity for greater mobilization of resources in order to maintain the sustainability of the post-Ebola recovery

process. In that context, an additional improvement of health and health education system is needed.

Security sector reform underpins the sustainable development efforts in Guinea.

56. The delegation noted with satisfaction that considerable efforts have been made so far in security sector reform, in particular concerning the reform of the army. It also noted the commitment of the Government to continue to build on the progress made in the defence, police and justice sectors. These reform efforts provide the security needed to achieve the sustainable development goal for the country.

Implementation of the UNDAF, 2013-2017, had to be adjusted due to the Ebola outbreak.

57. The UNCT is guided by the UNDAF, 2013-2017, which has been endorsed by Government of Guinea. Prior to 2014, it focused on three thematic areas that address key policy priorities and aligns them well with national priorities. After the outbreak of Ebola in 2014, a fourth thematic area, Ebola and other emergencies, has been added so that it aligns with the new national priorities. The delegation finds that the role of UNMEER and the role of the Resident Coordinator may have resulted in duplicative and unclear coordination mandates and leadership. As a result, the United Nations system response may have been based more on individual agency projects than on coherent cross-agency programmes.

Resource mobilization by the various UNCT members is fragmented.

58. The delegation heard of difficulties of the Resident Coordinator to coordinate and influence resource mobilization by the individual UNCT members. This is because some United Nations agencies approach donors with funding requests for projects with similar objectives, and also due to the lack of dedicated capacities in the Resident Coordinator office. For example, the WFP representative stated that differences in the nature of the operations by the various UN organizations complicate coordination. Agencies develop and implement programmes at “different speeds”. This, therefore, complicates coordination and joint procurement activities. Much time is therefore used for diverse coordination meetings at all levels, rather than a strategic common approach.

59. The Resident Coordinator briefed the delegation on her efforts to deal with the fragmented arrangements and improve coordination among the various agencies in the country; for example, in February 2016, the UNCT made a general decision to coordinate initiatives with shared objectives and target groups. Accordingly, some approaches were integrated in selected geographical areas in Guinea.

Delivering as One is gradually being introduced.

60. The delegation heard that the Government of Guinea in March 2014 asked the United Nations to operationalize the Delivering-as-One process. Accordingly, a roadmap was formulated and jointly adopted. The Government and the UN agencies signed a Concept Note in September 2015 and the implementation of Delivering-as-One will be reflected in the next UNDAF (2018-2022). Some elements of Delivering-as-One are currently being applied in Guinea, for example, the joint annual workplan, the resource mobilization strategy for Ebola response and the UN integrated approach, with a gender focus, for development in fragile areas of the Upper Guinea region.

Opportunities exist for closer cooperation and coordination between the UN agencies beyond the Ebola response.

61. The Ebola outbreak has proven that UN joint programming and joint resource mobilization are feasible. The Resident Coordinator stated the intention for joint programmes to become more substantial, and may facilitate involvement of UN organizations even without being present in Guinea.

62. Following on its request to adopt the Delivering-as-One approach, the Government sent a request to both Resident Coordinator and UN Headquarters to establish a funding mechanism for post-Ebola initiatives, to be managed through a trust fund mechanism. Preparations are ongoing to introduce a joint workplan in 2016 for the implementation of the fourth thematic area of the amended UNDAF (Ebola and other emergencies); this will be the pilot for Delivering-as-One implementation, and will provide a chance to learn lessons before the full implementation of the Delivering-as-One in the next UNDAF cycle.

B. Recommendations

63. In light of the above observations, the following recommendations are proposed:

64. **The United Nations should further encourage development partners to continue to support government efforts in resource mobilization towards the implementation post-Ebola recovery programmes.** Within the United Nations System, UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS are continuing to support the Government in the post-Ebola recovery and other development initiatives.

65. **The UNCT should continue and strengthen its work related to conflict prevention, peacebuilding and resilience, including efforts to strengthen social cohesion and reduce the vulnerability of youth and women, develop responses to gender-based violence and facilitate opportunities for national dialogue among all stakeholders.**

66. **Faced with threats of violence and extremism and other security challenges, it is important that the Government devote more resources and greater efforts for the implementation of capacity-building policies in the security sector.** The Guinean authorities appreciate the work carried out by the United Nations system in their country but the reform efforts are currently at the resource mobilization stage, and the Government would like the United Nations partners to continue to support them in resource mobilization.

67. In order to prevent radicalization and extremism, supporting capacity-building policies in the security sector solely might fall short of effective prevention. **It is therefore an opportunity for UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS (and the United Nations system) to support an integrated and comprehensive and Delivering-as-One approach,** which could collaboratively look into other essential related issues, such as promoting human rights-based approaches, values of peace, tolerance and non-violence, working with the educational system and with religious figures (imams) and community leaders, civil society and youth/women organizations to redress propaganda messages of hatred and extremism in the name of Islam in social media and other circles prone to enrolment and radicalization (correctional facilities, juvenile detention centres, mosques).

68. **There is a need to develop approaches for joint programmes and joint resource mobilization towards Delivering as One.** A strong impetus should come from headquarters of the funds and programmes as well as agencies in this regard. **It is important to further enhance existing capacities in the Resident Coordinator office,** not only to address the challenges of coordination and avoid the duplication of work by various agencies, but also to foster joint resource mobilization in support of the UNDAF 2018-2022 formulation process as well as full implementation of Delivering as One in the next UNDAF cycle.

69. **It is critical for UNDP to continue its active role in supporting the Government's coordination capacity. UNDP should consider to increase involvement in assisting the Government in coordination of donor contributions and resource mobilization.** However resource mobilization will need to be accompanied by the development of programming and implementation capacities of the government.

70. The field visit to Guinea took place this year; however, the new country programme document for Guinea, incorporating the Delivering-as-One approach, will only be presented in 2017. This presents a missed opportunity to combine the discussions on the field visit with the consideration of the new country programme for Guinea. **In future, it would be useful to select as the destination of the Board field visit a programme country whose country programme document would be presented to the Board the same year.**

ANNEX

List of participants in the field visit by members of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to Guinea, 10-15 April 2016

Country	Name and title
ASIAN AND THE PACIFIC	
Yemen	Mr. Belal Abdo Second Secretary
AFRICA	
Benin	Ms. Edwige Agossou Ahoussoubemey Counselor
EASTERN EUROPE	
Montenegro	Mr. Nikola Ivezaj Second Secretary
LATIN AMERICAN AND THE CARIBBEAN	
Antigua and Barbuda	Mr. Tumasie Blair Counselor, and Vice-President, UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Executive Board
WESTERN EUROPE AND OTHER STATES	
Belgium	H.E. Ms. Bénédicte Frankinet Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative, and Vice-President, UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Executive Board
Norway	Mr. Andreas Danevad Senior Adviser, Section for UN Policy, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
SECRETARIAT	
UNDP	Mr. Jordi Llopart Secretary, UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Executive Board
UNFPA	Mr. Horst Rutsch Senior Editorial Advisor
UNOPS	Ms. Elle Wang Partnerships Analyst