

U.S. Remarks
UNICEF Executive Board Annual Session
June 14-17, 2022

Item 7ab – Evaluation Annual Report

- The United States thanks the Executive Director and the Secretariat for the reports.
- The United States notes that despite challenges brought on by the continuation of the pandemic, the evaluation function remains strong, the quality of evaluations remains high, and the creativity that enabled the evaluation function to adapt to difficult times augurs well for business continuity in the face of possible future disruptions.
- We note the importance of working with partners in measurement and evaluation. How will UNICEF bring your partners along as you implement this report's recommendations and lessons learned?
- The United States notes management's response. Can management assure the Board that future responses to evaluations will be timely, robust and actively implemented and monitored as called for in the report?

Item 7c – Evaluation of Cluster Lead Role

- The United States notes and welcomes the evaluation of UNICEF's cluster function and its management response.
- We appreciate UNICEF for critically examining its organizational performance in the Cluster Lead Agency (CLA) role. As noted in the report, while UNICEF has generally delivered on the coordination responsibilities of its CLA role, pervasive and serious issues in cluster staffing and capacities remain.
- The CLA role is insufficiently supported and does not receive prioritization commensurate with the responsibilities and requirements of the role. We consistently raised our concern with these issues to UNICEF, particularly in regard to staffing and double-hatting of cluster coordinators, prior to the completion of the evaluation; several of these issues were identified more than seven years ago in the previous evaluation.
- We would like to see UNICEF improve its cluster leadership responsibilities, especially in building consensus among cluster partners around a shared vision and strategy, increasing opportunities for local actor engagement, promoting inter-sectoral connections, and sharing experiences on the cluster approach in humanitarian country teams (HCTs) and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC).
- We support the key recommendations of the evaluation and are pleased that the management response has agreed fully with all but one recommendation, which was partially agreed.
- We are particularly interested in seeing progress made on funding of staffing, management and prioritization of CLA staffing, accountability at senior country and regional staff levels, and leadership with the IASC.
- We welcome improved clarity on the implementation of 'provider of last resort' and seek to better understand UNICEF's operational mandate in circumstances where provider of last resource implementation is necessary.

- We also welcome updates on how UNICEF is supporting humanitarian-development coherence through increased and focused collaboration between cluster coordinators and other technical advisors.
- We ask UNICEF to include reports and briefs to Member States of its performance as a Cluster Lead Agency in future sessions of the Executive Board. Updates on UNICEF's progress in delivering on its CLA responsibilities, including from UNICEF's Executive Director, are critical for accountability. We look forward to updates in subsequent sessions of the Executive Board.