

UNICEF Executive Board
Item 2: Repositioning of the UN Development System
15 June 2022

Madame President, Excellencies,

I deliver this statement on behalf of the following 38 members and 1 donor, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, EU as a Donor, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Mexico, Republic of Moldova, Monaco, Kingdom of the Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, Türkiye, the United Kingdom, the United States, Ukraine, and my own country, Poland.

The achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals is under threat. Inequality, vulnerability, fragility and extreme poverty are increasing. And compounding global crises risk further derailing the development gains made to date. With increased frequency and furore, the UN system is called upon to be agile and responsive to global shocks. Achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a shared responsibility. It requires solid and reliable support from member states, and we recognise that further progress is needed on this front. At the same time, it requires the UN agencies to build on the strengths and comparative advantages of each agency: pooling knowledge, expertise and resources. The importance of inter-agency collaboration and joint approaches to planning, programming, financing, implementation, reporting and evaluation at all levels of the UN Development System is not new. But the importance of fully embedding the UN Development System reforms is more critical than ever before.

We want to acknowledge your commitment to delivering as part of a more effective, efficient “one UN” and we want to commend you for the progress achieved. But we equally recognize that today’s world requires all of us to step up our efforts more than ever, including system wide coherence and unequivocal support for reforms of the system at global, regional and especially at country level.

We wanted to draw your attention to five elements on which we would welcome renewed focus and dialogue.

First, we continue to stress the importance of **integrated responses to prevent, respond and recover from crises**. We acknowledge the work of UNICEF in contributing to joint analysis through the Common Country Analysis, Humanitarian Needs Overview and other analysis tools. How do you intend to build on this collaborative approach to analysis through integrated planning and programme

delivery? In particular, we would welcome an update on how you intend to support the use of collective outcomes in planning processes.

Second, following an integrated planning process, we note the importance of **critically assessing the agency country presence** to ensure there are the right skills and expertise to deliver on the agreed country programme documents. This includes tailoring the UN presence to meet the country needs, which may necessitate scaling down the presence when a large operational footprint may not be required, or bringing in staff with different expertise, as and when needed, such as those with experience in conflict and post conflict contexts. We urge you to continue to consolidate your operations and find efficiencies across the broader UN Country Team. To this end, we would welcome further information on how your agency has contributed to the efficiency agenda, especially at country level, including the use of common premises, increased data interoperability and common back office functions.

Third, we highlight the importance of ensuring **alignment of the Country Programme Documents with the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks**. We like to reiterate the importance of the Resident Coordinator certifying that the Country Programs are in alignment with the UNSDCF. We also recognize that with limited resources available for country programmes there is a great need to utilize them strategically, for example by using them to **leverage innovative, private and national finances to achieve the SDGs**.

Fourth, the 2020 QCPR included renewed direction to UN Development System Entities to support programme countries in their efforts to respect and fulfil their **human rights obligations and commitments**. A human-rights based approach is critical to ensure that UN development system programming reaches those most in need. How are you strengthening the human-rights based approach within UNICEF? How are you providing training to staff to support the integration of human rights across your programmes?

Finally, we request a fuller discussion around the **Management and Accountability Framework**, including the performance appraisal metrics of Heads of Agency in country. As a testament to the importance of your work in country, we see the role of the Head of Agency as a lynchpin in ensuring successful implementation of the reforms.

We remain deeply appreciative of the achievements to date on your implementation of the UN Development System reform and its contribution to improved development results. We look forward to continuing to work with you on the realisation of this agenda as we jointly endeavour to support efforts to consolidate development gains, build resilience to withstand the impact of global crises, and achieve the SDGs.