

Statement delivered by Daniela Buzducea, Vice-President – Global Advocacy and External Engagement lead, World Vision. UNICEF Executive Board. First regular session. February 7, 2023.

Madame President, Mrs. Russell, Distinguished representatives:

The last three years we have all witnessed the regression of hard-won progress in the rights of children and young people, as multiple and cascading crisis - from climate change to COVID-19 to conflict -- have threatened their very lives.

We agree with much of what has been said this morning by you, Madame President, by Executive Director Russell, and by members of this Board, who are at the forefront of championing children's rights.

It is consistent with what I heard last week from World Vision's children's advisory group. They fear the inequality that comes with the increasing number of children falling behind. Jimena, age 16, from Peru, said: "the pandemic resulted in social explosions where children's rights were lost".

Today, more than ever, a unified voice on behalf of children's rights is not only a moral obligation -- it's the right thing to do if we are committed to delivering on the SDGs promise. We must seek justice for the most marginalized and vulnerable among us.

World Vision remains committed to working in partnership with UNICEF and other NGOs with whom we share a humanitarian and development mandate, including with our faith partners.

The number and magnitude of the crises that affect children are unprecedented. As we approach the 3rd anniversary of the global pandemic, we are reflecting that our Covid-19 response has reached over 84 million people of which 36 million are children. Our humanitarian action has expanded to 52 countries – twice our reach in 2015. And our first ever global hunger response is providing assistance to 15 million people in 29 countries -- 58% of them children.

We must not allow wasting to take its toll on children's development. This is also a huge threat. Together with 12 implementing partners, World Vision is adopting simplified treatment approaches to wasting at the country level. A scale up of this approach will enable more children to recover, and our aim is to support national governments in implementing this model during this crisis and beyond.

Thank you.