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**For information**

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## United Nations Children's Fund

Executive Board

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Item 3 of the provisional agenda\*

### **UNICEF report on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit**

#### *Summary*

In accordance with Executive Board decision 2001/4, the present report summarizes the response of UNICEF to the recommendations contained in the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) issued from 1 January to 31 December 2022. Of the four reports publicly issued during that period, three contained recommendations directly relevant to UNICEF. All 20 recommendations issued in the system-wide reports were addressed to UNICEF: 16 to the UNICEF management and 4 to the Executive Board as the legislative body of UNICEF. This report provides UNICEF management responses to the relevant recommendations and includes an update on the implementation status of the recommendations contained in JIU reports issued prior to 2022. The organization greatly appreciates the insight of the JIU and the related observations and recommendations included therein.

The Executive Board may wish to take note of the present report, including the management responses to the four recommendations of the JIU intended for consideration by the Executive Board.

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\* E/ICEF/2023/9.

Note: The present document was processed in its entirety by UNICEF.



## I. Overview

1. The Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) issues annual reports, notes and management letters addressed to the executive heads of United Nations organizations that have accepted its statute. Each report or note contains a series of recommendations for consideration by either the executive heads or the legislative/governing bodies of each organization. Management letters contain recommendations for the attention of the executive heads of all participating organizations for action as appropriate.

2. This UNICEF report to the Executive Board provides a brief overview of the UNICEF response to relevant reports publicly issued by the JIU from 1 January to 31 December 2022<sup>1</sup> and comments on JIU recommendations directed to UNICEF (see annex I). The complete reports and notes of the JIU and any additional annexes and comments – for example, those by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) – can be obtained through the [JIU website](#) or through the hyperlinked titles of each report presented in section II.

3. Since the UNICEF submission of the JIU report for 2021 ([E/ICEF/2022/12](#)) to the Executive Board at its annual session of 2022, the organization has worked with the JIU on various reviews. UNICEF management continues to prioritize and provide the implementation status on the recommendations of the JIU. As a member organization of the CEB, UNICEF also contributes to the United Nations system-wide consolidated responses to JIU reports.

4. In 2022, the JIU issued four reports, one of which was specific to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat); the remaining three were system-wide reviews. Contained in the three system-wide reports were 20 recommendations with relevance to UNICEF (4 addressed to the UNICEF Executive Board and 16 to the executive head of UNICEF). The acceptance and implementation status of the 20 recommendations is presented in annex I and can be summarized as follows as at 31 January 2023:

(a) UNICEF accepted 18 recommendations, of which 16 have been implemented and 2 are in progress;

(b) Two recommendations were not relevant or outside UNICEF sole remit for implementation.

5. Annex II details the status of the 13 recommendations made by the JIU prior to 2022 that were in progress as at 31 January 2023. In summary:

(a) Eight were implemented;

(b) Five were accepted and are in progress (four were issued in 2020 and one in 2021).

## II. Highlights of Joint Inspection Unit reports issued in 2022

6. The three reports with recommendations relevant to UNICEF are summarized below. For additional comments on the relevant recommendations, see annex I.

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<sup>1</sup> The Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) issued four reports during this period, of which three were relevant to UNICEF. At the 2023 annual session of the Executive Board, UNICEF will comment on reports issued after 31 December 2021 that were part of the JIU programme of work for 2020 and 2021.

## **A. Review of the management of implementing partners in United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2021/4)<sup>2</sup>**

7. As an organization that works with implementing partners on a large scale, UNICEF welcomes the JIU follow-up review of the management of implementing partners by organizations of the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2021/4), examining the dynamic interplay among the United Nations system, major contributors and implementing partners and assessing the progress achieved since 2013. The review reflected on relevant changes in the global landscape over the past decade, including the significant increase in the proportion of earmarked contributions; the rapid advances in technology and how entities have utilized them in improving their procedures and processes; how entities have adapted to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic; and how these changes have affected the ways in which United Nations entities engage and manage implementing partners.

8. The JIU follow-up review notes several findings and makes 10 formal recommendations. These are supplemented by 17 informal or ‘soft’ recommendations that are framed as suggestions to the executive heads of United Nations organizations on how they can effect further improvements in United Nations entities’ engagement with implementing partners and strengthen governance, accountability and oversight and be fit for purpose. The findings and recommendations emphasize the importance of the optimal positioning of implementation partnership-related functions within the United Nations entities, adequate capacity and smart tools and approaches. In addition, alignment of the efforts of capacity-strengthening initiatives and adequate consideration of implementation partnership in organizational enterprise risk management systems are emphasized. The findings and recommendations also urge inter-agency harmonization and alignment of definition, principles, standards and practices among United Nations agencies.

9. UNICEF is pleased to note that its good practices are acknowledged in the review and is committed to use the findings and recommendations of the report to make additional enhancements for continued principled, efficient and effective implementation partnership management throughout the organization as well as towards more coordinated and more aligned practices with its United Nations partners. (CEB comments are available in [A/77/317/Add.1.](#))

## **B. Review of the ethics function in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2021/5)**

10. The objective of the review of the ethics function in the United Nations system was to assess the progress made since the last report published in 2010. The report confirmed that considerable progress has been made, but also revealed shortcomings on arrangements of the ethics function across United Nations organizations.

11. UNICEF was highlighted in the report as a good role model for achieving almost total staff coverage for completion of mandatory ethics training and the requirement for consultants to complete the mandatory training on ethics prior to the issuance of their contracts. Moreover, the Ethics Office conducts tailored and needs-based training and outreach activities to further enhance the awareness of UNICEF personnel on ethics and integrity, and will continue to further strengthen and refine its outreach and training programme.

12. The report contains four formal recommendations and a number of informal recommendations to strengthen and improve the ethics functions in the United Nations system. UNICEF acknowledges the recommendations and appreciates their

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<sup>2</sup> Identification numbers of JIU reports correspond to the JIU programme of work and not to the year of issuance.

significance towards an independent, adequately resourced, credible and strengthened ethics function. (CEB comments available in [A/77/258/Add.1.](#))

### **C. Business continuity management in United Nations system organizations ([JIU/REP/2021/6](#))**

13. UNICEF welcomes the JIU report on business continuity management in United Nations system organizations ([JIU/REP/2021/6](#)) and considers that its purpose and objectives provide a comprehensive assessment of business continuity management (BCM), allowing for enhanced coordination to prepare for and address future disruptive events. The report analysed the status of the use and integration of business continuity policies, plans, processes and practices across United Nations system organizations, while identifying good practices and lessons learned to guide future planning.

14. In addition to assessing the BCM framework, business continuity plans, oversight and accountability and inter-agency coordination, the report seized the opportunity to review the use of BCM by the United Nations in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, which also provided lessons learned for future events. One key linkage made was that of BCM being an element of a more comprehensive and coordinated framework of organizational resilience aligned with International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 22301 standards. UNICEF, through implementation of the United Nations organizational resilience management system, has matured its existing BCM programme such that it is noted as one of the United Nations organizations that has fully reflected all 11 core elements, as identified by the JIU, that are required to support a comprehensive approach to BCM.

15. Several important findings and recommendations include: the lack of sufficient or dedicated resources for BCM throughout the United Nations system; the reiteration of the fact that buy-in and full support at the most senior level is a crucial building block for embedding BCM practices within an organization, and ensuring it is viewed as essential and can be effectively integrated across the organization (which was noted in its 2011 review, [JIU/REP/2011/6](#)). An additional point made was an emphasis on ensuring entities apply a consistent and disciplined approach to the maintenance, exercise and review components of their business continuity plans such that these plans remain relevant and effective for any event.

16. UNICEF has completed the implementation of the recommendations of this report and is committed to use the findings to continually enhance BCM throughout the organization and in the context of being more coordinated with its United Nations partners in preparedness, response and recovery from disruptive events. (CEB comments available in [A/77/256/Add.1.](#))

## Annex I

### Summary of the status of Joint Inspection Unit recommendations addressed to UNICEF, January–December 2022

*Relevant recommendations*

*Remarks*

#### Review of the management of implementing partners in United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2021/4)<sup>3</sup>

1. Recommendations addressed to the legislative body/Executive Board

##### Recommendation 3

The legislative organs and governing bodies of organizations of the United Nations system should, starting in 2024 and on the basis of reports submitted to them annually by their respective executive heads, provide overall strategic guidance and legislative oversight to the management of their implementing partners, including in the framework of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, especially with regard to capacity-building, inter-agency coordination and information-sharing.

##### Accepted and implemented

The quadrennial QCPR monitoring framework 2021–2024 has dedicated indicators to track United Nations system engagement with national and international partners at the country level, with specific reporting modalities. UNICEF provides an annual update to the Executive Board on the repositioning of the United Nations development system in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (QCPR).

UNICEF will continue to contribute to the reflection of the inter-agency implementing partner network, which currently remains an informal group, on the formalization of implementing partner-related coordination and information-sharing.

Noting that this recommendation is addressed to the legislative bodies, and in view of established reporting modalities, UNICEF management considers it already implemented.

##### Recommendation 9

The legislative organs and governing bodies of United Nations system organizations should, beginning in 2023, assess their approaches to capacity-building of implementing partners and strengthening national capacities and ownership, in the framework of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, including the effectiveness of such efforts since 2013, progress made and lessons learned, based on reports prepared by their respective secretariats, and adopt specific measures to strengthen national capacities and ownership and build the capacities of their implementing partners.

##### Accepted and implemented

UNICEF continues to support the role of its Executive Board in analysing capacity-building approaches of implementing partners and strengthening of national capacities and ownership through the review and approval by the Executive Board of country programming frameworks anchored in the United Nations development system, as well as fully aligned through the commitments contained in the QCPR.

It should be highlighted that the revised UNICEF procedure on programme implementation, and associated guidance and handbook, was developed in consultation with users, including implementing partners. The procedure now includes a standard approach to providing capacity strengthening costs (7 per cent) to local organizations, which is considered a significant positive change and catalytic factor towards strengthening the capacity of local and national

<sup>3</sup> Identification numbers of reports of the JIU do not correspond to the year of issuance.

*Relevant recommendations**Remarks*

civil society organizations. As highlighted in paragraph 254 of the report, UNICEF reports from programmatic monitoring visits, capacity assessments (e.g., on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse and financial management) as well as observations from spot checks and audits, contain direct recommendations for implementing partners to strengthen programmatic and operational management that are discussed with the partners. UNICEF will widely share its experience with other United Nations agencies. UNICEF continues to participate in and influence inter-agency efforts to review lessons learned since 2013 on all implementing partner matters, including on capacity development of local and national civil society organizations, and to use these lessons to inform the development of related materials.

## 2. Recommendations addressed to the executive head

**Recommendation 1**

The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should, by the end of 2024, develop, through consultations in the appropriate inter-agency mechanisms, a common system-wide definition and a set of agreed guiding principles and standards for implementing partners that is informed by a risk-based and strategic approach to partnerships and results-based management methodology.

**Outside the sole remit**

This recommendation is outside the sole remit of UNICEF and aligns with the Note by the Secretary-General to this JIU review ([A/77/317/Add.1](#), paragraph 3) and with the comments to this specific recommendation in paragraphs 9 and 10 in the note.

Noting the above, UNICEF Division of Data, Analytics, Planning and Monitoring continues to evolve its country management tools, including those for programme implementation with partners, to facilitate effective and efficient engagement as well as risk management. Further, progress is being made towards end-to-end digitalization of partnership engagement and risk management processes, facilitating transparency, online collaboration, sharing (such as sexual exploitation and abuse assessments) and analysability of UNICEF engagement with implementing partners.

Throughout 2022, UNICEF proactively participated in a number of inter-agency initiatives, such as the transition to a harmonized approach for sexual exploitation and abuse risk management and the revision of common micro-assessment tools that were shared with agencies that use harmonized approaches to cash transfers and agencies that do not use them. UNICEF will continue to engage in these informal networks.

Moreover, a Chief Risk Officer has been appointed in the Office of the Executive Director. This role is expected to reflect on organizational strategies and governance for risk management, and to proactively identify and pursue opportunities for coordination and collaboration and to influence the system-wide approach, principles and standards for risk management.

*Relevant recommendations**Remarks***Recommendation 2**

The executive heads of organizations of the United Nations system should, by the end of 2023, include in their annual reports on the work of the organization a section on the engagement and management of their implementing partners, including important details useful to the legislative organs and governing bodies.

**Accepted and implemented**

UNICEF aligns with the comments in the Note by the Secretary-General to this JIU review ([A/77/317/Add.1](#), paragraphs 11 and 12).

Detailed information on all projects, results achieved, expenditures, project descriptions and other key information is publicly available on the [UNICEF Transparency Portal](#). In addition, country programme documents, financial information and other annual divisional reports and dashboards report on various elements of engagement and management of implementing partners. Implementation risk management, financial assurance and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse are included as indicators of enablers that are components of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, and are monitored and reported on. Moreover, information and data on implementing partners are two of the critical layers of information considered in the local and global level progress reviews that are reflected in UNICEF annual reports. As part of the annual report for 2022 of the Executive Director of UNICEF, information is provided to the Executive Board on the value and volume of implementing partners in both the humanitarian and development contexts.

**Recommendation 4**

The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should, by the end of 2023, update as necessary and implement their implementing partner policies and related guidance, including standard operating procedures for the selection, engagement, management, oversight and evaluation of implementing partners, to sustain a strategic and risk-based approach to implementing partner management, aligned to the entity's strategic framework.

**Accepted and implemented**

UNICEF aligns with the Note by the Secretary-General to this review ([A/77/317/Add.1](#), paragraph 17). UNICEF continuously reviews, develops and updates its procedures, guidance and tool kits for implementing partners. At an inter-agency level, efforts to harmonize implementing partner policies and procedures are already in place. This recommendation is also for consideration in the workplan of the United Nations Partner Portal group.

Implementation partnerships are well considered in the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, including through specific consultation with implementing partners that took place during the design phase of the Strategic Plan. UNICEF has revised its procedure on programme implementation to the extent possible, harmonized approaches such as partner mapping and selection, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse and micro-assessments. With more agencies joining the United Nations Partner Portal, the selection of implementing partners is standardized among agencies participating in the United Nations Partner Portal. A full standardization of approaches and tools, including standard operating procedures for management and oversight of implementing partners among United Nations agencies, is desirable, and UNICEF continues to support efforts



*Relevant recommendations**Remarks***Recommendation 5**

The executive heads of United Nations system organizations that have not yet done so should, on the basis of a cost-benefit analysis, establish an implementing partner unit or designate, by the end of 2024, a focal point for the management of implementing partners to support the coordination of implementing partner policies and activities within the organization, including by providing policy guidance and backstopping and by facilitating liaison and information-sharing, under terms of reference that clearly define its role and responsibilities.

towards this standardization despite challenges in different agency structures, governance mechanisms, scale of implementation with implementing partners and resource bases.

**Accepted and implemented**

UNICEF has a global civil society organization strategic coordination group that collaborates with relevant stakeholders throughout the organization. A priority global workplan and responsibility matrix for the coordination group are in place. Priorities for 2023 will include taking forward recommendations from the report of an internal civil society organization review conducted in 2022. The coordination function enables UNICEF to provide consistent coordination capacity to manage relationships with civil society organizations and establishes a 'single point of entry' for inquiries and feedback. The coordination group includes the Division of Data, Analytics, Planning and Monitoring, which is the business owner of policy guidance, procedures, tool kits, guidance and tools.

**Recommendation 6**

The executive heads of the United Nations system should incorporate implementing partner risks into their organization's risk management frameworks by the end of 2023.

**Accepted and in progress**

Implementing partner risks, including those related to the harmonized approach to cash transfers, are captured in the UNICEF risk management system. In addition, the Chief Risk Officer in the Office of the Executive Director is expected to evolve the risk management agenda, including that of implementation partnership risk management. To supplement the already established risk management frameworks for fiduciary and sexual exploitation and abuse risks, UNICEF is also in the process of developing its framework, procedure and tools for managing the environmental and social standards.

**Recommendation 7**

The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should develop, by the end of 2024, key performance indicators for the management of implementing partners and establish systems to collect, monitor and report the performance data.

**Accepted and implemented**

UNICEF aligns with the Note by the Secretary-General to this JIU review ([A/77/317/Add.1](#), paragraph 27) in that organizations collect, monitor and report data for several key performance indicators related to implementing partners in the context of the QCPR monitoring framework 2021–2024 for results achieved. Through the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, the annual report of the Executive Director and its supplemental data companion, various enablers and performance indicators are also captured. Furthermore, through the digitalization of implementation partnership processes in the electronic workplan and electronic programme documents, UNICEF defines performance indicators and analytics that form key components of each office performance indicators and dashboards.



*Relevant recommendations**Remarks***Recommendation 8**

The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should, by the end of 2023, share among themselves, through existing inter-agency mechanisms/forums, their specialized training materials and modules for the management of implementing partners, including due diligence, risk and capacity assessments of partners, results-based and risk-based performance monitoring, fraud prevention, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, capacity-building, working with local non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations, the harmonized approach to cash transfers and the United Nations Partner Portal.

**Recommendation 10**

The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should, by the end of 2024 and with the support of the Development Coordination Office, resident coordinator offices and the United Nations country team mechanisms, agree upon specific measures to further strengthen inter-agency coordination for improving implementing partner management at the country level and report on the implementation to their respective legislative organs and governing bodies from 2025.

**Accepted and implemented**

UNICEF aligns itself with the Note by the Secretary-General to this JIU review ([A/77/317/Add.1](#), paragraphs 29 and 30). UNICEF will continue to participate in the implementing partners' inter-agency management meeting to exchange information and approaches on managing implementing partners, and to consider the feasibility of sharing specialized training materials and modules for the management of implementing partners, including on private sector due diligence, risk and capacity assessments of partners, fraud prevention, protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, and the harmonized approach to cash transfers.

**Outside sole remit**

This recommendation is outside the sole remit of UNICEF.

UNICEF aligns itself with the Note by the Secretary-General to this JIU review ([A/77/317/Add.1](#), paragraph 36) in the efforts to strengthen inter-agency coordination. UNICEF is committed to proactively support and advocate for actions that facilitate country-level coordination and sharing on implementation partnerships, building on the facilities provided in the United Nations Partner Portal.

**Review of the ethics function in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2021/5)**

## 1. Recommendations addressed to the legislative body/Executive Board

**Recommendation 2**

The legislative organs and governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations that have not yet done so should request that organizations update the terms of reference of their respective audit and oversight committees by the end of 2023 to include, where necessary, provisions for ethics, and ethics as a desirable area of expertise for new committee members.

**Accepted and implemented**

Noting that this recommendation is addressed to the legislative bodies, UNICEF management considers it already implemented, as noted in the JIU report referenced in paragraphs 148–152. UNICEF agrees that audit and oversight committees, where necessary, should have provisions for oversight of ethics in accordance with recommendation 4 of the review of audit and oversight committees in the United Nations system ([JIU/REP/2019/6](#)), which UNICEF has implemented and that states, “The legislative and/or governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations that have not already done so should give due consideration to including the oversight of ethics and anti-fraud activities in the revised terms of reference or charter of their audit and oversight committees in order to strengthen the accountability frameworks of their respective organizations by the end of 2021,

*Relevant recommendations**Remarks*

provided that these audit and oversight committee meet the independence criteria.”

In the 2020 Charter of the UNICEF Audit Advisory Committee (AAC) in accordance with articles 2.3 and 3.1.3, the AAC advises on the following: ethics activities, including the Code of Ethics and whistleblower policy; systems for promoting international civil service rules and staff conduct, integrity standards and managing conflicts of interest; and quality assurance systems (including the internal and external assessments). The AAC also considers the implications of the reports of the Ethics Office and related management responses, and highlights issues that might require further attention, as appropriate, for the attention of the Executive Director. The AAC further advises the Executive Director on internal controls and risk management, which includes enterprise risk management and the anti-fraud strategy and its prevention and detection mechanisms.

Further, in terms of the recommendation to include the provision for ethics, section 6.4 of the Charter of the AAC includes ethics as one of the areas of expertise. The Charter states that the Executive Director shall ensure that the AAC, as a whole, is made up of a balanced mix of professionals from public or private sector organizations with senior leadership experience and familiarity in organizational management, governance, finance, accounting, risk management, internal auditing and investigations, external auditing, evaluations, ethics, information technology, etc.

In terms of the recruitment and appointment of the Ethics Director, AAC has provided advice to senior management in this regard. UNICEF strongly reiterates paragraph 153 of the JIU report ([JIU/REP/2021/5](#)), which states, “the selection and appointment as well as the dismissal of the head of the Ethics Office lie within the competence of the executive heads of United Nations system organizations.”

## 2. Recommendations addressed to the executive head

### **Recommendation 1**

The executive heads of United Nations system organizations who have not yet done so should with immediate effect ensure that the contracts of newly appointed heads of Ethics Offices are issued for a full term.

### **Accepted and implemented**

In 2020, the Ethics Office was established as an independent business unit outside of the Office of the Executive Director, headed by a Director who reports directly to the Executive Director, with a maximum office tenure of two terms of five years. This is also outlined in the report of the accountability system of UNICEF ([E/ICEF/2022/24](#)) dated 11 July 2022.

### **Recommendation 3**

### **Accepted and implemented**

*Relevant recommendations**Remarks*

The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations who have not yet done so should ensure that periodic refresher courses in ethics are introduced as mandatory for all staff and non-staff of their respective organization, irrespective of seniority, category and level, every three years, from 2023 onwards.

**Recommendation 4**

The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations who have not yet done so, supported by the ethics functions of their respective organizations, should, at the latest by 2025, evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency, including “value for money”, of their financial disclosure and declaration of interest programmes and, on the basis of the findings, propose changes to the relevant policies where appropriate.

Tailored training and outreach programmes are conducted by the Ethics Office to strengthen the understanding of UNICEF personnel on integrity and ethics on an ongoing basis.

**Accepted and in progress**

The Ethics Office is gathering information on the policy updates made by other United Nations agencies and is consulting the human resources policy team to come up with a comprehensive plan for the policy review.

**Business continuity management in United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2021/6)**

## 1. Recommendations addressed to the legislative body/Executive Board

**Recommendation 6**

The legislative organs and governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should consider, at the earliest opportunity, the conclusions of the internal management assessment of the continuity of operations during the COVID-19 pandemic prepared by the executive heads of their respective organizations and, on that basis, take appropriate decisions to address the identified gaps and risks and to ensure continuity of business operations.

## 2. Recommendations addressed to the executive head

**Recommendation 1**

The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should, by the end of 2023, review their business continuity management framework and ensure that the core elements identified in the present report are established and owned by relevant stakeholders to enable effective coordination of business continuity processes and practices, build coherence in their implementation and promote accountability at all levels.

**Recommendation 2**

The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should, by the end of 2023, ensure that the maintenance, exercise and review components of their business continuity plans are applied through a

**Accepted and implemented**

Noting that this recommendation is addressed to the legislative bodies, UNICEF management considers it already implemented. UNICEF management has updated the Executive Board on the cascading risks and lessons learned from pandemic. The various management and humanitarian reports over the past three years have provided this information at all levels of the organization.

**Accepted and implemented**

UNICEF has already established the recommended core components in its BCM framework, as noted in annex III of the JIU report on business continuity management in the United Nations system organizations. Through the integration of the organizational resilience management system into the existing BCM programme, UNICEF continues to mature its current programme and strengthen overall organizational resilience.’

**Accepted and implemented**

The Continuity Resilience Unit within the Division of Financial and Administrative Management conducted briefing sessions with all headquarters and country offices in all regions on all updated organizational

*Relevant recommendations**Remarks*

consistent and disciplined approach to confirm that the plans remain relevant and effective.

resilience management system and BCM policies and procedures following the dissemination of guidance notes by the Comptroller in June 2022. It has been emphasized to all offices the importance of performing all the activities noted in the organizational resilience management system maintenance, exercise and review regime, especially the exercise of their business continuity plans such that lessons learned are identified and implemented for improved readiness for disruptive events. Compliance is being monitored and support provided. In addition, as part of the statement of internal control, all UNICEF offices undergo an annual self-assessment exercise that includes an attestation that each office has a business continuity plan that has been updated and approved within the past year. Moreover, offices are to ensure that staff are trained on the business continuity plan and it is, at minimum, annually exercised, challenges addressed and lessons learned used to update the plan.

**Recommendation 3**

The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should, by the end of 2023, strengthen their learning mechanisms to contribute to organizational resilience by requiring after-action reviews following disruptive incidents and periodic internal management reviews of their business continuity management frameworks.

**Accepted and implemented**

UNICEF has already implemented this recommendation, as noted in annex IX of the JIU report on business continuity management in the United Nations system organizations. UNICEF offices perform after-action reviews for both actual events and exercises to obtain key learning opportunities for improving preparedness for future disruptive events. UNICEF will continue to work to ensure that offices at all levels of the organization perform their after-action reviews more consistently, and that internal management reviews of the BCM framework remain aligned and updated to the organizational resilience management system, as the emergency management framework for United Nations CEB members.

**Recommendation 4**

The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should, by the end of 2024, report to their legislative organs and governing bodies on progress towards the implementation of the policy on the organizational resilience management system and its revised performance indicators, and highlight good practices and lessons learned, especially in the area of business continuity management.

**Accepted and implemented**

UNICEF reports on efforts made on organizational resilience management and BCM through the annual report of the Executive Director, which is presented to the Executive Board. Moreover, business continuity indicators are also reported through the publicly available annual report of the Division of Financial and Administrative Management. At the request of the Board, UNICEF is prepared to provide further briefings, information and reporting on the area of BCM.

**Recommendation 5**

In 2023, the executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should conduct an internal management assessment of the continuity of business operations during the COVID-19 pandemic to identify

**Accepted and implemented**

An after-action review report was compiled at the headquarters level of the internal management assessment, inclusive of issues and lessons learned in various areas, such as human resources, information and

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*Relevant recommendations**Remarks*

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gaps, enablers, good practices and lessons learned and adjust policies, processes and procedures, in particular in areas such as human resources, information and communications technology management and occupational safety and health, and indicate necessary measures to better prepare for and respond to future disruptive incidents.

communications technology, facilities and occupational health and safety. After final approval by the Office of the Executive Director, the report will be disseminated to senior management to assist UNICEF in improved planning for and integration into a 'new normal'.

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**Review of management and administration in the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) (JIU/REP/2022/1)**

1. No recommendations addressed to UNICEF.

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## Annex II

### Summary of the status of all open accepted Joint Inspection Unit recommendations addressed to UNICEF prior to 2022

<i>JIU report symbol</i>	<i>Recommendation (number) and summary text</i>	<i>Addressee</i>	<i>Current status</i>
<b>JIU/REP/2018/6<sup>4</sup></b> <b>Enhancing accessibility for persons with disabilities to conferences and meetings of the United Nations system</b>	(8) Draft provisions for incorporating accessibility checks and/or requirements into procurement policies and guidelines for consideration and adoption by the relevant decision-making authority.	Executive head	Implemented
	(9) Develop and implement through relevant inter-agency mechanisms a common system-wide mandatory specialized training module on disability inclusion and accessibility for personnel involved directly or indirectly in the servicing of conferences and meetings.	Executive head	Implemented
<b>JIU/REP/2019/4</b> <b>Review of change management in the United Nations system organizations</b>	(5) Give greater prominence to the role that strategic human resources management functions play in organizational change management, including promoting changes in individual attitudes and behaviours, establishing mechanisms to reinforce these and creating channels to communicate feedback across all personnel.	Executive head	Implemented
<b>JIU/REP/2019/8</b> <b>Review of staff exchange and similar inter-agency mobility measures in United Nations system organizations</b>	(8) Enable all United Nations system staff members to compete for vacant posts on a basis equal to that established for their own staff, while considering downsizing contexts, the abolition of posts and positions, and the administration of rotational placements.	Executive head	In progress
<b>JIU/REP/2020/5</b> <b>Enterprise risk management: approaches and uses in United Nations system organizations</b>	(1) Incorporate enterprise risk management into meetings at least annually, with substantive coverage determined by the organization's mandate, field network and risk exposure.	Legislative body	In progress

<sup>4</sup> Identification numbers of JIU reports do not correspond to the year of issuance.

<i>JIU report symbol</i>	<i>Recommendation (number) and summary text</i>	<i>Addressee</i>	<i>Current status</i>
	(2) Undertake a comprehensive review of their enterprise risk management implementation against Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) benchmarks 1 to 9, as outlined in the present report.	Executive head	In progress
	(4) Report on the outcomes of a comprehensive review of the implementation of enterprise risk management against JIU benchmarks 1 to 9.	Legislative body	In progress
<b>JIU/REP/2020/7</b> <b>Blockchain applications in the United Nations system: towards a state of readiness</b>	(2) Ensure that examination of possible blockchain use cases will be based on assessments of project risks, including with respect to relevant organizational policies and regulations on privileges and immunities, data protection confidentiality, cybersecurity, system integrity and reputation.	Executive head	Implemented
	(4) Ensure that any decision on using blockchain should be based on an appropriate determination of the business case and of the most suitable solution, using as guidance a decision-making matrix.	Executive head	Implemented
<b>JIU/REP/2020/8</b> <b>Review of mainstreaming environmental sustainability across organizations of the United Nations system</b>	(3) Devote adequate resources in specific budget plans, including by better utilizing existing available resources, to mainstreaming environmental sustainability and report on the implementation to legislative organs and governing bodies from 2023.	Executive head	Implemented
	(5) Ensure that all recruitment and selection processes, as well as performance appraisal systems, incorporate and give adequate weight to environmental sustainability understanding and behaviours, and report on the implementation to legislative organs and governing bodies from 2023.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress



<i>JIU report symbol</i>	<i>Recommendation (number) and summary text</i>	<i>Addressee</i>	<i>Current status</i>
	(9) Ensure information and communications technology services' actions and projects comply with environmental sustainability considerations, including ensuring that greenhouse gas emissions are at a level compatible with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Paris agreement.	Executive head	Implemented
<b>JIU/ML/2021/1</b> <b>Management letter on securing the integrity of documents, records and archives of the United Nations system organizations</b>	(1) Give due consideration to devising and applying appropriate safeguards to secure current and historical documents, records and archives including by revisiting, if necessary, the security parameters applied to the storage of such documents in both the physical and cyber environment and including the matter in their organizations' risk registry, and to report to the Joint Inspection Unit on the measures taken to implement the present recommendation.	Executive head	Implemented