

UNICEF SRS 2023

Statement on Item 7 – Revised Evaluation Policy Drafted jointly by Norway and Germany

Madam/Mister President

I make this statement on behalf of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Ireland, Japan, the Republic of Moldova, Malta, Montenegro, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and my own country, Germany.

We thank UNICEF and the team of the evaluation function for the final revision of the evaluation policy. We greatly appreciate the efforts and tremendous work that was undertaken to ensure that the evaluation policy complies with current quality standards, international evaluation criteria and best practice.

We commend the UNICEF evaluation function for their consultative and transparent approach throughout the drafting process of the policy. We note with satisfaction that the remarks of the Executive Board and the results of the independent peer review were included in the final version. Overall, the revised evaluation policy provides greater clarity in defining the purpose and principles of evaluation and assessment standards.

The strengthening of gender, climate and inclusion-related issues is a further positive development that is highly appreciated.

We also welcome the stronger emphasis on achieving the 1% target as set out by highlighting the need for adequate and predictable human and financial resources to ensure the evaluation function can fulfil its mandate. We greatly appreciate the specification of the formula used to calculate the progress towards the 1% target. The resource allocation to the evaluation function should be reviewed regularly and the results of the reviews should be made available to the Executive Board in a timely manner.

While the evaluation function should facilitate the use of relevant, credible evaluations of high quality, it is the responsibility of UNICEF management to create incentives for the use of evaluations. In this regard we encourage the UNICEF management to be concrete and comprehensive in their management responses. Future annual reports will be reporting on qualitative progress of the evaluation function, which will allow for a better assessment of the implementation of the evaluation policy.

The effectiveness of the evaluation function depends on the presence of an enabling environment to carry out its mandate. We strongly advocate for proactive measures to be taken by the UNICEF management, aimed at the facilitation of an organizational culture that welcomes and supports independent and credible evaluations. We therefore call upon UNICEF's management to nurture a culture that values feedback, embraces critical analysis, and reform-mindedness. A robust evaluation function and proactive management responses are characteristics of an institution that values effectiveness, transparency, and guarding the trust of its donors. With a strong, independent evaluation function, management ensures continual organizational improvement and safeguards support for its work into the future.

We welcome that the revised evaluation policy clarifies roles and possible synergies between the evaluation function and other knowledge functions in UNICEF, such as audit, research,

monitoring, data and analysis, and knowledge management, and call upon UNICEF's management to continue to foster a knowledge and learning culture for increased effectiveness and organizational learning. While such collaboration is encouraged and positive, we would also like to reiterate that it is critical that the evaluation function always maintains its autonomy, impartiality, and independence.

We commend UNICEF for increased attention in the revised policy in strengthening national evaluation capacity. We encourage UNICEF not only to provide capacity training to local evaluators, including a gender-transformative approach, but also actively make use of them as evaluators to ensure increased local ownership of evaluation findings. We also call upon UNICEF to fully and consistently implement the revised evaluation policy across all areas of the organization, including different policy areas at headquarters, regional offices and at the field level, as well as capacity-building at the country and programme levels, which incorporates a strong gender-transformative approach.

The revised policy also mentions joint UN evaluations. We encourage UNICEF to prioritize and seek out opportunities for joint evaluations across the UN-system to assess joint programming and common results at country level, in line with UN reform.

We are looking forward to receiving the implementation guidelines, as well as the mid-term review.

We once again thank UNICEF and the evaluation function for their work. We encourage UNICEF to integrate the revised evaluation policy into its organizational structures and sensitize staff to its contents and significance. We firmly believe that the revised policy will contribute to secure the independence of the evaluation function, and thus be instrumental for the organization's ongoing learning, development and success.

Thank you