

U.S. STATEMENT ON ITEM 7:

As Delivered

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- The U.S. appreciates the report's overview of the wide-ranging contributions made by UNICEF to the global COVID-19 response, and how key lessons learned can be applied to accelerate recovery efforts and strengthen public health emergency (PHE) preparedness.
- We support and urge UNICEF leadership to prioritize action on the report's six recommendations.
- The pandemic has demonstrated the pivotal role of strong PHC delivery capacities at the community level, not only in accelerating progress towards the health SDG targets, including maternal and child survival, but also in mitigating the impacts of health crises, notably the food security and nutrition crisis resulting from the pandemic.
- We applaud UNICEF for its assistance to countries in building an adequately trained, paid, and equipped community health workforce. We strongly support this effort that stands to empower CHWs - the majority of whom are women - and improve maternal and child health and nutrition.
- We thank UNICEF for its leadership in the establishment of the Community Health Development Partnership launched with partner countries, WHO, and USAID last October.
- The U.S. strongly supports this country-driven initiative which aims to mobilize additional resources and align partners' support around countries' plans for bolstering their community health workforce.
- We urge Member States to support this effort which will help expand equitable access to life-saving PHC for millions of women and children, whilst also addressing gender inequities, fostering local leadership, and advancing universal health coverage and global health security objectives.
- Finally, we have a few questions:
  - To what extent are the life-saving oxygen therapy systems scaled up through UNICEF COVID-19 response support being effectively used in maternal and child health services?
  - What best practices can be gleaned from countries that have re-purposed COVID-19 vaccine ultra-cold chain equipment to strengthen essential PHC and public health functions?
  - When can the final draft of the UNICEF operational PHE response be shared with the Board?