

**UNICEF Executive Board
Annual Session 2021
Item 8 / Evaluation WASH in protracted crises**

Statement by Germany
Check against delivery

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- To begin with, I would like to align ourselves with statement held by Finland.
 - We congratulate UNICEF on a very insightful evaluation and thank UNICEF Management for a strong and encouraging management response.
 - We would like to highlight a few aspects.
 - First, the goal of sustainability of WASH operations in protracted crises requires that a longer-term perspective is integrated into planning as early as possible, i.e. when it is foreseeable that a situation will require more than just a short-term response. This must not come to the detriment of timely and principled humanitarian assistance in the WASH sector. But it should not come as an afterthought whenever operations have been running for an extended amount of time. Moreover, such sustainability planning and even more so its implementation require dedicated technical skills. We encourage UNICEF to continue building such skills, on infrastructure, business models and social and environmental standards, at the country and at the regional level. Such skills are essential for designing durable approaches and, importantly, for choosing, advising and – crucially – capacitating local partners and businesses who should ultimately run

long-term approaches. UNICEF has a role as a provider of last resort for humanitarian WASH assistance. But in protracted crises and where the context permits, planning should include exit strategies of building sustainable local operating models.

- Second, to strengthen the sustainability of UNICEF's WASH in protracted crises, additional aspects are important, which have not been addressed comprehensively by the evaluation. WASH programming has to be climate-sensitive and climate-resilient. Crisis and conflict settings are increasingly marked by climate and natural disaster risks. Analysis, planning and programming have to reflect and incorporate this reality. Goal area 4 of the current Draft Strategic Plan shows UNICEF's welcome ambition in this regard. Moreover, WASH operations need to be part of Integrated Water Resource Management in order to ensure lasting water security in the region. And lastly, WASH can and should be an integral part of addressing the Peace Dimension of the triple nexus. Sound conflict analysis is key and development-oriented WASH programmes should, wherever possible, strive to strengthen social cohesion and local employment.
- Third, we would like to emphasize Finland's call to strengthen outcome monitoring. This is ever more important given UNICEF's stated ambition to strengthen its contribution to outcomes and to catalysing lasting change through its new Strategic Plan with a corresponding shift of focus of its Results Framework. It is also important in order to gauge whether UNICEF's very comprehensive and pertinent steps for further improving its response as laid out in the management response

have the desired effects. The evaluation presented today is a crucial contribution to evidence building and UNICEF has been a thought leader on WASH in crises. We encourage UNICEF to continue building the evidence base and to promote and disseminate its insights and learnings.

- To conclude let me say that we highly value UNICEF's strength and ambition as one of the key providers and thought-leaders of WASH and we will continue supporting your important work.
- Thank you.