Executive Board of UNICEF

First Regular Session 2022

Item 11: Private Sector Fundraising 2022 Workplan and Budget

February 9th 2022, New York

Chair / Madam Chair

I deliver this statement on behalf of the following cross regional group of Member States: Belgium, Canada, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Lebanon, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Republic of Moldova, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Sweden, Turkey, the UK, the United States of America, and my own country Switzerland.

We thank UNICEF, and in particular the Director of the Private Fundraising Partnership Division and her team for the presentation today, and for the documents presented to the Board.

[General introduction]

The importance of private sector contributions to achieve the 2030 Agenda has never been greater. UNICEF's new Strategic Plan 2022-25 rightly emphasizes the importance of partnerships and engagement with the private sector to leverage financing, influence, innovation and expertise to realize children's rights and contribute to the realisation of the 2030 Agenda.

[PFP 2022 workplan]

The PFP workplan 2022 with its six strategic priorities and corresponding outcomes echoes UNICEF's Strategic Plan well. We in particular welcome the emphasis on non-financial resources to be leveraged from businesses, and the influencing of business practices, based on a child rights agenda. This is in line with UNICEF's envisioned transition from transactional private sector partnerships to more substantive private sector engagement.

We would be interested to learn more about the expected results for children from UNICEF's engagement with private sector, particularly in the field of influencing their businesses practices. Also, what is the role of country offices and National Committees in contributing to these results?

[PFP Budget 2022]

Revenues from country offices are expected to increase by 29% in 2022 compared to the 2021 approved budget, yet are below the actual estimates for 2021. We would welcome more information on the envisioned development of country office fundraising capacities, revenues and planned investments, also taking into account the expected impact and costs of the World Bank instrument.

Total investment costs in fundraising in 2022 are estimated at USD 121 Mio, which is a 40% increase on the 2021 approved investment cost of USD 85 Mio. This contrasts with a 10% revenue growth projection for 2022, compared with 2021 approved revenues. We would welcome more detailed information on planned investments and the expected long term impact in particular on Regular Resources revenues. We expect UNICEF's new Investment Strategy to provide the strategic framework for these planned investments and look forward to it.

[The Worldbank instrument]

The roll out of the WB instrument and the associated investments have started at country level. We look forward to hearing about the specific results and challenges from the first year of WB investments at UNICEF's Annual Session 2022.

We have also taken note that UNICEF has taken steps to seek approval from the UN GA to expand its options for financing through debt instruments. In light of the early stages of implementation of the WB instrument we deem it important that such instruments are firmly anchored in UNICEF's Innovative Financing and Investment Strategies, both of which are yet to be presented to the Board.

Importantly, we could like to recall Executive Board decision 2021/5 and re-emphasize that a possible repeat engagement of this pilot project must be informed by an evaluation and performance review of the instrument. Could you share more information about when this evaluation is planned to happen, and when its results will be presented to the Board?

[PFP Strategies]

We appreciate the *update on UNICEF's strategic approach to alternative/innovative finance* in response to the Executive Board decision 2021/20. While this update provides an overview of UNICEF's approach to innovate financing, we would like to hear more about UNICEF's risk mitigation strategies linked to innovative finance, as well as UNICEF’s current skills and capacities in that area. What will be the role of the newly established Office of Innovation, and more particularly the innovative finance unit, to further develop and refine UNICEF’s approach to alternative/innovative financing? Also National Committees should play a vital role in informing UNICEF’s approach to alternative finances by promoting and testing alternative financing solutions in different markets.

Given the relative novelty and potential of alternative/innovative financing for leveraging substantial resources for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda we strongly encourage UNICEF to share with UN sister agencies the best practices and lessons learnt, to promote coordination and harmonization across the UN.

Having in mind the different and additional innovative financing instruments, we would like to encourage UNICEF to work on ensuring improved coordination amongst all those various instruments.

Finally, we look forward to the forthcoming UNICEF Innovative Financing for Children Global Vision & Strategy and the UNICEF Investment Strategy and would welcome more information on the timeline for presenting these to the Board.

Let me close by thanking the PFP Director and her team, the National Committees and UNICEF country offices for their outstanding work in these exceptionally challenging times.