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United Nations Children's Fund

Executive Board

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Item 6 (f) of the provisional agenda*

Recommendation to the Executive Board

Extension of the Vaccine Independence Initiative

Summary

The Executive Director recommends that the Executive Board approve a further five-year extension of the Vaccine Independence Initiative for the period 2011 to 2015, in accordance with the terms of the original programme document approved by the Executive Board in 1991 (E/ICEF/1991/P/L.41).

Extension of the Vaccine Independence Initiative

1. The Vaccine Independence Initiative (VII) was established by the UNICEF Executive Board, initially for the period 1991-1995, as an interregional programme designed to enhance the ability of developing countries to procure, with hard currencies or their own currencies, high-quality, low-cost vaccines in quantities adequate to reach all children, sustain routine immunization services and achieve their disease-control goals. As contained in the original Executive Board document (E/ICEF/1991/P/L.41), the VII mechanism was set up with three components: (a) a revolving fund capitalized at up to \$10 million; (b) a vaccine procurement mechanism; and (c) a mechanism to utilize local currencies to replenish the fund.

2. The Executive Board has extended the VII three times since then: from 1996 to 2000 (pursuant to decision 1996/17); from 2001 to 2005 (decision 2000/14); and from 2005 to 2010 (decision 2005/12). Contributions to the VII fund (even as recently as 2008) — from the Japan International Cooperation Agency, the United

* E/ICEF/2010/15.

States Agency for International Development, Norway, New Zealand, the Australian Agency for International Development and others — have brought the fund to its current total of \$8.9 million.

3. Since its inception, 28 countries have used the VII mechanism to purchase routine vaccines. In 2010, some 22 countries make use of the VII mechanism, among them 14 Pacific Island countries, which have established through the mechanism a pooled procurement facility that includes planning, purchasing and onward freight to each destination. Many countries now use the VII mechanism to prevent their cash flow fluctuations from causing vaccine stock-outs and supply interruptions.

4. Since 2005, the VII fund has facilitated the purchase of vaccines valued at over \$39 million — an average of \$7.8 million per year. UNICEF believes the VII continues to have an important role to play in helping countries achieve their routine immunization goals, and the organization is working with States to strengthen the effectiveness and availability of the VII so that this annual average can double.

5. The Executive Director recommends that the Executive Board approve a further five-year extension of VII for the period 2011 to 2015, in accordance with the terms of the original Executive Board document, for an amount of up to \$10 million, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions.

Draft decision

6. UNICEF recommends that the Executive Board approve the following draft decision:

The Executive Board

Approves a five-year extension of the Vaccine Independence Initiative for the period 2011 to 2015, in accordance with the terms of the original document approved by the Executive Board in 1991 (E/ICEF/1991/P/L.41), for an amount of up to \$10 million, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions.