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## Report of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund on the work of its first regular session of 2011

(8-11 February 2011)\*

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## **I. Organization of the session**

### **A. Opening statement of the outgoing President**

1. The President of the Executive Board for 2010, H. E. Dr. Abdulkalam Abdul Momen, delivered a farewell statement, thanking the members of the Bureau, the Executive Board, the UNICEF secretariat, and his colleague, Mr. Nojibur Rahman, Minister, Economic Affairs of the Mission of Bangladesh to the United Nations, for their collegial spirit and for helping to make 2010 a very productive year. He outlined some of the main achievements of the Executive Board, including key decisions adopted, the advancement of the common country programme document for the United Republic of Tanzania, and the facilitating role of the Executive Board in the recruitment of the new Executive Director of UNICEF. He praised the Executive Director for his tremendous leadership and compassion for children.

2. Noting that significant progress had been made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, other internationally agreed goals for children, as well as national goals, he underscored the many global challenges that could hinder their full achievement. Against this backdrop, he said, the Executive Board had enthusiastically welcomed the renewed focus on equity spearheaded by the Executive Director. The President urged those present to use their influence to support the equity approach so that the world could fulfil the promises made to children for 2015 and beyond.

### **B. Election of officers of the Executive Board**

3. The Executive Board elected as President Ms. Sanja Štiglic, Permanent Representative of Slovenia to the United Nations; and as Vice-Presidents, Mr. Daffa-Alla Elhag Ali Osman, Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations; Mr. Peter van der Vliet, Minister Plenipotentiary of the Permanent Mission of the Netherlands to the United Nations; Ms. Gillian Joseph, First Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Antigua and Barbuda to the United Nations; and Ms. Grata Werdaningtyas, First Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Indonesia to the United Nations.

### **C. Opening statements by the President and the Executive Director**

4. In her opening remarks, the newly elected President of the Executive Board for 2011 said that serving in this office was a great honour for her country and for her personally. She said that she would strive to achieve an open, transparent and constructive Presidency that would contribute to improving the situation of children around the world. She thanked the outgoing President for his leadership and wisdom, and the Bureau for 2010 for its commitment to the goals of UNICEF, and she welcomed the new members of the Bureau for 2011. She expressed gratitude to the Executive Director of UNICEF for his vision and leadership, particularly in championing the focus on equity.

5. This focus, she said, will be essential to accelerating progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. Along with the realization of children's rights, achievement of the Goals was of utmost importance, though it remained an

extraordinary challenge. Significant strides had been made but progress was uneven in many areas and more needed to be done to ensure the survival and health of children, especially in adverse circumstances.

6. The main challenge, she said, was to further strengthen the quality and relevance of the work of UNICEF in order to promote a stronger, more cost-effective and results-oriented organization. Partnerships of all kinds would be central to achieving results in these uncertain times. The Executive Board provided an excellent venue for addressing the multiple dimensions of poverty and their implications for sustainable development, as well as for promoting concrete initiatives to help to alleviate the impact of disasters on the most vulnerable groups, particularly children and women. She said that the initiatives described in the agenda items for this session would contribute to United Nations coherence, transparency in the use of funds, a strengthening of the partnerships, especially with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and the global leadership of UNICEF as an advocate for children.

7. The Executive Director, in his opening statement, thanked the outgoing President for his dedication and leadership, and the departing members of the Bureau and Executive Board for their distinguished service. He congratulated and welcomed the new President and Vice-Presidents.

8. The year 2010, he said, had been a critical time for children and for UNICEF as the organization deepened its traditional focus on reaching the most vulnerable. The urgency of this focus was made clear for disadvantaged children in the emergencies in Haiti, Pakistan and elsewhere. With emergencies and crises placing children at even greater risk of exploitation and abuse, UNICEF was continuing to press for universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols.

9. The past year had also brought disturbing new evidence of widening gaps between rich and poor children in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. He explained how, contrary to conventional wisdom, concentrating on the poorest and most vulnerable in society presented a path towards achievement of the Goals that was faster, more economical and more sustainable than that of other approaches. This conclusion had come from the UNICEF modelling reported on in the study, "Narrowing the Gaps to Meet the Goals" (UNICEF, 2010). The implications of this approach were far-reaching not only in the area of health but also in education, child protection and gender equality.

10. As 2015 approached, UNICEF was working hard to put systems in place and work with partners to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The Executive Director outlined four broad objectives for 2011 that would help UNICEF to realize the full promise of the equity approach and deliver results for the worlds' most vulnerable children: (a) seize the moment to build support for the equity approach; (b) become an even stronger partner and leader in promoting United Nations coherence; (c) operationalize the equity approach across the entire organization; and (d) improve the organization's internal efficiency and management practices.

11. Reporting that UNICEF projected a decline in income of approximately 7 per cent for 2011, including a slight decrease in overall income in real terms and a decline in regular resource income, he emphasized that UNICEF would need greater

core resources in order to deliver results for children. The organization would also look into cutting costs and increasing efficiency.

12. For UNICEF to deliver results for children, he said, a sharper focus on equity would prove essential. He closed by saying that in each of the 18 countries he visited this year, and in every community, he saw the evidence of what a difference an equity approach could make in children's lives.

#### **D. Adoption of the agenda**

13. The Executive Board adopted the agenda, timetable and organization of work (E/ICEF/2011/1) for the session.

14. In accordance with rule 50.2 of the rules of procedure, the Secretary of the Executive Board announced that credentials had been submitted by 33 observer delegations, including 1 United Nations body, 4 intergovernmental organizations, 5 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and 5 National Committees for UNICEF.

## **II. Deliberations of the Executive Board**

### **A. Annual report to the Economic and Social Council (item 3)**

15. The Director of the Division of Policy and Practice introduced the annual report to the Economic and Social Council (E/2011/6-E/ICEF/2011/3). The Director emphasized that the report presented the activities of UNICEF in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 62/208 on the triennial comprehensive policy review (TCPR) of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. It was produced in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

16. Delegations welcomed the report. Many delegations praised it for being informative, analytical and results-focused. Especially appreciated were the concrete follow-up by UNICEF to the recommendations of the TCPR through its 2008 TCPR Action Plan, and efforts to improve organizational efficiency and effectiveness.

17. Enthusiastic support was expressed for the focus of UNICEF on equity, which was viewed as being especially crucial in the context of the global economic downturn and humanitarian crises. Cited by one delegation as a practical, moral and strategic imperative, the equity approach was said to be critical to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed and national goals for children. Several speakers recommended that the approach be adopted by other United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies, under United Nations coherence and the Delivering as One approach.

18. Delegations commended UNICEF for its sharpened focus on strategic partnerships at the global, national and local levels. Noted in particular was the importance of partnerships with other United Nations agencies in furthering United Nations system-wide coherence, with the Bretton Woods institutions, especially the World Bank, with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and with regional and multilateral development banks. It was said that partnerships at all levels could significantly contribute to strengthening systems and building skills

necessary to implement integrated and comprehensive services for children. UNICEF was encouraged to further integrate its disaster risk reduction initiatives and response to climate change with those of other United Nations agencies, in particular through the framework of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). It was also suggested that the lessons from the Delivering as One initiative be considered for the integrated mission planning process. In the next annual report, UNICEF was requested to describe the steps it has taken to bolster its work with civil society organizations and the private sector.

19. UNICEF was praised for its firm support of — and leadership role in — United Nations coherence. One delegation said that, despite achievements in this area, there was an urgent need for improving and accelerating progress, both at country and headquarters levels. UNICEF was asked about bottlenecks towards this end and about the functioning of the management and accountability, resident coordinator and “functional firewall” systems. One delegation asked about efforts made and challenges encountered in achieving a ‘one report’ initiative at the country level. A question was also posed on what challenges lay ahead for UNICEF in contributing to a collective United Nations system and operational response and about the implementation of the fiduciary agreements of the United Nations and the World Bank.

20. While supporting the commitment of UNICEF to United Nations coherence, one delegation said that this should extend beyond the Delivering as One initiative and the harmonization of business practices. The delegation particularly welcomed the fruitful discussion on several programme issues that had taken place on 4 and 7 February 2011 at the Joint Meeting of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), UNICEF, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the World Food Programme (WFP). A word of caution on harmonization was voiced by some delegations, who said that the process should not impose one model on all countries; instead, it should take into account the context of each country.

21. A strong emphasis was placed on the importance of working with partners on capacity-building. This was especially critical, speakers said, in the provision of quality services for children; in prevention, response and transition in emergency contexts, as well as peacebuilding; and in improving monitoring and evaluation systems. One delegation encouraged UNICEF to take the lead in expanding training for emergency preparedness and response, giving special attention to education in disaster zones. Another delegation expressed appreciation for the participatory and multi-level approach of UNICEF to capacity-building, noting that this was in line with the human security approach to development.

22. Another main thrust of the discussion was gender equality. UNICEF was praised for its efforts to integrate gender equality throughout its work, including in the hiring and assessment of staff. Delegations requested further information on the implementation of the Strategic Priority Action Plan for Gender Equality, 2010-2012, and on the application of the Gender Equality Marker (GEM) for tracking gender-related allocations and expenditures from programme funds. One delegation requested that UNICEF improve efforts to report on gender equality results, particularly at the country level, and collect sex-disaggregated data. The organization was also commended for its contributions to the promotion of gender equality, along with the well-being of children, at major global meetings. These included meetings

of the General Assembly and G20 (Group of Twenty) and conferences on climate change. UNICEF was encouraged to work closely with UN-Women and report on the cooperation.

23. Delegations commended UNICEF for its work in many other areas described in the report. These included emergency assistance to Pakistan and other crisis situations as well as maternal and newborn/child health, HIV/AIDS, child-friendly schools, South-South cooperation and HIV/AIDS. In addition, praise was given to UNICEF for its high-quality preparation for the 2010 High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals.

24. While delegations expressed concern about the decrease in the income of UNICEF, including in core (regular) resources, they voiced satisfaction about the rise in income from inter-governmental sources and thematic funds. Delegations urged donors to increase their contributions to regular resources. These resources, they said, were crucial to enable UNICEF to respond flexibly to changing contexts and to deliver results for children, especially the poorest, through the equity approach.

25. Several suggestions were made to further improve the report. These included a recommendation to strengthen the assessment of lessons learned and the systematic reporting on development results. One delegation requested that the report better reflect the important role of UNICEF in middle-income countries and the efforts of UNICEF to reduce administrative expenditures. The delegation inquired about implementation of Executive Board decision 2010/17 regarding the promotion of greater efficiency in UNICEF offices. Another delegation asked for information on how UNICEF plans to support planning for disaster recovery and integrate disaster risk reduction in its work in 2011. UNICEF was also requested to provide information on its activities in the 'H4-plus' (Health Four-plus) Group.

26. The secretariat thanked the delegates for their comments. Responding to those on capacity development, the Director of the Division of Policy and Practice explained that UNICEF had adopted the three-tier approach endorsed by the United Nations Development Group and tailored to the context of each country. A standard benchmark for reporting on capacity development had been introduced in field offices. He said that the evaluation function played a strong role in the work of UNICEF and that the procuring of feedback from local groups and communities was strengthening the delivery of services to the poorest groups.

27. For more in-depth reporting on results against the medium-term strategic plan (MTSP), the Director suggested that delegations refer to the annual report of the Executive Director, to be presented at the annual session of 2011. Responding to a question posed by one delegation, he noted that UNICEF had worked with UNDP and UNFPA on a paper that will present options for streamlining reporting to the Executive Board; the challenge was to maintain sufficient scope to report on results.

28. Turning to the questions raised on gender mainstreaming and gender equality, he said that UNICEF would present a report to the Executive Board at the annual session of 2011, which would cover results achieved against the strategic priority action plan and implementation of the Gender Equality Marker. Within a few weeks, UNICEF would have a complete set of operational guidance on gender for each focus area of the MTSP. UNICEF continued to support the production of sex-disaggregated data through household surveys and other means. The organization

had identified areas of cooperation with UN-Women that included combating sexual violence and gender-based violence and creating cities safe for children and women, especially adolescent girls.

29. On the issue of the comparative advantage of UNICEF in work on transition from relief to development, he said that UNICEF focused on children most affected by emergencies and most vulnerable to crises. This included working with adolescents and youth in crisis and post-crisis situations. He reminded delegates that UNICEF maintained a presence in countries before, during and after crises and was therefore well positioned to support authorities at each stage, including through the cluster system. In all stages, UNICEF focused on basic social services and child protection. More intensive efforts would be made to integrate disaster risk reduction, peacebuilding, conflict prevention, and capacity-building more systematically into country programmes. This would include advocating for stronger early recovery measures, including through the cluster working groups. Funding for conflict prevention activities remained a challenge.

30. He said that UNICEF collaboration with the World Bank was very much focused on the equity approach and concentrated on several areas: creating tools to assess the impact of policies on children, supporting social protection programmes, and assessing needs in emergency situations such as those in Haiti and Yemen.

31. Regarding evaluation, he said that UNICEF would present its annual report to the Executive Board at the second regular session of 2011. The resources spent on evaluation at the field level were supplemented by those at the global level to support more systemic and thematic evaluations. He closed by saying that the focus on equity would impel UNICEF to use evaluation to better understand the results achieved for the poorest children and their families.

32. Also speaking on behalf of the Secretariat, Ms. Gunilla Olsson, Director of the Division of Governance, United Nations and Multilateral Affairs, emphasized the commitment of UNICEF to a more relevant, effective, efficient and transparent United Nations system. This, she said, was at the root of achieving results and real impact for children. In response to comments from partners and colleagues about high transaction costs, she said UNICEF was aiming to lighten and simplify its processes. All work within the United Nations system should respond to the national needs and priorities of countries. Among the areas requiring continued improvement, she cited the need to enhance and streamline reporting requirements and to harmonize, to the extent possible given the divergent business models of the United Nations system as well as the need to make sure that there is flexible and dynamic programming for different country contexts.

33. Additional areas for improvement included the management of multi-donor trust funds, the facilitation of inter-agency mobility, and increasing the role and oversight of regional United Nations Development Group or Regional Directors Teams. More attention also needed to be paid to fully implementing the harmonized approach to cash transfers, including by involving specialized agencies in the effort, and to harmonizing the cost recovery policies of the United Nations system. Other issues requiring special attention were developing the capacities of country offices in national supply and procurement, and improving audit definitions and ratings and financial rules and regulations.

34. Responding to questions on the management and accountability system for the United Nations development system and the resident coordinator system, she reported on the initial results of a desk review of UNICEF country office annual reports. Trends indicated that the system was working relatively well in Delivering as One countries and those experiencing sudden or ongoing emergencies, and working less well in middle-income countries. Nearly 63 per cent of country offices reported that the system was functioning at least reasonably well, an increase from last year. Reports showed that there was more strategic engagement with the United Nations country teams (UNCT) and the regional coordinator; key information was being shared; funds assigned to the resident coordinator were being shared more transparently; and increasingly, important decisions were being taken only after consultation among members of the UNCT.

35. Working less well, according to the surveys, was the functional firewall system. In addition, in a number of countries, the management and accountability system was not fully understood or complied with by UNCT members, and smaller agencies tended to demonstrate a lack of capacity. UNICEF was working hard with the other United Nations agencies to address all these challenges.

36. The Executive Director of UNICEF responded to the question raised about how UNICEF intended to cooperate more closely with Governments in programme countries by saying that the organization intended to do this in every way, through mainstreaming its objectives into all areas of work. On the budget issue, he said that projections for 2010 were looking better than for 2009, even though some of the improvement might be due to funds received for humanitarian work in Pakistan and Haiti. He emphasized, however, that the decline in regular resources was extremely important to note. He thanked those Governments that called for, or announced, an increase in contributions to regular resources. These core resources, he said, would help UNICEF not only to do its job but also to improve innovation and efficiency in its programmes and work. He especially thanked the Government of Japan for its support and expression of confidence in UNICEF.

37. The Deputy Executive Director, Mr. Saad Houry, provided an update on the work of UNICEF and its partners in the H4-plus group. He noted that the group had conducted joint activities in four areas: country assessments, programming, promotion of support for the global strategy among low-income, high-burden countries, and the coordination of advocacy and provision of support for the Secretary-General's global strategy for women's and children's health.

38. The Executive Board took note of the UNICEF report on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit (E/ICEF/2011/4) and adopted decision 2011/1 on the annual report to the Economic and Social Council (see annex).

## **B. UNICEF programme cooperation (agenda item 4)**

### **(a) Approval of revised country programme document discussed at the second regular session of 2010 (agenda item 4 (a))**

39. The Executive Board approved, on a no-objection basis, revised country programme documents for Burkina Faso, Indonesia, Maldives, Somalia, Uruguay and Zambia.

**(b) Draft common country programme document for the United Republic of Tanzania (item 4 (b))**

40. The Regional Director introduced the draft common country programme document (CCPD) for the United Republic of Tanzania (DP/FPA-ICEF-WFP/DCCP/2011/TZA/1).

41. The representative of the United Republic of Tanzania expressed appreciation for the positive response to the approach pursued by his Government and the United Nations country team. He emphasized that the CCPD was anchored in the 2011-2015 United Nations Development Assistance Plan (UNDAP) for the United Republic of Tanzania and provided a more collective and coherent strategic response by the United Nations system to the national priorities articulated in the National Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy. He said the UNDAP was aligned with the national planning cycle and consistent with global and regional initiatives. He further stressed that the agency-specific and joint programme work plans were being replaced by a single annual programme workplan for each of the 10 areas of cooperation, due to an innovative methodology that seeks to strengthen coherence, strategic focus and clearer accountability. Noting that the United Republic of Tanzania, as a staunch supporter of United Nations system-wide coherence, had signed on as a One United Nations pilot country, he concluded that the CCPD represented a significant opportunity to further advance the reform process.

42. In a joint statement co-sponsored by 29 Member States, delegations warmly welcomed the unequivocal commitment of UNICEF to the Delivering as One principle and to becoming an even stronger partner and leader in promoting United Nations coherence. The delegations commended the leadership and ownership shown by the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania in supporting the Delivering as One process. They also commended the efforts of the United Nations country team to build upon lessons learned to ensure a more collective and coherent strategic response to the country's national priorities. Welcoming the CCPD presentation to the Executive Boards of the relevant United Nations organizations, the delegations also expressed their support for the UNDAP. This, they said, builds upon the comparative advantage of the United Nations system as a key development partner and seeks to improve efficiency, synergies, transparency and the accountability of all stakeholders in the country's development. They noted that continuing challenges would require further assistance from United Nations Headquarters in support of implementing the UNDAP as well as the mobilization of all resources, particularly resources that are not earmarked. They also noted the need to further reduce costs, heighten the impact of actions and accelerate achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

43. In additional comments, one delegation asked if the proposed programme of UNICEF was fully integrated into the One United Nations programme or whether some parts were managed separately. The delegation noted differences in the narratives of the CCPD and the UNDAP and recommended that efforts be made to avoid duplication of effort. The delegation said that the differences in approach by each agency made it challenging to understand the proposals and asked if there was a simpler way of harmonizing and streamlining the annexes. Another delegation asked whether UNICEF, based on its experience in the country, had concrete suggestions on how to improve the process.

44. In response, the Regional Director said that the very pertinent points made by the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania would continue to guide work on the common country programme throughout its implementation and evaluation.

45. Responding to the joint statement, he confirmed that UNICEF worked towards achieving coherence, efficiency and a focus on results. UNICEF was committed to the United Nations coherence agenda and to sharing leadership and accountability for the programme. He noted that the UNICEF areas of priority were agreed upon by the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania and the United Nations country team. UNICEF delivered results in these areas on behalf of the United Nations system as a whole. In multisectoral health areas, he said, there might be co-leadership with other agencies to complement efforts, but without duplication. He acknowledged that further efforts were needed for streamlining the results framework of the CCPD and the UNDAP. He noted that an empowering, participatory, and overall inclusive process had led to a good product owned and supported by all. One lesson learned, he said, was that it was important to continue to streamline processes while focusing more on substance.

46. The Executive Board adopted decision 2011/2 (see annex).

### **C. Oral report on the knowledge management and research functions of UNICEF (item 5)**

47. The Director of the Division of Policy and Practice and the Director of the Office of Research presented the report (E/ICEF/2011/CRP.2).

48. Delegations expressed their strong support for the increased emphasis of UNICEF on strengthening the knowledge management and research functions, including through the appointment of the Director of the Office of Research. Delegations also supported the decision to establish the Office of Research at the same location as the Innocenti Research Centre (IRC) in Florence, Italy, and noted the importance of the 2008 Executive Board decision (2008/19) to allocate core resources to the research function. Many delegations also welcomed the decision of the Executive Director to preserve the IRC as the authoritative research hub of UNICEF. In this way, they said, the IRC would continue to contribute to the strategic agenda of the organization by advancing applied research while producing independent analysis on normative issues related to children.

49. Delegations emphasized that knowledge management and research should not be mere academic exercises but rather play a key role in sharpening the organization's focus on the most deprived and vulnerable children and families. The two functions, they said, helped UNICEF to increase interaction with other stakeholders in the field — policymakers, academics and development actors — and to disseminate the wealth of field experience and best practices throughout the organization in order to ensure quality in programming results. They also said that the full engagement of regional and country offices was essential to identifying and addressing the most vital issues.

50. A number of delegations requested further information on how UNICEF planned to achieve fully operational research and knowledge management functions. Some underlined the importance of a close relationship between UNICEF headquarters and the Office of Research and asked for more information on the

respective roles and responsibilities of the Office of Research and the IRC. Underscoring the importance of an integrated approach to research and knowledge management and of a clear mechanism for setting research priorities, delegations welcomed the ongoing work towards development of an integrated strategic framework for research and knowledge management. One delegation asked whether the restructuring of the research function would affect the role of the situation analysis as a country programming tool.

51. The representative of Italy confirmed that the Government of Italy, which has been a strong supporter of the IRC since its founding in 1988, stood ready to support UNICEF in its plan related to the IRC. He announced that the President of the Tuscany region, Enrico Rossi, had recently confirmed the region's decision to make new premises available to UNICEF.

52. In response, the Director of the Division of Policy and Practice confirmed that the situation analysis remained an important tool for policy, programming and decision-making, and was one of the means by which UNICEF supported national reporting on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other treaties. UNICEF was increasingly trying to disaggregate data in the situation analysis in order to better understand disparities. He confirmed that the building blocks and tools for knowledge management were in place but that the organization was looking to establish effective indicators to track performance within the diverse country contexts. UNICEF was assessing the indicators of performance in knowledge-generation being used by other organizations.

53. The Director of the Office of Research acknowledged that more work was needed on the research function, including establishing mechanisms for coordination and the setting of research priorities across the organization. The renewed focus on equity, he said, offered an excellent opportunity for such alignment. In order for the research function to be fully effective, a shift would need to occur in the culture of UNICEF, where staff still tended to 'learn by doing' rather than by using evidence and research. He said that this effort would be bolstered by the development of training packages and terms of reference. The Office of Research had begun a dialogue with the regional offices, whose contribution would be important for shaping the final strategy for research.

54. Deputy Executive Director Mr. Saad Houry noted that in the coming months, the Office of Research would be busy creating linkages with the rest of the organization and finalizing the strategic framework, which would build upon the solid foundation laid by the IRC.

55. The Executive Director said that much deliberation went into the decision of UNICEF to combine the IRC and Office of Research under one roof and one director. The aim was to ensure that research was relevant to achieving results for children while remaining independent and impartial. Such research would play a strong role in identifying the most relevant issues for the action agenda of UNICEF. He thanked the Government of Italy for its support in providing new quarters for the IRC and the Office of Research.

56. The Executive Board adopted decision 2011/3 (see annex).

#### **D. Oral briefing on the response of UNICEF to recent humanitarian situations (item 6)**

57. Deputy Executive Director Ms. Hilde Frafjord Johnson made the presentation, highlighting trends in the changing humanitarian context and providing updates to the country situations in Haiti, Indonesia and Pakistan.

58. The representative of Haiti thanked UNICEF for its involvement in the country, particularly the tireless efforts of the team on the ground, working under difficult circumstances following the earthquake, Hurricane Thomas and the recent cholera outbreak, all of which took place in 2010. He praised the organization's work in numerous areas, such as health, education, child protection and gender equality, and singled out the equity-based approach to human development in the country programme for Haiti. He noted that the work of UNICEF was greatly appreciated both by the Government and the people of Haiti, to the extent that UNICEF was becoming one of the most revered partners in the country's recovery and development.

59. The representative of Pakistan thanked the international community, especially UNICEF and its country team in Pakistan, for their support in responding to the disastrous floods of 2010. He expressed gratitude to the Executive Director for making the humanitarian response, in the wake of floods in Pakistan, a top priority for UNICEF. The floods, he reported, had affected 18 million people in 78 districts. Now that most affected people had been returned to their homes, the Government had moved to early recovery phase; however, due to the expanse of the floods, there were some parts of the country where the relief phase was still on. The National Disaster Management Authority, which was created after the experience of the 2005 earthquake by Pakistan, was helpful and effective in limiting the damage, given the scale and geographical expanse of the floods. He referred to the reference to malnutrition in parts of Sindh province in the UNICEF briefing and informed those present that the previous Friday, with the help of partners, the provincial governments of Sindh and Punjab had come up with strategic plans to address the increased level of malnutrition in the affected districts.

60. He noted that there was still a shortfall of more than 40 per cent in funding of the humanitarian response plan and he called on the international community to continue its support.

61. The representative of Indonesia commended UNICEF for protecting the rights of children in humanitarian situations. She noted that Indonesia had repeatedly experienced the damaging impact of disasters on vulnerable populations, particularly children and women, and that the disasters seemed to have grown in frequency and intensity. She reported that there was greater recognition of the importance of disaster-risk reduction and emergency preparedness, as reflected in the country's national action plan on disaster-risk reduction for 2010-2012. The Government of Indonesia, she said, planned to enhance its capacity to respond to the impact of disasters on children, including through the prevention of child trafficking, and ensuring the availability of education, trauma counselling, clean environments and support for breastfeeding mothers in evacuation areas. She said that the Government welcomed the initiative of UNICEF to strengthen the national capacity on disaster-risk reduction and emergency preparedness and to expand efforts to the subregional and local levels.

62. Delegations commended UNICEF for its humanitarian response in extremely difficult emergency situations, including in the Republic of the Congo during the polio epidemic there. Thanks were also given to the National Committees for UNICEF for their fundraising and advocacy efforts on behalf of people affected by emergencies.

63. Several delegations emphasized that natural disasters disproportionately affect the poorest communities. Some cautioned that a focus on early recovery and reconstruction in Haiti and Pakistan should not lose sight of protection for displaced populations and the most vulnerable groups, including those suffering acute malnutrition in Pakistan. It was essential, delegations said, to work with cluster partners to help communities to build resilience.

64. Also underlined was the need for predictable and effective coordination of the humanitarian response in emergencies, for investment in preparedness and for strong country ownership in contingency planning. UNICEF was asked about its plans to improve risk management and future evaluations of its humanitarian work.

65. Speakers stressed the importance of an integrated cluster approach, with some commending UNICEF for its work in improving cluster coordination in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). UNICEF was also praised for its leadership role in several clusters. Several speakers recommended that the cluster lead and humanitarian coordination responsibilities of UNICEF should be mainstreamed into its core programmes and budgets. This would help UNICEF to respond more quickly and deploy professional staff more rapidly at the onset of a crisis. Delegations asked for more details on the work of UNICEF with its various partners in the clusters, including efforts to strengthen accountability.

66. In response, the Deputy Executive Director stated that some of the questions raised, including those on transition and on operating in high-risk environments, would be addressed more thoroughly in separate briefings. She noted that the revised Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action had a sharper focus on risk management and the link between humanitarian assistance and development. UNICEF was also committed to supporting community resilience.

67. She said that UNICEF was actively working on the funding of cluster responsibilities, but that this required more support from the international community, including for regular resources. On the education cluster, she said that UNICEF and Save the Children needed to build on their successes and lessons learned to systematically strengthen their cluster responsibilities to ensure emergency preparedness.

68. Responding to comments on the need for a rapid response to emergencies, she reported that UNICEF had re-established a human resource emergency unit within the Division of Human Resources to speed up deployment of core capacity in cluster leadership. UNICEF had also established a fast-track recruitment process for emergencies and had expanded stand-by arrangements to ensure rapid response teams that included key non-government partners.

69. She expressed her concern about gender-based violence in Haiti, including in the camps for the displaced. To address this, she said, UNICEF had begun training staff from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour to develop separate shelters and latrines for girls and women, and to send in frontline social workers to decrease vulnerability and risk for girls and women.

70. She also noted with appreciation that the Governments of Pakistan and Indonesia had learned from the experience of earlier disasters and had taken on a much stronger leadership role and had strengthened their capacity. She welcomed the strategic plan of the provincial governments to tackle malnutrition in the emergency areas of Sindh and Punjab, and commended the efforts of the Government of Indonesia to build capacity in disaster-risk reduction, confirming that UNICEF was ready to collaborate with the Government. She also expressed appreciation for the positive comments on the humanitarian work of UNICEF made by the representatives of Haiti and the Republic of the Congo. She confirmed that OCHA was a key inter-cluster coordinator and crucial partner for UNICEF, and she announced that there would soon be a donor meeting on nutrition hosted by OCHA, the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF.

71. The Director of the Office of Emergency Programmes reported that real-time evaluation had been integrated into the humanitarian response of UNICEF in Haiti and Pakistan and independent reviews would continue to be conducted. He said that UNICEF was already responding to the situation of acute malnutrition in the worst-affected provinces of Pakistan.

72. Deputy Executive Director Mr. Martin Mogwanja confirmed that UNICEF worked closely with OCHA at all levels, particularly through the IASC, which is also leading the real-time evaluations of humanitarian response. In Pakistan, he said, UNICEF was a strong and active member of the humanitarian team established by the IASC, with OCHA as the secretariat. UNICEF was providing cluster coordinators at the national and subnational levels for its cluster responsibilities and supported the provision of information management capacity in each of the cluster areas. He gave further details on the humanitarian response in Pakistan, emphasizing the close coordination with OCHA and other partners in the United Nations system.

#### **E. UNICEF financial report and audited financial statements for the biennium ended 31 December 2009 and Report of the Board of Auditors (item 7)**

73. Deputy Executive Director Mr. Martin Mogwanja introduced the report (A/65/5/Add.2) as well as the two related reports also presented for information: the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors contained in its reports on the United Nations funds and programmes for the financial period ended 31 December 2009 (A/65/296/Add.1) and the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the financial reports and audited financial statements and reports of the Board of Auditors for the period ended 31 December 2009 (A/65/498). He reported that UNICEF had received a clean, or unmodified, audit opinion from the Board of Auditors for the 2008-2009 biennium.

74. Highlights of the reports were presented by the Comptroller, who analysed trends by comparing the 2006-2007 and 2008-2009 bienniums. He also gave a brief overview of some of the key recommendations made by the Board of Auditors. This included the recommendation that UNICEF consider amending its financial regulations to allow cash transfers to be recorded as advances and to be recognized as programme expenditure only upon the receipt of reports on financial utilization.

75. Delegations commended UNICEF for the positive audit opinion, the considerable progress made to strengthen its audit and oversight mechanisms, and the high degree of transparency regarding weaknesses in governance, programme and operations management.

76. They raised concerns about several issues: the low number of country offices submitting audited financial statements; the decrease from the last biennium in the rate of implementation of internal audit recommendations; the level of cash balances and investments built up; the low quality of indicators used to track results in the budget and lack of budget estimates for each result; the fact that in several instances in country offices competitive bidding procedures did not comply with standard procedures as well as the lack of penalty clauses for delayed delivery of procured items; and the high number of vacant posts in UNICEF, which, they said, could hinder humanitarian response and work in emergency clusters. Also highlighted were weaknesses in three areas: in assessing the capacity of implementing partners to use and manage UNICEF-supported inputs; in implementation of the evaluation policy of UNICEF; and in the timely submission of donor reports in some offices.

77. The delegations expressed support for the recommendation to change the financial regulations to alter how cash advances are recorded. Specific questions were raised on several write-offs and on the steps UNICEF had taken to establish a policy regulating the refund process. UNICEF was requested to provide an update of the agreement with National Committees for UNICEF, particularly regarding their retention policies. UNICEF was also requested to disclose its end-of-service liabilities in its financial statements, at the latest from January 2012, when the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) will be introduced.

78. One delegation said that it was overly optimistic to plan on implementing all audit recommendations on the 2008-2009 biennium within the first quarter of 2012 and asked for an explanation of the variance between the implementation statistics of UNICEF and the Board of Auditors. The delegation asked about specific steps that needed to be taken in order to introduce IPSAS by 2012, and recommended that the SAP system be fully upgraded and that higher priority be given to audit recommendations regarding implementation of IPSAS. UNICEF was also asked to explain the high amount of cash transfers to partners and to make greater efforts to implement results-based management in the field, prevent financial irregularities and improve risk assessment and risk management in humanitarian contexts. The delegation requested information on how UNICEF was handling cases involving fraud and presumptive fraud.

79. The Executive Director replied that UNICEF welcomed an open relationship with the Executive Board and encouraged delegations to express any concerns, including through informal channels. He emphasized that UNICEF was committed to implementing the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, and addressed four of the issues raised in particular. First, regarding the accounting treatment of cash transfers, he said that UNICEF embraced the recommendation to change the accounting procedures, as this would increase transparency. Second, UNICEF was drawing down cash balances as much as was prudent to do so. Third, on the issue of recruitment, he said that UNICEF was working hard to reduce the vacancy rate, which had declined over the last months. Finally on the status of the agreement with the National Committees, he said UNICEF was working with the Committees in a spirit of cooperation, and progress was expected.

80. Addressing the issue of implementation of the audit recommendations, the Comptroller said that UNICEF would produce a table similar to that of UNDP summarizing progress made. The table would be shared with the Executive Board at its second regular session of 2011. Explaining that it was difficult to compare implementation rates across the bienniums for various reasons, he reiterated that UNICEF was committed to working with the Board of Auditors on addressing all the recommendations of the auditors. He further said that UNICEF would continue strengthening the management of supply systems and would monitor the strengths and weaknesses of implementing partners through the harmonized approach to cash transfers. Progress on the implementation of the evaluation policy was significant and would be reported on at the second regular session of 2011. On fraud, he emphasized that UNICEF had a zero-tolerance policy and that funds related to fraud were pursued for recovery and return to UNICEF. He addressed the questions on outstanding cash transfers by highlighting the time frame, noting that there was only a very small percentage of recommendations older than 9 months. Regarding the policy on refunds to donors, he said that this policy is currently under development as part of the regulatory framework, which would be ready as of January 2012. He closed by saying UNICEF would prioritize the recommendations related to IPSAS.

81. The Executive Director emphasized that UNICEF had a zero-tolerance policy on fraud, would make sure that the issue received priority in audits, and would continue to freeze payments or outlays in cases of suspected fraud. On supply, he noted how often the supply function had been praised by partners and he commended the division for its excellent work in supply management, in shaping markets and reducing prices for the benefit of children.

82. The Executive Board adopted decision 2011/4 (see annex).

## **F. Private fundraising: 2011 workplan and proposed budget (item 8)**

83. The Director of Private Fundraising and Partnerships (PFP) presented the report (E/ICEF/2011/AB/L.1 and Corr.1).

84. Delegations welcomed the report as being strategic and forward-looking. They noted that PFP had made timely adjustments to its workplan in light of the changing global economy and sought to tap into new revenue streams through two income-driving strategies: increasing the number of pledge donors worldwide and scaling up partnerships with the corporate sector. Some speakers pointed to the need to improve monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and said they hoped for the production of more regular reports that included data on corporate and individual donors. Other speakers welcomed the strategy to raise regular resources, particularly predictable income from pledge donors, as well as efforts at restructuring and securing investments for future income.

85. A number of delegations praised the fundraising partnership of PFP with the National Committees and asked how this was being strengthened. The development of a new cooperation agreement with the National Committees was welcomed. One delegation asked whether UNICEF was addressing the issue of the retention of revenues by National Committees, as noted in a recent Board of Auditors report. Others praised the excellent the corporate partnerships of UNICEF and suggested that the United Nations system could benefit from the organization's experience in this area as a means to support development goals.

86. Several delegations took note of the restructuring of the cards and gifts model, and asked for an overview of the investment costs and estimates on expected income over the next three years, including sales margins and total turnover. One delegation cautioned that income forecasts in that area seemed optimistic and recommended making necessary adjustments to adapt future budgets to actual figures. Others welcomed the efforts to reduce controllable costs and direct expenses and to tap new private-sector resources, and asked about the future role of digital donations as well as the use of emergency communication as a strategic option to building partnerships with civil society. One delegation asked to see the breakdown of percentages for pledge, corporate, direct response and cash giving to total income, to illustrate changes in fundraising practice and to illuminate fundraising principles based on the new strategy.

87. The Chairperson of the Standing Group of National Committees summarized recent activities in resource mobilization and advocacy. She reported on successful fundraising for emergencies, including those in Haiti and Pakistan, and said that income from the private sector in 2010 had topped the approved budget, and for the second time passed the \$1 billion mark.

88. In response to the comments from delegations, the Executive Director said he strongly endorsed the use of investment funds to develop new income. He cautioned that income forecasts for 2011 in the PFP report might be higher than what has been projected in more recent estimates. He concluded that it was of extraordinary importance to reverse the trend of declining income in regular resources for UNICEF.

89. The Director of PFP thanked delegations for their many supportive comments. In terms of monitoring and evaluation, she said that PFP had reinforced capacity to generate specific reports, including on individual donors as well as on corporate giving, and would be able to share data more broadly with partners and stakeholders. PFP also aimed to share more regular reports on the cards and gifts rationalization as well as on returns on investment funds, she said. On strengthening relationships with National Committees, she said PFP anticipated that joint strategic plans would be in place for the majority of National Committees by the end of the year but stressed that these always needed to be reinforced by excellent interpersonal relations. On cards and gifts, she underscored the focus on current and future savings, and said that PFP would continue to monitor the figures. On the emerging area of digital donations, she said that PFP had identified a number of priority countries in Asia, Latin America and Europe that had potential to show results. A strategy for emergency communication, she said, was currently being developed under the lead of the Division of Communication and would also reinforce UNICEF support to the National Committees.

90. She noted that UNICEF was sharing its experiences with other United Nations agencies to align outreach and collaboration with the corporate world. She reported that since December 2009, when the Board of Auditors report was issued, one third of the National Committees were surpassing a 75 per cent contribution rate while another third reached 70 per cent or more. She stated that the joint strategic plans with National Committees that were being developed also focused on maximization of income and improvements in contributions rates. The Director concluded by noting that income projections, particularly for regular and other resources, were

based on a situation analysis but that emergency funding, by its nature, was always estimated conservatively.

91. The Executive Board adopted decision 2011/5 (see annex).

### **G. Road map to an integrated budget: cost classification and results-based budgeting — joint presentation of UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF (item 9)**

92. Deputy Executive Director Mr. Martin Mogwanja introduced the informal note on the road map, the highlights of which were then presented by the Comptroller.

93. The Comptroller emphasized that the joint informal note showing the harmonized results-based budget model was a milestone towards achievement of an integrated budget from 2014 onwards. The process, he said, had included consultations with the Executive Board over the past year.

94. Delegations expressed their appreciation for the considerable efforts that went into producing the results-based budgeting methodology and the different categorizations of costs, as well as for the consultations that had taken place with Member States. Speaking on behalf of 10 delegations, one speaker noted that the format achieved several results: (a) a clear understanding of the resource plan, including the expected contributions and resources used; (b) a more transparent linkage between resources and management results from the strategic plans, as well as a streamlining of results frameworks; (c) more transparent information on the use of all sources of income, core and non-core, for each costs category and functional cluster; (d) improved information on actual expenditures against projections; and (f) greater harmonization of the budgets, while respecting the specific business models of the agencies.

95. The delegations questioned whether the presentation of the information on management results in the annual reports of the agencies would prove to be cumbersome when future budget proposals were reviewed, and said that this plan may need further consideration.

96. UNICEF was also asked who would decide which costs would fall under the category of development coordination and whether this category would include costs associated with humanitarian coordination, such as cluster lead roles.

97. Regarding the proposed harmonized cost classification, the delegations asked how income from cost recovery would be represented in the results framework and proposed budget estimates. It would be important, they said, to outline the variable indirect costs of the organizations.

98. The delegations requested that the new budget document clearly explain where there were changes from the previous budget and the rationale. They asked UNICEF to support UN-Women in its effort to adopt a similar harmonized format for its 2012-2013 biennial support budget. Finally, they suggested that the road map towards an integrated budget for 2014 could be updated for the review of the 2012-2013 biennial support budget in September 2011.

99. In response, the Comptroller clarified that the category of development coordination would include the cost of humanitarian cluster leads, the component

that could be supported from global or regular resources. He explained that the Executive Board would be kept informed of the work on cost recovery, which was ongoing. One question being considered in this regard was how to allocate the amounts recovered from other resources among the categories currently defined. On the comparison of the 2012-2013 budget to the budget for 2010-2011, he said that the previous budget would be re-presented to facilitate the comparison. Meetings with UN-Women had already been set up to promote the partnership that would help that organization harmonize its budget with that of the others. Lastly, the road map would be updated in September, when the budget was presented, and include proposed milestones for achieving the integrated budget by 2014.

100. The Executive Board adopted decision 2011/6 (see annex).

## **H. Pledging event (item 10)**

101. The Executive Director introduced the twelfth annual pledging event, expressing appreciation for the support that UNICEF has received from its donors, especially those who have sustained or expanded their support in the midst of the global economic crisis. He underscored the importance of regular resources to the work of UNICEF, saying that these core resources help UNICEF to implement the increased focus on equity, to protect children's rights and improve children's lives. He introduced a brief video that illustrated the sharpened focus of UNICEF on equity and the positive impact for children that core resources help to achieve.

102. The representatives of 17 Governments pledged their support for UNICEF, with 15 of them indicating specific amounts. The total amount pledged during the event was \$264 million.<sup>1</sup>

103. Delegations emphasized the crucial need for regular resources, urging donors to increase their contributions in this area. This was especially important, they said, to support the equity focus on the poorest and most vulnerable children and families, and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Several speakers expressed support for the excellent work of UNICEF in development, humanitarian and transition contexts. In particular, UNICEF was praised for supporting the rights of children, child protection, meeting the basic needs of children, expanding opportunities for children so that they could reach their full potential, and gender equality. UNICEF was also commended for its efforts to improve organizational efficiency and effectiveness and results-based management.

104. The Executive Director and the Director of the Public Sector Alliances and Resource Mobilization Office concluded the event by thanking the donors, including those who had pledged during the United Nations Pledging Conference in November 2010.

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<sup>1</sup> For details of Government contributions to regular resources pledged or paid for 2010, and indicative figures for 2011, see "UNICEF regular resources: pledges for 2011 (E/ICEF/2011/CRP.3) on the UNICEF Executive Board website. Contributions also include pledges received during the 2010 United Nations Pledging Conference in November 2010 and those received outside of pledging events. As of mid-February 2011, UNICEF had received total pledges of \$353 million for regular resources in 2011 from 39 Governments.

## **I. Other matters (item 11)**

### **Special focus session on the collaboration between the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and UNICEF**

105. In his introductory remarks, the Executive Director of UNICEF noted that the Global Fund supported more than half of all international funding for antiretroviral treatment and two thirds of all funding for malaria and tuberculosis. The Global Fund had changed the way the international community financed health campaigns and was also helping to achieve a greater return on the enormous investments made.

106. The Executive Director said that UNICEF and the Global Fund were natural partners, with their missions driven by similar principles. The Global Fund's ability to attract and channel unprecedented levels of funding and its commitment to local ownership and decision-making, combined with the technical expertise and extensive country presence of UNICEF, had led to significant results, he said. He noted that the partnership had helped to cut new cases of malaria by more than 50 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa over the past three years, and added that, in 2010, UNICEF supported Global Fund grant recipients with procurement and supply management of low-cost drugs and other life-saving supplies in 43 countries. He said that UNICEF and the Global Fund were intent on strengthening their work in the prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) of HIV in an effort to virtually eliminate the virus and achieve a generation free of AIDS.

107. In his presentation, the Executive Director of the Global Fund, Mr. Michel Kazatchkine, described the collaboration of his organization with UNICEF as remarkable. He stated that the mandate of the Global Fund was to focus on Millennium Development Goal 6 but that its work also had a major impact on Goals 4 and 5, which are at the heart of the mission of UNICEF. He reported that currently some 500 Global Fund grants were active in 117 countries. The three key principles for work of the Global Fund, he said, were country ownership, performance, and inclusiveness.

108. The Global Fund was innovative, he noted, because it was a financial instrument and not an implementing entity; its work complemented that of the United Nations agencies and other actors in development aid. The Global Fund depended on the collaboration of a broad range of partners and stakeholders at the country level, mainly through the Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM), the entity that applies for Global Fund grants on behalf of a country. UNICEF is a member in at least 55 (40 per cent) of the 140 CCMs, he noted. In the absence of a suitable entity in a country, multilaterals step in as principal recipients. UNICEF was the principal recipient in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and in Somalia and a sub-recipient in many other countries.

109. He said that, among other areas, UNICEF and the Global Fund would concentrate on procurement and supply management as well as technical support for countries in the scale-up of malaria interventions and PMTCT. The two organizations were convinced that it was possible to virtually eliminate mother-to-child transmission of HIV by 2015. He described how UNICEF was working to support this goal. In the fight against malaria, he said, UNICEF had made a remarkable contribution as a founding member of the affordable medicines for malaria initiative, known as the Affordable Medicines Facility — malaria, which

subsidizes private-sector and public-sector drug buyers to ensure that patients have access to effective treatments and drugs at affordable prices.

110. Mr. Kazatchkine noted several areas for further enhanced collaboration. Among them was supporting countries in securing grants from the Global Fund, especially grants for AIDS, which had a relatively low level of success compared with those of the two other diseases. He noted that UNITAID was phasing out support for paediatric treatment of AIDS and urged UNICEF to consider a future role as principal recipient in that area.

111. The Executive Director of UNICEF added that the potential to eliminate malaria as a public-health problem in most malaria-endemic countries and to virtually eliminate PMTCT over the next few years was a truly historic opportunity that should motivate the international community to work more closely together.

112. In the discussion that followed, delegations welcomed the opportunity to learn more about the Global Fund and its collaboration with UNICEF. They noted the vital role UNICEF played in the Global Fund activities in order to help to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Several donor countries noted the significant scaling-up of funding since the first round of grants, which outpaced even the expectations of the founding members. One delegation asked whether recipient countries with strengthened health systems could eventually take over the role of the Global Fund in those countries. Several delegations recounted their positive experiences in combating the three diseases in their countries and commended UNICEF for supporting their CCMs in successfully applying for Global Fund grants and ensuring their implementation. Delegations commended the focus on elimination of PMTCT and some supported the idea that UNICEF should become a principal recipient in paediatric treatment.

113. One delegation asked whether there were plans to address the significant increase in the AIDS epidemic in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Another delegation asked whether the low number of successful AIDS grants resulted from lack of capacity or of demand; whether the Global Fund was able to provide more integrated funding, with regard to health systems and infrastructure-strengthening, and whether the focus was on prevention rather than treatment.

114. In response, Mr. Kazatchkine thanked delegations for their expression of support for the Global Fund and its collaboration with UNICEF. He underscored that country ownership was crucial to ensuring the sustainability of results. For countries that moved up on the economic scale, he said that future arrangements could involve co-financing and a mixed donor/recipient status. On the AIDS pandemic in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, he said that access to treatment and prevention was more difficult in this region than in others, for various reasons. He emphasized that it would be important to overcome cultural obstacles and mobilize political leadership there.

115. He said that many AIDS grant applications were not accepted because they did not adequately address priorities in combating AIDS at the country level and described how the Global Fund was exploring new ways to help governments apply for funds. He called upon the World Health Organization and UNICEF to provide stronger technical assistance to countries in establishing plans and priorities for strengthening national health systems and in describing these plans and priorities in the next round of Global Fund grants.

116. The Executive Director of UNICEF underlined the importance of country ownership in ensuring sustainability. He emphasized the crucial need to strengthen community-based health systems, especially in communities with the greatest needs.

117. UNICEF Deputy Executive Director Mr. Saad Houry said that the fight against AIDS in Eastern Europe needed to focus on the underlying causes in that region, which include drug use and children without parental care.

118. He noted that the relatively high success rate for grant applications related to malaria were in part due to the efforts of the Roll Back Malaria partnership, which includes UNICEF as a member, to test the validity of the proposals before they were submitted to the Global Fund. He added that some action along those lines was now also being taken for HIV/AIDS proposals. He confirmed that prevention, care and support were all part of the strategy for fighting AIDS but acknowledged that more needed to be done in prevention.

**Thematic discussion on results and lessons learned in the medium-term strategic plan focus area 2: basic education and gender equality**

119. The Associate Director for Education in Programme Division made a presentation of the topic.

120. Delegations expressed their appreciation for the in-depth discussion. UNICEF was praised for several aspects of its work in education: increasing enrolment rates, narrowing the gender gap, promoting education in crisis situations, paying greater attention to quality in education, working with governments on building their technical capacities in policy work, the global initiative on out-of-school children, and efforts to accommodate children with disabilities.

121. While acknowledging the leadership role of UNICEF in girls' education, delegations asked how UNICEF could improve the situation of adolescent girls, do more to provide girls with a safe learning environment, and address violence in schools, including sexual violence.

122. UNICEF was also encouraged to strengthen results-based reporting, including on how resources were spent. Speakers recommended that a greater emphasis be given to the demand side of education, addressing the improvement of access for various groups. UNICEF was asked to provide more information on challenges encountered in emerging areas such as urbanization, migration, climate change and education for adolescents.

123. One delegation recognized the significant progress made towards the Millennium Development Goal targets but recommended a closer focus on linking the Goals on health and education. This integrated approach was more likely to benefit the poor and marginalized groups. Speakers also stressed the importance of addressing all phases of education, from early childhood development through higher levels of education, and on emphasizing all aspects of quality, including teacher training.

124. Save the Children International expressed appreciation for its work with UNICEF on promoting equitable results for children. They recommended accelerated efforts to reach children out of school, including in conflict-affected and fragile states. Highlighting the importance of the co-leadership of Save the Children

and UNICEF in the education cluster in emergency response, they also urged governments to integrate education more fully into emergency response.

125. Delegations noted the important support for education taken by the General Assembly in its recent resolution and called on donors and governments to invest more resources in education.

126. Thanking delegations for their valuable input, the Associate Director for Education emphasized that UNICEF strongly supported girls' education around the world, including as lead in the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partnership. Special efforts were being made to increase girls' enrolment and decrease violence against girls. She described the support of UNICEF for the abolition of school fees and other means of increasing enrolment of all children, and on the work of UNICEF in emerging areas, where good lessons were being assimilated. She said that teacher training was a key aspect of efforts to improve quality in education. On the collaboration with Save the Children as cluster co-lead, she said that the two organizations had succeeded in putting education at the forefront of humanitarian response.

127. The Executive Director added that girls' education, especially in hard-to-reach areas, was a strong priority for UNICEF, as was the focus on adolescents. He supported the call of delegations for a more integrated approach to development and for giving teachers more training and incentives, especially for work in the poorest areas. UNICEF, he said, would make ever greater efforts to measure results, though he recognized that this would be challenging for the organization as it increasingly engaged in 'upstream' work such as advocacy with governments and other partners.

#### **Provisional list of agenda items for the annual session of 2011**

128. The Secretariat shared with the Executive Board the provisional list of agenda items for the annual session of 2011 and noted that a proposal had also been made to include in the list a thematic discussion on the transition from relief to development.

### **J. Adoption of draft decisions (item 12)**

129. The Executive Board adopted decisions 2011/1 through 2011/9 (see annex).

### **K. Closing statements by the Executive Director and the President (item 13)**

130. In his closing remarks, the Executive Director noted that there were two main themes running through the discussions at the session: management and partnerships.

131. On management, the Executive Director stressed that monitoring for results was the key to the successful work of UNICEF. The organization would continue to try to simplify processes, including those related to audit, evaluation and human resources. He promised to report to the Executive Board on management progress at the next session.

132. Partnerships, he noted, were a key focus of every issue discussed at the session. UNICEF was working to improve its participation and leadership in United

Nations coherence as well as in its collaboration with partners beyond those of the United Nations. In this regard, he highlighted the importance of the Joint Meeting of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP and the new ties created with UN-Women in the area of gender equality.

133. Thanking Governments for their pledges for core resources, he said these resources would enable UNICEF to continue to achieve results for children, particularly those who are all too easily forgotten: the poorest and most vulnerable, especially those in emergencies.

134. In her closing remarks, the President thanked the participants for the excellent quality of the discussion during the session and the results achieved in a spirit of dialogue and partnership, highlighting the constructive engagement of the facilitators in the adoption of the decisions. She noted that the Executive Board had received comprehensive updates on a number of important issues. She thanked the secretariat for organizing the special focus session on the collaboration of UNICEF with the Global Fund, saying that it showed the importance of partnerships in achieving results. She encouraged UNICEF to continue to strengthen its response to the recommendations of the Board of Auditors and she thanked Member States for their contributions to UNICEF, especially to core resources, despite the global economic crisis. The session, she said, had clearly indicated that UNICEF aimed to be an authoritative voice for children and to achieve results through a focus on equity.

135. Both the President and the Executive Director paid tribute to Deputy Executive Director Saad Houry for his dedicated service to UNICEF for over 30 years. The members of the Executive Board gave him a round of applause.

## Annex

### **Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its first regular session of 2011**

#### **2011/1**

#### **Annual report to the Economic and Social Council**

*The Executive Board*

1. *Commends* the progress made in the contributions of UNICEF to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 62/208 of 19 December 2007 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system;
2. *Requests* UNICEF to include in future reports recommendations to further improve the implementation of the triennial comprehensive policy review;
3. *Decides* to transmit the present report (E/2011/6-E/ICEF/2011/3) to the Economic and Social Council, along with a summary of the comments and guidance provided by delegations at the present session.

*First regular session  
11 February 2011*

#### **2011/2**

#### **Draft common country programme document for the United Republic of Tanzania**

*The Executive Board*

*Approves* the aggregate indicative budget for the common country programme document for the United Republic of Tanzania, covering the period from July 2011 to June 2015, in the following amounts: \$74,692,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and \$73,308,000 from other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions.

*First regular session  
11 February 2011*

#### **2011/3**

#### **Oral report on the knowledge management and research functions of UNICEF**

*The Executive Board*

1. *Takes note* of the oral report on the knowledge management and research functions of UNICEF and welcomes the additional information subsequently provided on the issue;
2. *Reiterates* the findings of the organizational review report in 2007 which, inter alia, stressed the importance of linking the research agenda to the core

organizational priorities, as well as of capturing, packaging and sharing knowledge across the organization;

3. *Recalls* its decision 2008/2, through which the establishment of an Office of Research was approved;

4. *Welcomes* the appointment of the Director of the Office of Research, based in Florence, Italy;

5. *Requests* that UNICEF submit for information to the Executive Board, at its first regular session of 2012, a strategic integrated framework for research and knowledge management as well as clear mechanisms for setting research priorities;

6. *Stresses* the importance of research and knowledge management and their direct links to strategic decisions, and requests that UNICEF also inform the Executive Board at its first regular session of 2012 on concrete steps taken to improve knowledge management at headquarters and in the field;

7. *Requests* that UNICEF in 2011 organize informal consultations to keep the Executive Board informed on organizational arrangements made within UNICEF to improve and organize the research function.

*First regular session  
11 February 2011*

## **2011/4**

### **UNICEF financial report and audited financial statements for the biennium ended 31 December 2009 and Report of the Board of Auditors**

#### *The Executive Board*

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Board of Auditors (A/65/5/Add.2) and the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors on the financial statements of the United Nations funds and programmes for the financial period ended 31 December 2009 (A/65/296/Add.1);

2. *Welcomes* the unmodified opinion of the Board of Auditors on the UNICEF financial statements;

3. *Notes* that 12 recommendations of the Board of Auditors for the biennium ended 2007 are yet to be fully implemented;

4. *Takes note* of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors for the biennium ended 31 December 2009;

5. *Requests* the Executive Director of UNICEF to build on progress achieved and to continue to implement the recommendations of the Board of Auditors in a timely way, and requests UNICEF to provide the Executive Board with a report at its second regular session of 2011, including an overview of the strategic implications of the recommendations for the management and strategy of UNICEF, as well as an update on the implementation of the main recommendations;

6. *Expresses concern* regarding the Board of Auditors findings that a high number of posts remain vacant, and calls upon UNICEF to address this issue

accordingly and to brief the Executive Board on challenges faced and progress made by the first regular session of 2012;

7. *Notes* the progress made in addressing the level of cash balance related to regular resources, and requests UNICEF to provide detailed information at the second regular session of 2011 of the Executive Board on the level of unspent funds, including on reasons why funds are unspent, on the cash balance policy of UNICEF and on steps taken to ensure a more appropriate level of liquidity;

8. *Calls upon* UNICEF to develop guidelines, targets and indicators to promote greater efficiency in country offices, including the reduction of administrative costs;

9. *Recommends* that UNICEF amend its Financial Regulations to ensure that, under the accounting treatment in relation to cash transfers, such transfers provided in advance to the implementing partners are accounted for as advances and are recognized as programme expenditure only when the appropriate financial liquidation reports have been received, and looks forward to receiving the revised Financial Regulations for approval at the second regular session of 2011;

10. *Takes note* of the steps taken by UNICEF since 2003 to fund the end-of-service liabilities and welcomes the decision of UNICEF to disclose the end-of-service liabilities in its financial statements as of 1 January 2012, with the introduction of International Public Sector Accounting Standards;

11. *Takes note with appreciation* of the steps taken by the Executive Director to work with the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and other funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations to attain best management practices and to improve the comparability of financial reporting through the adoption of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards, and requests to continue to be informed on the progress of this work.

*First regular session  
11 February 2011*

## **2011/5**

### **Private Fundraising: 2011 workplan and proposed budget**

#### **A. Private Fundraising and Partnerships budgeted expenditures for 2011 season**

##### *The Executive Board*

1. *Approves* for the fiscal year 2011 (1 January to 31 December) budgeted expenditures of \$153.9 million, as detailed in the table below and summarized in table 2 and column II of table 5 to document E/ICEF/2011/AB/L.1.

(in millions of United States dollars)

Country office expenses — sales	5.7
Cost of goods and inventory overhead	15.2
Investment funds	42.0
Direct expenses (excluding cost of goods)	33.1
Indirect expenses	57.9
<b>Total expenditures, consolidated</b>	<b>153.9</b>

2. *Authorizes* UNICEF

(a) To incur expenditures, as summarized in column II of table 5 to document E/ICEF/2011/AB/L.1, and to increase expenditures, up to the level indicated in column III of the same table, should the apparent proceeds from fundraising or cards and gifts sales increase to the levels indicated in column III; and accordingly, to reduce expenditures below the level indicated in column II, to the extent necessary, should the net proceeds decrease;

(b) To redeploy resources between the various budget lines (as detailed in paragraph 1 above), up to a maximum of 10 per cent of the amounts approved;

(c) To spend an additional amount between Executive Board sessions, when necessary, up to the amount caused by currency fluctuations, to implement the 2011 approved workplan.

**B. Budgeted income for the 2011 season**

*The Executive Board*

*Notes* that for the period 1 January to 31 December 2011, Private Fundraising and Partnerships net proceeds are budgeted at \$993.6 million, as shown in column II of table 5 in document E/ICEF/2011/AB/L.1.

**C. Policy issues**

*The Executive Board*

1. *Renews* investment funds, with \$42 million established for 2011;

2. *Authorizes* UNICEF to incur expenditures in the 2011 fiscal period related to the cost of goods and inventory overhead (production and purchase of raw materials, cards and other products) for the 2012 fiscal year, up to \$15.8 million, as indicated in the Private Fundraising and Partnerships Strategic Plan 2011-2013 financial projections (table 4 of document E/ICEF/2011/AB/L.1);

3. *Approves* an interim one-month allocation for January 2011 in the amount of \$15.4 million, to be absorbed in the annual Private Fundraising and Partnerships budget for 2011.

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11 February 2011*

**2011/6**  
**Road map to an integrated budget: cost classification and results-based budgeting — joint informal note of UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF for information**

*The Executive Board*

1. *Takes note* of the joint informal note of UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF on the road map to an integrated budget: cost classification and results-based budgeting, prepared in response to decision 2010/32 of the Executive Board of UNDP and of UNFPA and decision 2010/20 of the Executive Board of UNICEF, containing:

(a) information on differences in the categorization of costs into cost classifications;

(b) an informal mock-up illustrating the format of key budget tables and accompanying explanations;

2. *Acknowledges* that the additional information presented should ensure comprehensive and transparent linkages to the institutional and management results frameworks of the respective strategic plans of UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF;

3. *Endorses* the results-based budgeting approach contained in the joint informal note mentioned in paragraph 1, above;

4. *Notes* that in the medium-term strategic plan of UNICEF, the management results framework is currently addressed through Key Performance Indicators, and in order to fully harmonize the approach of UNICEF with that of UNDP and UNFPA, requests UNICEF to translate its relevant Key Performance Indicators in the updated results matrix (E/ICEF/2010/10) into high-level, strategic outputs to be reflected in the 2012-2013 budget document as an interim measure until UNICEF presents its 2014-2017 strategic plan accompanied by the integrated budget applying the endorsed results-based budgeting model;

5. *Also notes* the efforts made by UNICEF to strengthen its results frameworks and encourages UNICEF, in the implementation of the results-based budgeting approach, to continue to improve the indicators to be 'specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound', and to link resources and expected results in a more explicit manner;

6. *Requests* UNICEF to prepare and present its 2012-2013 budget document in line with the format of the key budget tables and accompanying explanations presented in the joint informal note mentioned in paragraph 1, above, including the results of the joint review of the impact of cost definitions and classifications of activities on cost recovery;

7. *Emphasizes* the need for regular consultations with the Executive Board, in preparation for the biennial support budget, 2012-2013, and for the integrated budget for 2014 and beyond.

*First regular session*  
*11 February 2011*