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UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2014-2017
Advancing the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged

Draft for review

Summary

The present draft UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2014-2017, and its supporting documents are presented to the Executive Board for discussion. A final draft will be presented to the Executive Board, for approval, at its second regular session of 2013.

Elements of a decision

The Executive Board may wish to take note of, and comment on, the draft UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2014-2017 (E/ICEF/2013/16) and the supporting documents (E/ICEF/2013/16/Add.1).

* E/ICEF/2013/10.

I. Priorities and opportunities for children

A vision for 2017 and beyond

1. At the most fundamental level, the mission of UNICEF is to promote the rights of every child, everywhere, in everything the organization does – in programmes, in advocacy, and in operations. The equity strategy, focused on the most disadvantaged and excluded children and families, is how UNICEF translates this commitment to children’s rights into action. To the degree that any child has an unequal chance in life – in its social, political, economic, civic and cultural dimensions – her or his rights are violated. This is why the focus on equity is so vital. It accelerates progress towards realizing the human rights of every child, which is the universal mandate of UNICEF, as outlined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
2. At the same time, communities and families must be supported to increase their resilience so that achievements for children can be sustained even when families and children are confronted with volatility and shocks – whether caused by economic shift, climate change, natural disasters, disease or violent conflict. Humanitarian action will remain crucial given the anticipated increase in the scale, severity and frequency of humanitarian crises.

Opportunities in a changing world

3. The past two decades have brought unprecedented gains for the world’s children.
4. Child survival has improved significantly over the past decade. Every day, 14,000 fewer children under age 5 died in 2011 than in 1990. Fewer children are falling sick from communicable diseases such as measles, thanks in part to expanded routine immunization and other life-saving commodities and interventions. The maternal mortality ratio has been cut by almost half worldwide over the last 20 years. More pregnant women are effectively supported to avoid passing HIV to their children, and rates of HIV infection and mortality from AIDS among children in the first decade of life have fallen.
5. Far fewer children live in extreme poverty. Ninety per cent of children of the appropriate age are enrolled in elementary education. More than 2 billion people have gained access to safe drinking water since 1990.
6. The growing numbers and capabilities of adolescents present an unprecedented opportunity. Experience shows that engaging adolescents in decision-making processes leads to better policies and programmes and contributes to positive change in communities.
7. Innovation is playing an increasing role in driving and sustaining global progress towards realization of children’s rights, and the world now benefits from a deeper and wider evidence base for children. Intensive local-level monitoring and analysis of barriers and bottlenecks through expanded disaggregated data collection and analysis are critical to accelerating progress for the most disadvantaged children. Real-time monitoring through the Monitoring Results for Equity System (MoRES) is proving to be an effective tool to harmonizing and expanding national and subnational monitoring systems.

8. Information and communication technologies are increasing participation, accountability and institutional efficiencies and effectiveness. The use of these technologies is also enhancing prospects for reaching the most disadvantaged and excluded children and the communities in greatest need. New research methods are testing and demonstrating the potential of actions in one sector to influence outcomes in another, such as when cash transfer programmes lead to a reduction in behaviours that increase HIV risk, thus lowering HIV incidence.

9. A large number of low- and middle-income countries have enjoyed significant and continuing rates of economic growth over the past decade, in spite of the global economic downturn. Notwithstanding certain setbacks, political will and systems to protect and promote the human rights of children continue to strengthen. More and more countries have the resources, systems and commitment to drive progress for children, and dependence on development assistance is declining. Increased international mobility and interaction is providing opportunities for new forms of cooperation and exchange of lessons, particularly among low- and middle-income countries, and in partnerships with private sector actors.

The unfinished agenda for children

10. Major challenges remain. More than two decades after the advent of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, there are still millions of children who have not been able to realize their rights to survive and thrive, to be nurtured and educated, and to benefit from protection and participation. The agenda for children outlined in the Millennium Declaration, the Millennium Development Goals and the World Fit for Children Declaration and Plan of Action demands continued attention.

11. Aggregated trends mask the situation of children left behind. Amid the advances in child survival and development, inequalities have often widened. The benefits of rapid economic growth have not been equally shared. Children living in fragile and conflict-affected contexts are the most underserved and are at greatest risk. In communities with high levels of gender inequality – where women and girls have low education, mobility and decision-making power – children often suffer multiple deprivations. A UNICEF study of under-five child mortality among the poorest and richest households in 38 countries showed that, over the last two decades, more countries experienced an increase in disparities between the richest and poorest than experienced a decrease in disparities.

12. In addition to the 19,000 children under age 5 that die every day from largely preventable causes, the world's children under age 5 are facing a silent emergency in nutrition. About 165 million children are stunted, and the result is lifelong deleterious effects on their health and cognitive development. Millions of children are among the 2.5 billion people who remain without improved sanitation. Data show the median age at first marriage is gradually increasing for girls, yet too many are still married before the age of 18, often with pernicious effects on their health, education, development and protection. Globally, 120 million children of primary school age, almost 20 per cent of the total of 650 million children, do not reach the last grade of primary school. A further 130 million children who are in school are failing to learn the basics. Only 60 per cent of secondary-school-age children are enrolled in secondary school. Girls still have less access to secondary education than do boys, while in some countries concern is growing about deterioration of learning outcomes among boys. Children throughout the world – particularly those who have disabilities, who are orphaned, who live in the poorest households, who lack family care and who come from marginalized groups – are exposed to various forms of violence, exploitation and abuse.

13. Specific groups of children, including many adolescents, are at a disproportionate risk of losing out on the large gains made in recent years in child survival, education, poverty reduction and protection. Excluded and underserved children may be living with disabilities, in minority or indigenous communities, in fragile settings, in urban slums or peri-urban settings, or in areas where girls and women face heavy constraints.

14. Climate change, environmental degradation, economic crises and population dynamics have all become pressing issues, and disasters more frequent. The past decade was the warmest on record. Sea levels continue to rise and carbon emissions are increasing rapidly. The effects of climate change threaten the economic livelihoods and social fabric of affected communities – particularly for the most disadvantaged children and families.

15. The world's population now stands at 7 billion, with an additional 1 billion people anticipated by 2030. By mid-century, cities will be home to 67 per cent of the earth's population. This trend presents many new challenges as well as opportunities for realizing the rights of urban children, particularly those most disadvantaged and marginalized, who often live in underserved areas and informal settlements.

The post-2015 world

16. This Strategic Plan bridges the final two years of the Millennium Development Goals timetable and the anticipated launch of a new global development agenda, which is expected to feature a new set of sustainable development goals. The combination of political will and financial investments mobilized to advance the Goals have led to dramatic improvement in the lives of poor and marginalized people, particularly children. Changes in the global economic and political landscape are also driving transformations in development and humanitarian assistance, with the rise of middle-income countries and of private philanthropic organizations as major development actors.

17. Progress and shortcomings in the global effort to achieve the Goals have drawn attention to the ongoing contributions of development cooperation, multilateralism and the United Nations development system, as well as to limitations in the development cooperation architecture. The General Assembly's 2012 quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) of operational activities for development of the United Nations system summarized these findings. The review outlined an agenda for reform that will strengthen the entire United Nations development system, including UNICEF. It will also strengthen the linkages between humanitarian and development assistance. Discussions now under way to shape the post-2015 development agenda include significant attention to the health, education and protection needs of all children, girls and boys equally; strengthened governance; increased attention to poverty, equity, inclusion, the environment and resilience; and a reframing of responsibilities that calls on all countries – rich and poor alike – to address social inequalities, remove social or financial barriers to services, and meet obligations for all rights of children everywhere.

18. Development assistance is evolving with the changing world and the emerging new development agenda. Political leaders and taxpayers throughout the world are calling for more focus on results for the most disadvantaged, and for increased transparency and accountability, efficiency and effectiveness.

19. The humanitarian system is also changing. Many countries have developed capacity for national disaster management and coordination of humanitarian assistance. There is an increase in the number of humanitarian non-governmental organizations. The Transformative Agenda pursued by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, adapted to different contexts, provides considerable opportunities, as does the New Deal on fragile and conflict-affected states, agreed to by a range of development partners.

II. Strategic approach

Lessons from the end-of-cycle review to be applied in the Strategic Plan

20. This Strategic Plan incorporates the findings of the 2012 end-of-cycle review of the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan, 2006-2013 (summarized in [E/ICEF/2013/4](#)). Key findings from the review include:

- (a) The relevance and strength of the equity refocus and its key contribution to the realization of children's rights;
- (b) The need for accelerated efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and to continue relevant programming after 2015, with many countries requiring ongoing UNICEF support in the focus areas defined in the 2006-2013 plan;
- (c) The importance of efforts to scale up proven interventions, enhance the accountability of national institutions for effective policies, systematically strengthen the use of services and encourage appropriate behaviour change and participation of children, including adolescents, and communities;
- (d) The need to complement sector-based approaches with more attention to synergies across sectors and to multisectoral action;
- (e) The necessity of systematically integrating humanitarian preparedness and response, gender equality and attention to other cross-cutting issues into programming, while simultaneously strengthening dedicated capacity for humanitarian action and promotion of gender equality;
- (f) The importance of developing innovative programming to reach children living in fragile situations and to build resilience of communities to better withstand and recuperate from conflict, disaster and economic crisis;
- (g) The capacity of UNICEF to promote the rights of children from minorities and other vulnerable groups;
- (h) The strategic value of UNICEF contributions in data, evidence and policy and the need to address gaps in accountability, data and reporting;
- (i) The leveraging power of the UNICEF presence in most countries, including growing engagement with the private sector and private individuals for resource mobilization and corporate social responsibility.

21. Because needs are greatest among the unreached and excluded, and because new strategies exist to identify and reach such children, an equity focus accelerates progress. A particularly

effective strategy is to identify key barriers and bottlenecks that impede results for the disadvantaged and excluded, strengthen monitoring of relevant outcomes, and work with national authorities and other partners to remove those barriers and bottlenecks in a sustainable way.

22. The end-of-cycle review confirmed the continuing importance of the Millennium Development Goals agenda and therefore the relevance of UNICEF work in all five focus areas of the medium-term strategic plan during 2006 to 2013. No country has accomplished all that is possible in any of the focus areas. Many countries look to a partnership with UNICEF to advance progress where gaps remain, better reach and include those left behind, strengthen systems so that results are more likely to be sustained and provide support in sectors that are often neglected. While the review confirmed the relevance of each area of operation, it also called for a stronger results-based management approach that aligns with the institutional structures of most governments.

23. While accelerating progress in the different sectors remains important, the review also underlined the importance of strengthening linkages across sectors. Cross-sectoral action should include attention to community participation, social protection systems and behaviour change programming to address the underlying normative factors that impede inclusive development and the realization of rights. It is particularly important to address specific barriers or bottlenecks that are related to results for children in multiple areas, such as enhancing the capacity of local health workers to strengthen achievements in health, HIV, nutrition and water, sanitation and hygiene. For this reason, UNICEF will work with countries to identify synergies across sectors, such as the role of nutrition in learning outcomes; identify strategies, like the promotion of gender equality, that contribute to delivering multiple results; and support partners in understanding and responding to the holistic needs of children at different stages of the life cycle, including children with disabilities.

24. For many years, UNICEF has emphasized the critical importance of a child's early years to later stages of growth and development. New scientific research on brain development has brought fresh evidence of the critical importance of early childhood development for future learning achievements, health outcomes and productivity, and the cumulative nature of deficits. UNICEF will continue to strengthen early childhood development programming, particularly for disadvantaged children.

25. The demographic transition being experienced by a majority of countries requires additional work with adolescents. Support will be provided for policies and programmes that enable adolescents to make informed decisions, communicate effectively and develop coping and self-management skills that help them lead healthy and productive lives. UNICEF will renew its focus on secondary education and address the role of adolescents in building healthy, safe and peaceful communities.

26. The review emphasized the importance of UNICEF involvement in humanitarian action and the need to anticipate a possible increase in the scale, severity and frequency of humanitarian crises. For UNICEF, this will mean strengthening dedicated systems and capacities for effective preparedness and response on the one hand, and more explicitly integrating humanitarian and development programming to promote resilience on the other.

27. The benefit and relevance of 'mainstreaming' approaches were confirmed in the review. Building on this finding and recent experience, UNICEF will refocus on equity in all aspects of its work. The plan will also continue mainstreaming gender equality and children's rights perspectives and principles into all of its programming areas, with an overriding focus on the most disadvantaged

children. There was also a call for UNICEF to increase its attention to mainstreaming sensitivity to climate change and environmental degradation and to promoting resilience.

28. Another important conclusion of the end-of-cycle review was that UNICEF adds value to development efforts by linking normative and operational work, as called for in the QCPR. Therefore, UNICEF will continue to help countries to translate policy into practice and vice versa, in both cases building on a foundation of data and evidence. UNICEF support to countries in collecting and analysing data has contributed to country-specific development results. In addition, these data have been identified as a key global public good with a central role in reporting on the Millennium Development Goals and in accountability.

Strategic Plan overview

29. The Strategic Plan contributes to the realization of the rights of all children by emphasizing equity. By focusing on the most disadvantaged and excluded children, families and communities, progress towards the fulfilment of the rights of all children is accelerated and disparities are reduced.

30. UNICEF contributes to and fosters coherence and synergies among all funds, programmes and specialized agencies within the United Nations development system, to better support countries. As part of this effort, the Strategic Plan has been developed in close collaboration with the other funds, programmes and agencies included in the remit of the QCPR, including the United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Population Fund, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, and World Food Programme. These agencies are all aligning their strategic plans to operationalize the QCPR during the period 2014 to 2017. They are also acting in accordance with the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) programming principles, based on the human rights-based approach to cooperation, gender equality, environmental sustainability, results-based management and capacity development. At country level, the agencies of the United Nations development system collaborate through United Nations country teams, humanitarian country teams and clusters, Delivering as One and other mechanisms for collective action. The aim is to avoid overlaps and define clear roles and responsibilities based on comparative advantage. The agencies also commit to sharing results to the maximum extent possible in thematic areas in which multiple agencies are active.

31. UNICEF and the other funds and programmes have taken steps towards converging strategic planning, particularly with respect to results frameworks, through actions that include:

- (a) A greater focus on strengthening real-time monitoring systems of government and partners, with particular focus on barriers and bottlenecks faced by the most disadvantaged;
- (b) The use of performance indicators of the Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS to help monitor progress in addressing HIV and AIDS and to maximize the coherence, coordination and impact of the broader United Nations response to HIV and AIDS;
- (c) The use of performance indicators aligned with the approach agreed through the ongoing work of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee on a common Humanitarian Response Monitoring Framework, as part of the newly developed Humanitarian Programme Cycle;

(d) Harmonizing application of the principles of value for money, based on the concepts of economy, efficiency and effectiveness, including common areas of measurement and reporting.

32. In consultation with Member States, within the United Nations family and with other partners, UNICEF will continue to strengthen performance, accountability and coherence as called for in the QCPR. The organization will collectively identify effective common operating platforms for achieving results and accelerate collaborative work to support countries in strengthening the frequent monitoring of outputs, with feedback loops to adjust strategies as appropriate. UNICEF will aim to achieve greater coherence in reporting results across agencies.

33. The UNICEF Strategic Plan will also leverage a growing diversity of partnerships with government, civil society, the private sector and others. These include public-private partnerships, South-South and triangular cooperation, and engagement with non-governmental organizations. Important new partnership opportunities are emerging, including new models of South-North learning, in which countries adopt, adapt and help to refine effective innovations from the South. This will include a stronger engagement with the private sector in development in terms of corporate social responsibility and innovations. An equally important opportunity is the increasingly direct engagement with children, families, communities and social movements, facilitated by social media.

Impact: Advancing the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged

34. The Strategic Plan is designed to enable the organization to contribute to the realization of the rights of all children, especially the most disadvantaged. At the impact level, which represents changes in the situation of children, the outcomes of the work of UNICEF converge to enhance the realization of rights for the most disadvantaged children. The impact of UNICEF work will be reflected in progress towards the relevant global commitments summarized in the annex to the Strategic Plan. This is a primary measure of how the world is progressively meeting its obligations to children. UNICEF will support countries and the global community to measure overall trends in advances for children, including progress towards the relevant global commitments. Data will be disaggregated to the extent possible to demonstrate progress in reducing inequities and will include key dimensions of resilience.

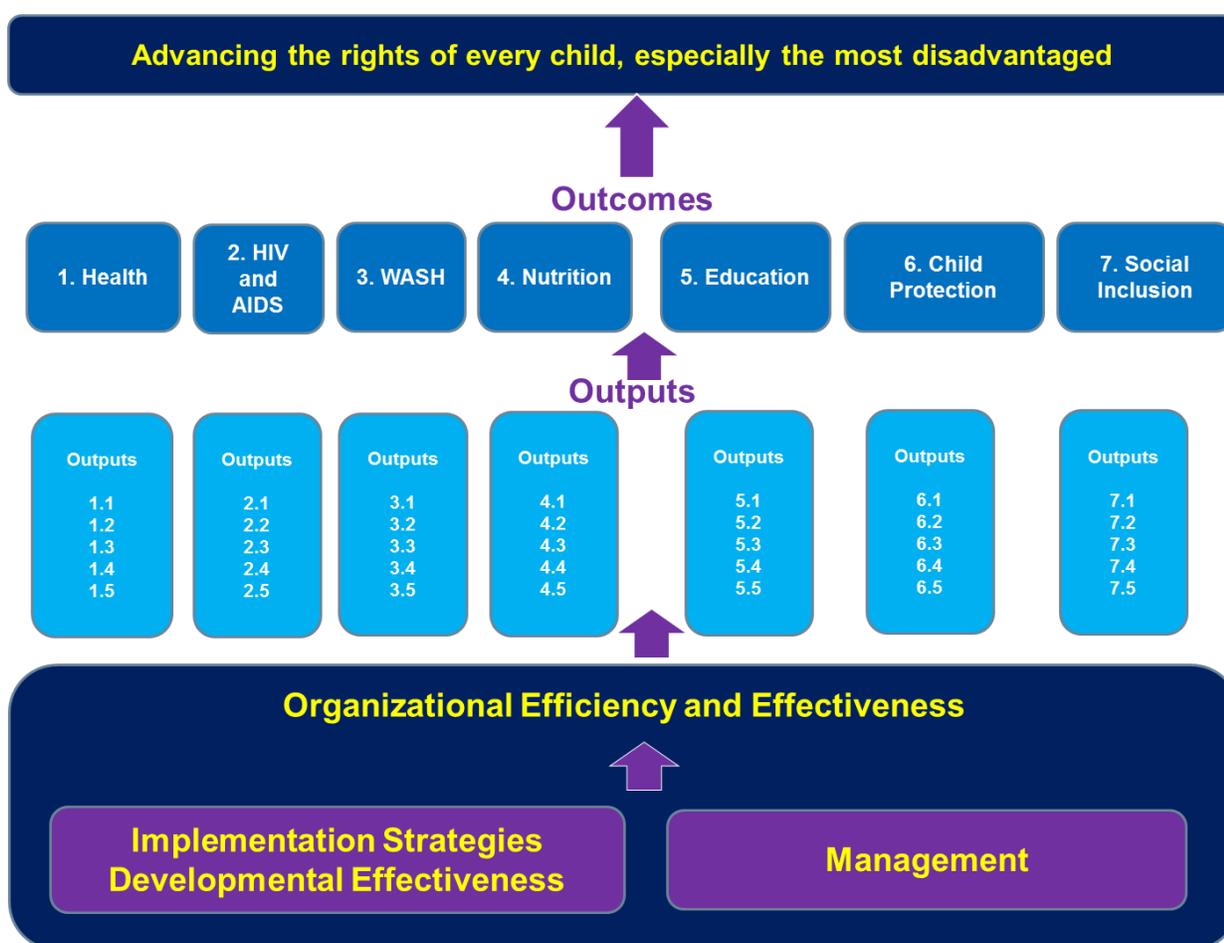


Figure 1: Summary of the Strategic Plan

Outcomes

35. Outcomes – which represent institutional and behavioural changes consistent with the UNDG Results-based Management Handbook – are results to which UNICEF contributes in collaboration with national partners, civil society and others. The seven outcomes of the Strategic Plan, 2014-2017, encourage a focus on all aspects of child well-being, addressing the rights of the most disadvantaged and excluded children as well the needs of their communities and families. Each outcome reflects the combined result of development and humanitarian interventions:

(a) **Health:** Improved and equitable access to and use of proven interventions to increase the survival of all mothers and newborns during delivery and the neonatal period, and among children the ability to live free from preventable diseases and disability;

(b) **HIV and AIDS:** Improved and equitable access to and use of proven HIV interventions, to protect children from HIV infection and ensure that children with HIV remain free from AIDS;

(c) Water, sanitation and hygiene: Improved and equitable access to and use of safe drinking water, adequate sanitation and good hygiene practices and promotion of healthy environments;

(d) Nutrition: Improved and equitable access to and use of nutritional support to protect children from malnutrition and ensure they reach optimal growth and development;

(e) Education: Improved and equitable access to and completion of quality, inclusive education with a focus on gender equality and improving learning outcomes;

(f) Child protection: Improved and equitable prevention of and response to violence, abuse and exploitation of children, with strengthened support for their protection and development by families and communities;

(g) Social inclusion: Improved and equitable access to and use of data and systems to reduce multidimensional child poverty and exclusion.

36. UNICEF has different roles in contributing to each of these outcomes, and some require greater absolute levels of operational investment than others. Accordingly, the level of resources assigned by UNICEF to each outcome area does not reflect global prioritization of any one outcome over another.

37. The full results chains associated with each of these outcomes, including associated indicators and risks, are outlined in the supporting documents.

Outputs

38. The work of UNICEF and its partners leads directly to outputs, which are categorized for each outcome according to their association with:

(a) Enhanced support for children, families and communities to promote knowledge, behaviour change, demand for services and opportunities for participation;

(b) Increased national capacity to ensure availability of and access to services and strengthen systems;

(c) Increased country capacity and delivery of services to protect and provide for children in humanitarian settings;

(d) Strengthened political commitment and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for children;

(e) Increased capacity of governments and partners, as duty-bearers, to identify and respond to specific challenges related to the protection and promotion of the rights of children and gender equality.

Organizational efficiency and effectiveness

39. Unlike prior UNICEF strategic plans, the integrated results and resources framework summarized below (and presented in the supporting documents) includes results for all inter-agency cost categories. For programmes, resources will be linked to outcome-level results.

40. The following seven implementation strategies have been identified from the end-of-cycle review and from the QCPR, to leverage the organization's comparative advantage to achieve results for children within an overall Human Rights-Based Approach.

41. **Capacity development.** Capacity development at individual, community and government levels has always been one of the main UNICEF implementation strategies. Support to individual and community capacity development is often provided through 'communication for development'. To strengthen the capacity of government at all levels, UNICEF focuses on increasing capacity to address gaps of rights-holders and duty-bearers. Measures include training and technical assistance for reforms of government institutions; piloting models for scaling up; and using national and local systems and processes to strengthen capacities and empower children, families and communities. Strengthening management systems, results-based management and planning capacities are key components of a comprehensive approach to capacity development.

42. Capacity development aims to (a) strengthen delivery of supplies and services; (b) develop the enabling environment needed to guarantee key rights, promote behaviour change and demand for services; and (c) strengthen the ability of rights-holders to claim key rights. UNICEF will increasingly apply communication for development to generate community-driven demand for services, facilitating participation and supporting accountability mechanisms by sharing public information and reporting on budgets, policies and services.

43. In supporting capacity development with government partners, a growing priority is to strengthen national and subnational collection, analysis and use of data relating particularly to children and women, and to implement models and pilots for scaling up. This will include the more systematic use of disaggregation to enhance equity-focused design and management of policies and programmes. The broad range of other capacity development activities with governments will include training of service providers, strengthening supply chain management and supporting development of quality assurance systems.

44. **Evidence generation and evidence-based policy dialogue and advocacy.** A growing number of countries are generating insights and evidence that contribute to the promotion of equity. Such evidence is likely to be relevant and useful to other countries in similar situations. The Strategic Plan emphasizes UNICEF participation in structured learning and sharing and applying knowledge with partners. UNICEF supports partners to generate evidence by supporting research and data collection design, by forming partnerships in conducting research and by strengthening related quality assurance mechanisms. Evidence generated from research will support policy dialogue and advocacy specifically linked to the Strategic Plan's seven outcome areas. Evidence generated across regions will be used to influence global policy.

45. This implementation strategy is particularly pertinent in higher-income countries, where UNICEF acts most frequently in partnership with a National Committee for UNICEF, and in multi-country programmes. Policy dialogue and advocacy in these contexts will emphasize social inclusion and child protection concerns, child rights education in school curricula and learning

environments, and increased public awareness and support for child rights around the world. A strengthened external communication strategy and brand will drive public advocacy and complement resource mobilization.

46. **Partnerships.** Being able to partner effectively and efficiently to enhance results for children has never been more important. Strategic partnerships with members of the United Nations family will continue to play a central role in advancing results for children with equity. Catalysing and supporting social movements that call for the fulfilment of child rights will become increasingly critical, as will the integration of child rights into other agendas. UNICEF will continue its long-standing practice of building partnerships with national and local governments, civil society, academic institutions and centres of excellence, the private sector and other agencies of the United Nations based on the comparative advantage of UNICEF and the shared commitment to common results. Special focus will be on ensuring both the supply of key services for children and the demand for these services, while reducing the dependence of governments and other actors on development assistance over time.

47. Global programme partnerships such as Committing to Child Survival: A Promise Renewed and Scaling Up Nutrition will continue to be a cornerstone of UNICEF programmatic engagement, advocacy and leveraging of funds. Supporting appropriately structured private sector partnerships will be increasingly important given the expanding role of for-profit enterprises in providing essential services to the poor. Building on 'Children's Rights and Business Principles', UNICEF will pursue an integrated approach to corporate engagement, incorporating resource mobilization, corporate social responsibility initiatives and programmatic cooperation.

48. **South-South and triangular cooperation.** Two long-standing and proven methodologies to support development and learning are South-South cooperation, in which countries support each other to learn from experience, and triangular cooperation, in which South-South engagement is supported or facilitated by a multilateral agency or donor. These strategies are strongly complemented by other forms of interaction among states in the South, including regional intergovernmental structures, trade and investment. UNICEF will continue to support programme countries to advance the rights of children through South-South cooperation and to support newer forms of horizontal cooperation, as well as North-South and South-North cooperation. These methodologies are expected to become increasingly cost-effective through the use of information and communication technologies.

49. **Identification and promotion of innovation.** Innovation is generating important opportunities to advance progress towards results for children. At the same time, some countries find it difficult to identify and select among the many new technologies and approaches becoming available. UNICEF works to ensure innovators are aware of and encouraged to address the rights and needs of children, especially those who are most disadvantaged. UNICEF helps to identify the most promising innovations for application in different contexts, supporting partners to adopt, adapt and scale up the approaches that are most useful and to quickly identify those that are not. This implementation strategy applies equally to all UNICEF outcome areas, from new life-saving technologies in health care to micronutrient fortification systems to enhancements in distance-learning technologies. Innovation and innovative approaches to programming can also play a key role in supporting the application of cross-cutting normative principles, for example by using new real-time data collection approaches to provide communities and countries with early-warning systems for emerging or impending challenges.

50. **Support to integration and cross-sectoral linkages.** Governments around the world are organized into sectoral ministries for efficiency of management, delivery and accountability. At the same time, there is widespread recognition that outcomes in one sector influence those in another, and that certain strategies can help advance results, synergistically, in multiple spheres. For the first time, in this Strategic Plan, UNICEF identifies support to integration and cross-sectoral linkages as an explicit implementation strategy. The organization will emphasize learning from its partnerships and programmes that support integrated programming for children at different stages of the life cycle or that address inter-sectoral issues, such as social determinants of health, early childhood development and adolescent development. This strategy will contribute to and inform the generation of evidence, policy dialogue and knowledge management specific to cross-sectoral dimensions. Those lessons and models will be shared widely, as many UNICEF partners strive to increase synergies and coordination across government ministries and structures.

51. **Service delivery.** From its inception, delivering essential services and associated communication for development has been a core approach of UNICEF programmes in both humanitarian and development settings. For the majority of countries able to provide vital services to their own children, the UNICEF role in service delivery is diminishing. However, it is still critical in situations of weak institutional capacity for delivery and in humanitarian action. In addition, UNICEF continues to have an important role in coordinating procurement of essential commodities such as vaccines to help governments to benefit from lower costs and better quality control. UNICEF will also continue to provide technical assistance to countries building up their service delivery capacity and will advocate globally and nationally to ensure that every child has essential services and protection.

52. For all of the implementation strategies described above, country offices require development effectiveness support from regional offices and headquarters. Activities to support development effectiveness will include the following: provision of policies, guidance and technical support for cross-cutting issues and for assessment, planning and review; global technical leadership and support of the outcome areas and implementation strategies; effective management of supplies; and global technical leadership and support in humanitarian action. Development effectiveness support will also contribute to better United Nations system-wide coherence at country level.

Management efficiency and effectiveness

53. Sound organizational strategies must be backed by effective and efficient management that is intensively focused on realizing rights, equity and resilience for children through achievement of concrete results. UNICEF will use results-based management to support Strategic Plan implementation, based on clear principles, best practices, accountability and transparency. Ongoing investments in accountability and transparency will enable UNICEF to better quantify and articulate how it is contributing to outcomes and final results for children.

54. The Strategic Plan will support management and operational excellence, including through enhancement of programme and operations efficiency and effectiveness in the context of United Nations coherence and the roll-out of a second generation of Delivering as One. This will entail further simplification and harmonization of business practices and programming instruments. In recent years, UNICEF has undertaken major enhancements in its management, accountability and reporting structures and processes, but there is room for further improvement. The Strategic Plan addresses the strengthening of these areas.

55. UNICEF is adjusting its management strategies to improve efficiency and effectiveness through strengthened business operations. In humanitarian action, UNICEF will invest in mechanisms to make itself more accountable to affected populations. Continued implementation of the International Aid Transparency Initiative, coupled with expanded evaluations of country and global programmes, is helping the organization to validate and be accountable for results. UNICEF is also strengthening the ability of headquarters, regional and country offices to measure and report their performance in (a) effective leadership and executive direction; (b) oversight and assurance; (c) management of financial and information and communication technology resources; (d) human resources; (e) partnerships, communication and resource mobilization; (f) security for staff and premises; and (g) accountability for results.

56. Enterprise risk management will continue to be an essential element of UNICEF governance and accountability. Offices at all levels will identify, manage and report on critical risks, including the identification of roles and accountabilities, implementation of risk mitigation procedures and facilitation of trainings for managers and staff to develop and promote risk-informed decision-making across the organization.

Humanitarian action

57. This Strategic Plan outlines specific and measurable performance targets for humanitarian preparedness and response and to building resilience. The commitment to integrate humanitarian action within UNICEF programmes at global and country level will be strengthened because it provides unique opportunities to improve the links between humanitarian response and development programmes. This is key to responding more effectively to humanitarian crises as well as to promoting rapid recovery and building community resilience to shocks that affect children.

58. UNICEF humanitarian action encompasses two main areas. The first involves interventions focused on preparedness, response and early recovery. The aim is to save lives and protect rights as defined in the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action and in line with international standards such as those developed by the Sphere Project and the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies. The second area involves UNICEF contributions to systematically reduce vulnerability to disasters and conflict, through both its support during humanitarian crises and its development programmes. Accordingly, the Strategic Plan includes specific targets to ensure a focus on addressing underlying causes of vulnerability and conflict.

59. The first priority of UNICEF humanitarian action will be to support effective preparedness and response to humanitarian crises. In the coming four years, UNICEF will continue to build on recent improvements in systems that support humanitarian action. The overall aim will be faster scaling-up of the response in major emergencies, including early identification of priorities and strategies, rapid deployment of qualified staff and clear accountabilities. Where vulnerability to, or risk of, disasters is particularly high, UNICEF will advocate for and support the integration of national preparedness into development plans and systems. Where they exist, UNICEF will support national systems and capacities for humanitarian action. Its contribution will be in the adopting and implementing of standards, providing child-centered humanitarian policy advice, facilitating access to knowledge, and assisting in resource mobilization. Where needed, UNICEF will help to fill critical gaps in service delivery to help reach excluded populations. Such service delivery will always be accompanied by explicit capacity development strategies. National preparedness will be integrated into development planning and implementation. UNICEF will continue its contributions to the humanitarian partnership system, including by fulfilling its responsibilities for cluster and

sector coordination. In all instances, but most particularly in situations of civil unrest or armed conflict, UNICEF will support responses that are consistent with humanitarian principles.

60. In building resilience and reducing vulnerability, UNICEF country offices will support the development of systems and structures articulated through risk-informed country programmes and adapted to the country context. This may involve leveraging the influx of funding for humanitarian response programmes to trigger more structural and systemic changes in development programmes to address gaps in fulfilling children's rights.

61. UNICEF will strengthen its ability to act as a centre of excellence for humanitarian knowledge analysis and innovation to anticipate threats. UNICEF will leverage this capacity to empower partners with cutting-edge standards, technologies and tools to facilitate effective humanitarian action.

Gender equality

62. Gender equality is integral to the Strategic Plan as a normative principle and as a core element of the refocus on equity. As a cross-cutting, structural disadvantage, gender inequality exacerbates the multiple deprivations that not only girls but all children face due to disadvantages such as poverty, ethnicity or disability status. Therefore, this Strategic Plan emphasizes gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women as priority outcomes for UNICEF work, along with the need to address gender-related challenges faced by girls, boys, families, and communities. It also integrates gender mainstreaming as an organizational priority for equitable results that will contribute to achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda.

63. A gender analysis has informed the development of the Strategic Plan. Both gender-relevant and gender-transformative indicators at outcome and output levels are included in the results matrix of each of the seven outcome areas. Together, this set of results forms the basis for a programmatic focus on gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women. In implementing the Strategic Plan, UNICEF will emphasize the importance of gender equality by systematically tracking the individual and consolidated achievement of these results. It will also document lessons learned from programmes addressing gender inequalities. In conjunction with its forthcoming Gender Action Plan 2014-2017, UNICEF will further amplify these results, highlighting the synergies and efficiencies across result areas, as for example, in the important connection among girls' education, child marriage and maternal mortality.

64. The Strategic Plan also emphasizes improving the focus and depth of mainstreaming gender into UNICEF programmes and operations, including in humanitarian clusters led by UNICEF. As an element of results-based management, the Gender Marker, which tracks the inclusion of gender as a principal or significant focus in programmatic activities and related expenditures, will continue to be strengthened with increased guidance and oversight. Likewise, the performance benchmarks tracking the success of programme strategies in mainstreaming gender have been made more robust with objective, field-relevant indicators. The new Gender Action Plan will also identify common gender-based bottlenecks and barriers to achieving children's rights and the corresponding indicators for tracking shifts in such barriers through country-level outcome monitoring. Finally, key performance indicators will monitor the success of management strategies for mainstreaming gender in UNICEF operations in such areas as staff capacity, gender balance in staffing and implementation of gender-sensitive workplace policies.

Translating the Strategic Plan into country programmes of cooperation

65. UNICEF has a universal mandate and will therefore contribute to promoting the rights of children in every country, whether low-, middle- or high-income. One of the key UNICEF strengths is its commitment to respond to the development priorities and needs of country partners, as called for in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, Accra Agenda for Action and Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation. From 2014 to 2017, the ability of UNICEF to contribute to results for children will still depend above all on understanding and responding to the unique features of each country, including patterns of inequity and opportunities for progress.

66. The seven outcome areas included in the Strategic Plan are sufficiently specific to ensure that UNICEF focuses on its areas of comparative advantage. At the same time, they are sufficiently broad and flexible to enable UNICEF to respond to the specific priorities of individual countries. Country programmes to be developed during 2014 to 2017 will address either all seven or a subset of the Strategic Plan outcomes, based on national plans and priorities, the situation of children and women in the country, the country-specific comparative advantage of UNICEF vis-à-vis its partners as described in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, and the availability of financial and human resources.

67. Country offices will also determine an appropriate combination of implementation strategies, based on the following criteria:

- (a) Issues related to the enabling environment;
- (b) Capacity to deliver quality services;
- (c) Extent of deprivation, whether large-scale or limited to certain population groups;
- (d) Potential to leverage domestic resources.

68. Country offices facing similar situations are likely to employ a comparable mix of implementation strategies. Identification of such commonalities will facilitate clear articulation of the role of UNICEF and its added value in similar contexts, as well as enhance monitoring, performance reporting and sharing of best practices.

Summary of the Global and Intercountry Programme

69. The Global and Intercountry Programme will contribute to results for children via global and regional public goods, as outlined in detail in the annex. This programme will play a crucial role in contributing to an enabling environment for child rights at global and regional levels, reflecting UNICEF strategic engagement with global development policy and practice.

70. The Global and Intercountry Programme in this Strategic Plan has a significantly narrower scope than the 'Advocacy, programme development and intercountry programmes' of the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan, 2006-2013. It includes four approaches to contribute to global and regional public goods. The first, advocacy and policy dialogue, will strengthen the focus on children in relevant global and regional structures, systems and policies. The second, multi-country and cross-border programming, will support attention to public goods shared among countries that would not be addressed within a country programming framework. The third, identification, testing and sharing of innovations from global and regional structures and processes, will promote broader

and more timely application of successful strategies for children. The fourth, knowledge generation, synthesis and dissemination, reflects UNICEF contributions to the global knowledge base for child-related development and human rights work.

III. Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

Monitoring and reporting within and among countries

71. Recognizing the fundamental importance of quality information for decision-making and programme design, the Strategic Plan includes a strong emphasis on monitoring and measuring the realization of child rights. In addition to indicators that reflect human rights outcomes directly, UNICEF is committed to developing appropriate measures of community resilience as an enabling factor, as well as a child equity index to assess the levels of development and disparities facing children.

72. The UNDG study on results reporting highlights the following principles related to results reporting: (a) mutual accountability, (b) transparency, (c) efficiency in resource use; and (d) effectiveness in attaining development results. Emphasis will be placed on strengthening government and partner monitoring systems to track the status of barriers and bottlenecks in real time by applying the Monitoring Systems for Equity. Every programme country office will report on the status of barriers and bottlenecks (identifying them as ‘significant’, ‘moderate’, etc.) in the context of its United Nations Development Assistance Framework and UNICEF-supported country programme of cooperation. Over time, information on changes in the barriers and bottlenecks will be aggregated and synthesized. Reporting on these obstacles and how they are overcome will enable sharing of lessons and experiences and improved planning of support to identified areas.

73. Changes in the situation of children and women will be tracked using the UNICEF-supported Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys as well as other surveys and data sources.

74. Indicators for monitoring outcomes will be tracked from national monitoring and data collection systems, annually when possible.

75. Indicators for monitoring outputs are typically collected by programme monitoring systems associated with UNICEF-supported country programmes. They will be measurable every year as part of the programme performance monitoring system. However, changes in outputs may be seen over varying time periods, depending on the barrier or bottleneck being addressed.

76. The achievement of selected standardized outputs will be reported annually by the relevant country offices – those that have programmes of cooperation working in the respective area – and aggregated at the global level. Emphasis will be placed on standardized outputs that absorb significant resources, are strategically important and relate to many countries. Outputs will be related to either quantitative changes (e.g., insecticide-treated mosquito nets distributed) or qualitative changes (e.g., assessment of communication campaigns). An independent peer review of evidence on results and performance of country offices will be conducted as part of midterm reviews of country programmes, strengthening quality assurance and country-to-country learning.

77. The Strategic Plan will facilitate improved reporting in several additional key areas:

- (a) Results achieved relative to expected results at country, regional and global level;

- (b) Results achieved in humanitarian action;
- (c) Results achieved related to UNDG normative principles of human rights, gender equality and environmental sustainability;
- (d) Results achieved related to implementation of relevant elements of the QCPR and the UNICEF contribution to efforts in United Nations system-wide coherence.

Performance management

78. The shift towards identifying the strategic contribution of UNICEF to achievement of results will necessitate a corresponding adjustment in the programme performance monitoring system. This will include strategic evaluations and an enhanced accountability system focusing on decision-making and partnerships. Investments in performance monitoring in humanitarian action will be designed in a manner that builds national emergency management capacity.

79. Results-based management will inform and strengthen performance management over the period of the Strategic Plan. Priority actions include:

- (a) Strengthening government monitoring systems, particularly those related to the status of barriers and bottlenecks for the most disadvantaged and excluded children and their families and communities through MoRES;
- (b) Leveraging these monitoring systems to report on UNICEF contributions in achieving results;
- (c) Enhancing performance monitoring systems to measure the UNICEF contribution to broader, systemic change and to track performance in humanitarian action;
- (d) Promoting evaluative exercises that enable quantitative and qualitative analysis of the organization's contribution to broader and systemic change;
- (e) Assessing programming quality and strategic choices at all levels to complement the monitoring and evaluation of programme results and management effectiveness of country and regional offices and related headquarters divisions;
- (f) Strengthening UNICEF capacity by revising and enhancing tools that support results-based management, based on experience to date and on recent developments related to: United Nations coherence; the Millennium Development Goals and post-2015 development goals and agenda; and the Paris, Accra and Busan agreements.

Evaluation

80. Evaluation will support the achievement of Strategic Plan objectives by generating findings, conclusions and recommendations to inform management decisions at all levels and across all results areas, including the humanitarian field. Evaluation evidence will complement monitoring reports, statistical data and research findings as important sources of information on implementation and results. Evaluation will contribute to performance improvement through support to accountability and organizational learning. The function will play a role in operationalizing results-based management principles and in assessing results against the criteria of relevance, efficiency

and effectiveness. Evaluation also provides a means for validating the impact and sustainability of results and checking for unintended consequences.

81. Evaluation in UNICEF is largely a decentralized function, undertaken at country and regional levels. Continuing steps are being taken to strengthen evaluation systems across UNICEF. Global thematic evaluations are undertaken independently by the Evaluation Office. A comprehensive evaluation plan will be developed following the approval of the Strategic Plan. Where appropriate, joint evaluations will be undertaken with other United Nations agencies or national partners.

Integrated Results and Resources Framework for 2014-2017

Programmes

#	2014-2017 Indicative resources				
	Outcomes	RR	OR	TF	Total
P1	Improved and equitable access to and use of proven interventions to increase the survival of all mothers and newborns during delivery and the neonatal period, and among children the ability to live free from preventable diseases and disability.				
P2	Improved and equitable access to and use of proven HIV interventions, to protect children from HIV infection and ensure that children with HIV remain free from AIDS.				
P3	Improved and equitable access to and use of safe drinking water, adequate sanitation and good hygiene practices and promotion of healthy environments.				
P4	Improved and equitable access to and use of nutritional support to protect children from malnutrition and ensure they reach optimal growth and development.				
P5	Improved and equitable access to and completion of quality, inclusive education with a focus on gender equality and improving learning outcomes.				
P6	Improved and equitable prevention of and response to violence, abuse and exploitation of children, with strengthened support for their protection and development by families and communities.				
P7	Improved and equitable access to and use of systems to reduce multidimensional child poverty and exclusion.				
	Total programme resources				

Organizational effectiveness and efficiency

#	Result	2014-2017		
		Indicative Resources		
		RR	OR	Total
Results area 1: Improved accountability of results				
	Policies, guidance and technical support are accessible and relevant to enable high-quality country programming and reporting.			
	Efficient and effective management of supplies enable the achievement of programme results.			
	Effective management, utilization and stewardship are assured of financial and information and communication technology resources, assets and administrative policies, procedures and systems.			
	Improved accountability is in place for achieving results at country and regional office levels.			
	Data and knowledge are shared and used to inform programming and advocacy for children.			
	Enhanced transparency is achieved through improved access to key corporate information and official documents.			
Results area 2: Independent corporate oversight and assurance				
	Independent and effective oversight and assurance are provided on internal controls of the use of UNICEF resources and on the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact of programmes assisted by UNICEF worldwide.			
	Timely and comprehensive responses are given to relevant evaluation findings.			
Results area 3: Effective and efficient policies and procedures				

	Global technical leadership and support related to country situation analysis, planning and review, and related implementation strategies, are accessible to enable high-quality country programmes.			
	Global technical leadership and support related to the seven Strategic Plan outcome areas are accessible to enable technical excellence.			
	Strengthened partnerships with Member States and multilateral agencies (and United Nations organizations), and strategic and innovative communications and public advocacy, are maintained.			
Results area 4: Human resources managed effectively				
	Effective and streamlined human resources policy and procedures are in place and implemented, providing quality advisory support to develop and maintain a flexible, highly skilled and motivated workforce.			
Results area 5: Corporate leadership and direction				
	Effective leadership and executive direction are assured for implementing results outlined in the Strategic Plan.			
Results area 6: Security for staff and premises enhanced				
	Enhanced security measures for staff and premises are in place and a safer environment for UNICEF-assisted programmes is achieved.			
Results area 7: United Nations development system leadership and coordination				
	Leadership of humanitarian clusters under UNICEF responsibility is carried out effectively.			

Financial plan
(details to be confirmed; table provided for illustrative purposes only)
(In millions of United States dollars)

	2010-2013					2014-2017					
	Regular resources	Other resources	Trust Funds	Total resources	%	Regular resources	Other resources	Cost recovery	Trust Funds	Total resources	%
1. Resources available											
Opening balance	1,193.0	3,528.0	751.0	5,472.0		\$	\$		\$	\$	
Income											
Contributions	3,844.8	8,351.8	-	12,196.6		\$	\$		-	\$	
Other income and reimbursements	275.2	39.2	55.2	369.6		\$	\$		-	\$	
Total Income	4,120.0	8,391.0	55.2	12,566.2		\$	\$		-	\$	
Trust funds	4,395.2	8,430.2	110.4	12,935.8		-	-		\$	\$	
Total available	5,313.0	11,919.0	861.4	30,974.0		\$	\$		\$	\$	
2. Use of resources											
A. Development Activities											
A.1 Programmes	3,224.4	8,344.4	4,334.0	15,902.8	88.9%	\$	\$	-	\$	\$	%
Country Programmes	\$	\$	\$	\$		\$	\$	-	\$	\$	%
Inter Country Programme	\$	\$	\$	\$		\$	\$	-	\$	\$	%
A.2 Development Effectiveness	348.1	169.0	5.0	522.1	2.9%	\$	\$	-	-	\$	%
Subtotal development activities	3,572.5	8,513.4	4,339.0	16,424.9	91.8%	\$	\$	-	\$	\$	%
B. United Nations Development Co-ordination	4.1	-	-	4.1	0.0%	\$	-	-	-	\$	%
C. Management Activities											
C.1 Recurring Costs	978.2	407.4	-	1,385.6	7.7%	\$	-	\$	-	\$	%
C.2 Non-recurring costs	14.9	3.2	-	18.1	0.1%	\$	-	\$	-	\$	%
Subtotal Management Activities	993.1	410.6	-	1,403.7	7.8%	\$	-	\$	-	\$	%
D. Special Purpose Activities											
D.1 Capital Investments	56.2	-	-	56.2	0.3%	\$	-	-	-	\$	%
D.2 Non-UNICEF operations administered by UNICEF	-	-	-	-	0.0%	\$	-	-	-	\$	%
Subtotal Special Purpose Activities	56.2	-	-	56.2	0.3%	\$	-	-	-	\$	%
Total Institutional Budget (A.2 + B + C + D.1)	1,401.5	579.6	5.0	1,986.1	11.1%	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	%
Total use of resources (A+B+C+D)	4,625.9	8,924.0	4,339.0	17,888.9		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	
3. Projected Balance of resources	5,082.3	11,425.2	(3,422.4)	13,085.1							