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Annual report for 2018 of the Executive Director of UNICEF

Summary

This is the first report to the UNICEF Executive Board on the implementation of the Strategic Plan, 2018–2021 and its contribution to the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals. The report is accompanied by reports on the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system^a and the implementation of the Integrated Results and Resources Framework of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021; a data companion and scorecard; and a joint report on the implementation of the common chapter.

Committed to collaboration and coherence, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, UNICEF and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) started implementing the common chapter of their strategic plans in 2018. The results and progress in the six areas of collaboration are summarized in the joint report on the implementation of the common chapter.

^a General Assembly resolution 71/243.

* [E/ICEF/2019/9](#).

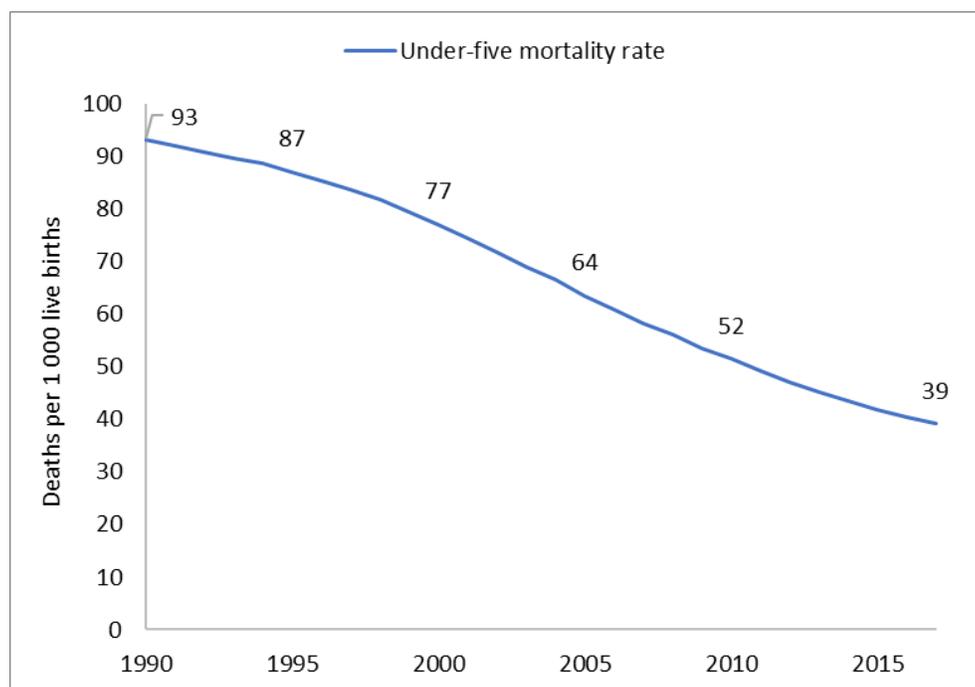


I. Overview

1. At the global level, 2018 witnessed a continuation of the improvements in many aspects of child well-being. The under-five mortality rate fell to 39 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2017, from 93 in 1990, saving the lives of 132 million children under the age of 5 years. The reduction in child mortality accelerated over this period, with the fastest progress and greatest acceleration recorded in low- and middle-income countries, indicating the potential for further progress up to 2030. Updated malnutrition estimates showed that the number of stunted children declined by 24 per cent between 2000 and 2017. New data revealed that 25 million child marriages have been prevented due to progress in the past decade driven by progress in South Asia.

Figure I

Progress in reducing the under-five mortality rate, 1990–2017



Source: United Nations Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation, 2018 estimates.

2. Despite this good news, in many areas the scale of the challenge in realizing child rights remains daunting and global progress masks uneven outcomes, with many children being left behind. Some 15,000 children still die every day, mostly from treatable diseases and other preventable causes, and 50 countries remain off-track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal target on child mortality. While the number of stunted children is falling, the number and share of overweight children is increasing as is anaemia among girls and women of reproductive age. In Latin America and Caribbean, the prevalence of child marriage remains as high as it was 25 years ago. Globally, over 150 million girls are likely to be married between now and 2030 unless progress accelerates further.

3. In such areas as water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and education, new data shed light on the scale of the challenges facing children. Monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals has revealed that one third of primary schools worldwide lack basic WASH facilities, with especially deleterious consequences for girls. Open defecation is still practised by 892 million people. Fecal contamination of drinking water and the environment and poor hygiene practices are leading causes of child mortality, disease, undernutrition and stunting. Despite more children entering

primary school worldwide, nearly 60 per cent of primary school-aged children are failing to meet minimum learning standards and gender gaps in learning outcomes vary significantly across the world. As of 2017, only half of all pre-primary school-aged children were enrolled in pre-primary education, leaving 175 million children globally without the benefits of early structured learning. Those living in the wealthiest households were seven times more likely to attend early childhood education programmes than those in the poorest households.

4. Most alarming is that in many areas of the world new threats to child rights have emerged or past progress is unraveling. In many countries, including Afghanistan, Bangladesh (Cox's Bazar), the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, Myanmar, Somalia, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, conflict and fragility have exposed children to violence, disease, hardship and deprivation. There has been an escalation in grave violations against children in war zones. In 2018, ground attacks, aerial bombardment and other conflict-related violence in Yemen killed or maimed over 1,680 children, a 28 per cent increase compared with 2017, and in Somalia, over 5,200 grave violations against children were reported, a 5 per cent increase compared with 2017. Children were among the most affected by the major natural disasters that struck East Asia and the Pacific. Children are similarly bearing an unprecedented burden in the regional migration crisis in Latin America.

5. Against this backdrop, UNICEF began the implementation of its new Strategic Plan and delivered results at scale for children in diverse operating contexts.

6. In 2018, UNICEF provided life-saving treatment and care to 4.1 million children with severe acute malnutrition (SAM) (among countries with sex-disaggregated data, 52 per cent were girls); reached over 58 million adolescents with services to prevent anaemia and other forms of malnutrition, exceeding the 2018 milestone of 55 million; and provided over 255 million children with vitamin A supplementation. Nearly 19 million people gained access to safe water and nearly 11 million gained access to basic sanitation services.

7. Over 11 million children received learning materials, while 2 million children and adolescents participated in programmes, including in humanitarian situations, that equipped them with critical skills for learning, personal empowerment, active citizenship or employability. The number of participants was just short of the 2018 milestone of 2.1 million (among countries with sex-disaggregated data, 57 per cent were girls). UNICEF-supported programmes enabled nearly 12 million out-of-school children to participate in education, including in humanitarian contexts, versus a 2018 milestone of 10 million (among countries with sex-disaggregated data, 48 per cent were girls).

8. The births of over 16 million children were registered, while 2.3 million children who had experienced violence received health, social work, justice and law enforcement services. Programming relating to child marriage reached nearly 5 million adolescent girls, while nearly 100,000 girls received prevention and protection services relating to female genital mutilation. UNICEF-supported programmes, including in humanitarian situations, enabled around 6 million adolescents to participate in or lead civic engagement initiatives aimed at improving their school, community, city or environment (among countries with sex-disaggregated data, 52 per cent were girls).

9. In humanitarian settings, UNICEF reached more than 43 million people with access to safe water; nearly 20 million children were vaccinated against measles; over 7 million children benefited from cash assistance; and nearly 7 million children gained access to some form of education.

10. Amidst shifting demographics and emerging risks that jeopardize young people's ability to gain the education and skills they need to transition successfully into productive work and engaged citizenship, UNICEF launched Generation Unlimited, a global partnership to connect secondary-age education and training to employment and entrepreneurship. The partnership brings together the private and public sectors, civil society and young people to co-create large-scale breakthroughs to secure a better future for the world's 1.8 billion young people.

11. UNICEF worked closely with other United Nations agencies in support of the reforms of the United Nations development system and the implementation of General Assembly resolution [72/279](#). The organization played a leading role in sparking collective action on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, linking efforts across the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and the United Nations system, and charted the course for accelerating programmes on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse in all countries with humanitarian and refugee response plans.

II. Performance under the Goal Areas of the Strategic Plan, 2018–2021

A. Goal Area 1: Every child survives and thrives

12. UNICEF supports an integrated and holistic approach to child survival, growth and development. In 2018, UNICEF scaled up work on community-based primary health care, enhancing collaboration with Governments and partners to improve maternal, newborn and child health, nutrition, HIV and early childhood development (ECD) outcomes. UNICEF worked on Goal Area 1 in 126 countries in 2018. The total Goal Area 1 expense was \$2.1 billion.



27 million live births were delivered in health facilities through UNICEF-supported programmes



About 65.5 million children were vaccinated with three doses of DTP-containing Pentavalent vaccine by UNICEF and partners



5.5 million children with suspected pneumonia received appropriate antibiotics through UNICEF-supported programmes



More than 475,000 children in humanitarian situations participated in UNICEF-supported early childhood development programmes

13. UNICEF recognizes primary health care — delivering integrated programmes and interventions across the life cycle within the community, along with concerted efforts in strengthening health systems — as the most sustainable path to achieving Goal Area 1 results. With the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Government of Kazakhstan, UNICEF organized the Global Conference on Primary Health Care in Astana (now Nur-Sultan), Kazakhstan, in October 2018, where representatives from Governments, international organizations, development partners, civil society and academia from nearly 150 countries endorsed their commitment to the essential role of primary health care in promoting good health, social and economic development and global security and as a major driver of universal health coverage, as envisioned by Sustainable Development Goal target 3.8. UNICEF and WHO are now co-leading a global effort with a range of key partners to strength primary health care at the country level, operationalizing the commitments agreed in the Astana Declaration.

14. Between 2016 and 2018, in 25 countries, 16.5 million children with suspected pneumonia received antibiotics through UNICEF-supported programmes and nearly 155,000 community health workers participated in UNICEF-supported skills enhancement programmes on integrated community case management, against a 2018 milestone of 100,000. In 2018, UNICEF distributed insecticide-treated nets to 28.3 million people in 17 countries, including 1.5 million in humanitarian situations in 11 countries.

15. UNICEF supported 23 countries with high neonatal and maternal mortality in implementing plans to strengthen the quality of maternal and newborn care. Sixteen countries started to monitor the implementation of kangaroo mother care, exceeding the 2018 milestone of 15. Through UNICEF-supported maternal and newborn health programmes, 27 million live births were delivered in health facilities in 2018. Over 2018, UNICEF supported WASH in 3,355 health facilities, of which 3,017 facilities were located in the 52 focus countries of the Every Newborn Action Plan. In 2018, UNICEF supported the vaccination of 8.5 million women of reproductive age against neonatal and maternal tetanus in six countries and Kenya eliminated maternal and newborn tetanus.

16. UNICEF and partners supported the vaccination of an estimated 65.5 million children with three doses of the Pentavalent vaccine, which includes the vaccines for diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis, in 64 priority countries in 2017, the most recent year for which data are available. The number of polio cases in the world has fallen by over 99.9 per cent since 1988. Despite this progress, transmission of the wild polio virus continues in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The detection of even a single polio case points to remaining immunity gaps, which must be filled through high-quality vaccination coverage if the disease is to be eradicated.



Over 255 million children

received two annual doses of vitamin A supplementation in priority countries



Over 4 million children

with severe acute malnutrition were admitted for treatment



Over 58 million adolescents

were provided with services to prevent anaemia and other forms of malnutrition through UNICEF-supported programmes



Over 1 million pregnant women

living with HIV received antiretroviral medicine to reduce the risk of mother-to-child transmission of HIV through UNICEF-supported programmes

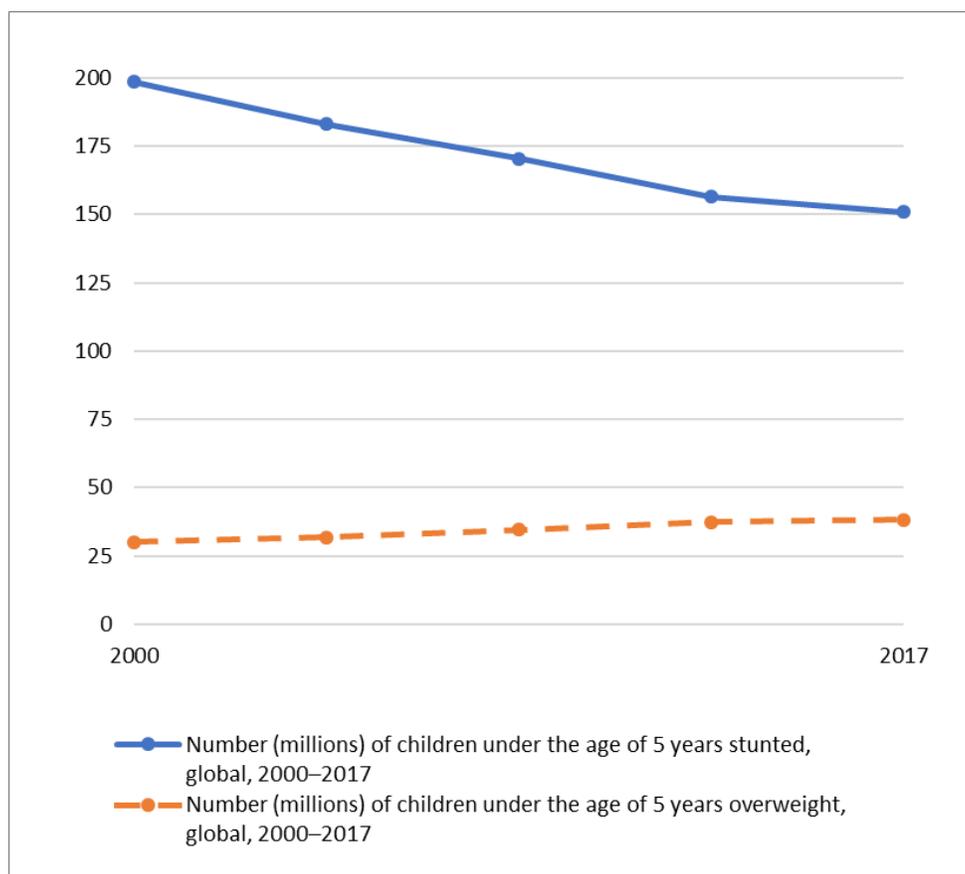


89 per cent of targeted countries

supported the implementation of at least three high-impact gender-responsive adolescent HIV-prevention interventions

17. In addition to strengthening health systems, UNICEF helped to reshape food systems to deliver nutritious diets for children and to prevent all forms of malnutrition: 74 countries rolled out large-scale food fortification programmes with UNICEF support; 15.6 million children benefited from micronutrient powders containing essential vitamins and minerals; 23 million caregivers were counselled on optimal infant feeding practices; and over 255 million children were reached with two doses of vitamin A supplementation. With UNICEF support, 56 Governments implemented programmes for the prevention of overweight in childhood and 108 countries scaled up programmes to improve the quality and diversity of young children's diets.

Figure II
Trends in stunting and overweight among children under the age of 5 years, global, 2000–2017



18. Over 4 million children were reached with life-saving treatment and care for SAM in 72 countries and 82 per cent recovered fully, exceeding global standards of care. In Nigeria, the number of children with SAM admitted for treatment increased from fewer than 7,000 in 2009 to over 700,000 in 2018. As the cluster lead agency for nutrition, UNICEF responded to 22 nutrition emergencies and provided technical support to 59 crisis-affected countries.

19. UNICEF worked with Governments in 30 countries on programmes to improve the quality of adolescents' diets and raise their nutritional status. Over 58 million adolescent girls and boys were reached with services to prevent anaemia and other forms of malnutrition. In India, over 44 million adolescents benefited from an iron and folic acid supplementation programme to prevent anaemia.

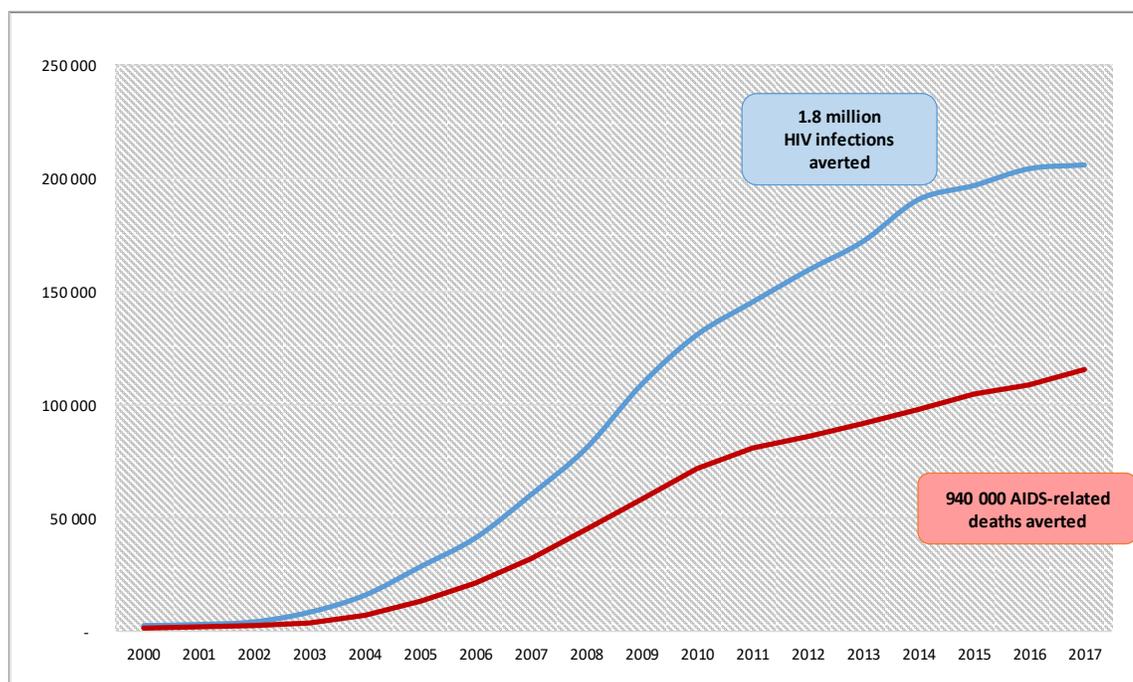
20. As of the end of 2017, 80 per cent of mothers with HIV globally are accessing lifelong treatment. This progress in coverage translates to a cumulative 1.8 million paediatric HIV infections averted and 940,000 child lives saved since 2000. In the same period, treatment coverage in children with HIV increased to 52 per cent globally. The contrast between high coverage in mothers versus modest coverage in children with HIV is partly due to poor access to infant HIV diagnosis.

21. HIV prevention and treatment in children, young people and women are central to the work of UNICEF in Goal Area 1. To close the gap in treatment coverage, UNICEF is supporting the roll-out of new point-of-care testing platforms in 20 countries in Africa. This will help to increase the rate of HIV testing within the first

two months of life in infants born to pregnant women living with HIV and also the number of infants receiving needed antiretroviral treatment. Over 70,000 point-of-care tests were conducted in 2018.

Figure III

Estimated number of new HIV infections and AIDS-related deaths averted among children under 5 years of age by prevention of mother-to-child transmission programmes, global, 2000–2017



Source: Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS 2018 estimates.

22. Almost all the 35 countries that UNICEF designated for intensive action on HIV are scaling up prevention interventions to control HIV among young people. In Tanzania, UNICEF is working with the Tanzania Social Action Fund and the Tanzania Commission for AIDS to implement an intervention for adolescents (aged 14–19 years) that combines social protection, economic empowerment and education on HIV and sexual and reproductive health.

23. UNICEF has made ECD central to its work. In 2018, advocacy by UNICEF and partners, including close cooperation with the Government of Argentina, helped to spur the creation of the G20 Initiative for Early Childhood Development. The ECD landscape saw systems strengthening and improved multisectoral interventions, with 80 countries adopting multisectoral packages with at least two interventions for early stimulation and care. Of those 80 countries, 33 reported established systems and the remaining 47 demonstrated the potential to go to scale in the coming years. More than 475,000 children in humanitarian situations participated in UNICEF-supported ECD programmes.

24. UNICEF provides a wide variety of Goal Area 1 interventions in humanitarian settings. In 2018, the organization supported the vaccination of 19.6 million children in humanitarian situations against measles and made progress in preventing cholera. In Haiti, this resulted from an immediate and effective rapid response; active oral cholera vaccine campaigns; interventions in targeted areas; and improved sanitation practices. Two doses of oral cholera vaccine were provided to 59,537 people in Saint-Michel de l'Attalaye. In 2018, nationwide, suspected cholera cases were down from

13,681 in 2017 to 3,786; and UNICEF responded to 87 health emergencies or outbreaks in the world, under the most challenging conditions for the population and the responders. This included cholera in more than 14 countries. In response to the 2018 Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a communication and community engagement risk strategy implemented in North Kivu, Ituri and Equateur provinces resulted in the mobilization of 25,000 local leaders, 15,000 frontline workers and 90,000 radio broadcasts in four languages across 113 stations to engage 9.6 million people on Ebola prevention and to dispel rumours and misconceptions. Thirteen knowledge, attitudes and practices surveys conducted during the response indicated an increase in Ebola-related knowledge from 23 to 91 per cent.

25. One of the greatest challenges faced in Goal Area 1 was aligning the capacity and profiles of staff and partners with the increasing demand for systems strengthening for achieving sustainable results at scale. To address this, UNICEF has invested new efforts in bolstering analytical skills; the use of data; sector planning; policy dialogue; and coordination to support cross-sectoral programming.

B. Goal Area 2: Every child learns

26. UNICEF maintained its commitment to education in 2018, with programmes covering 144 countries. The total Goal Area 2 expense was \$1.2 billion.



12 million
out-of-school children
participated in early learning or
primary or secondary education



Over 11 million children
were provided with individual
education/early learning
materials



2 million children
participated in skills development
programmes for learning,
personal empowerment, active
citizenship
and/or employability

27. While 168 million more children and adolescents are enrolled in pre-primary, primary and secondary schools than 10 years ago, many children are not gaining the knowledge and skills they need. Accordingly, UNICEF emphasizes the quality of education and learning outcomes in its Goal Area 2 work.

28. As the foundation of all future learning, early learning received continued emphasis. UNICEF collaborated with the World Bank to adapt the accelerated school readiness curriculum for implementation within the formal pre-primary “O” class; the revised “O” class pre-primary curriculum package was developed in 42 languages. In Ethiopia, UNICEF focused on the expansion of accelerated early learning programmes delivered outside of the formal school structure, notably the child-to-child and the accelerated school readiness programmes.

29. UNICEF supported skills development in over 86 countries, with significant progress at the system level. The Life Skills and Citizenship Education Framework supported Governments and partners to bolster life and employability skills development at scale in Jordan, Lebanon and the State of Palestine, while the ING-supported Power for Youth programme performed similar work in China, Kosovo, Montenegro, the Philippines and Viet Nam.

30. UNICEF continued to prioritize the educational needs of the most vulnerable children. In 2018, over 11.9 million out-of-school girls and boys participated in early

learning or primary or secondary education through UNICEF-supported programmes, including in humanitarian contexts, against a 2018 milestone of 10 million.

31. In 2018, UNICEF reached approximately 7 million children in humanitarian situations with education, including nearly 600,000 children in South Sudan and 1.2 million Syrian refugee children across Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. To benefit crisis-affected children and adolescents in the Syrian Arab Republic, UNICEF supported the development of a holistic learning assessment tool that measures reading, math and social-emotional skills.

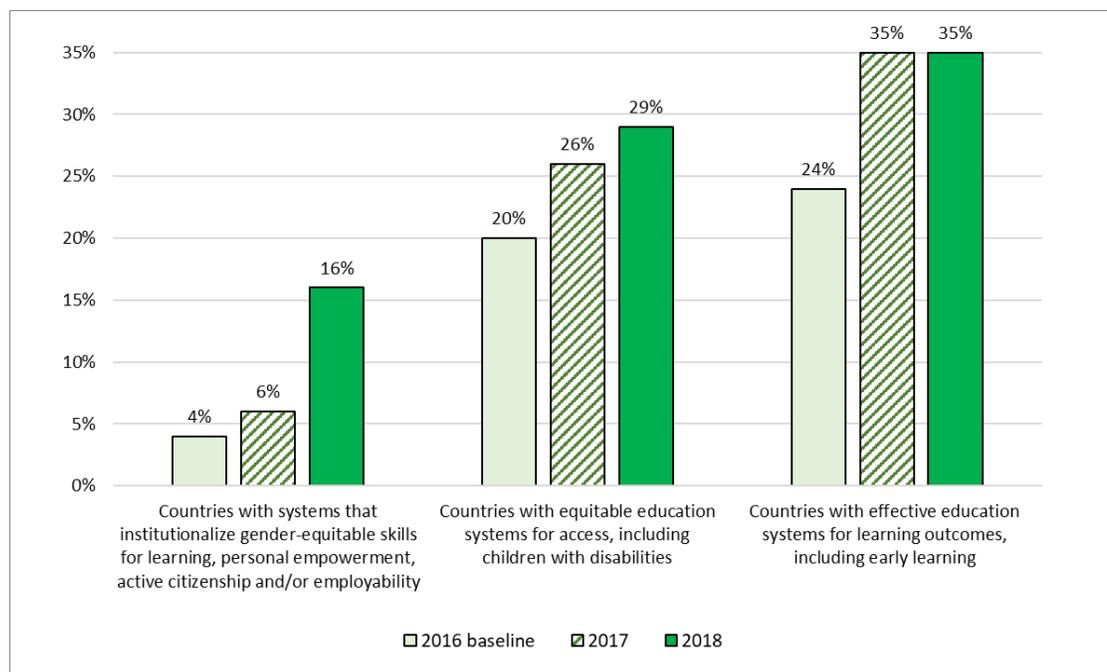
32. In Nepal, a UNICEF study increased traction for inclusive education by showing that a pilot programme improved teachers' capacity to make classrooms more inclusive and enabled children and young people with disabilities to learn. The Government is now implementing similar programmes and developing a national inclusive education master plan with support from UNICEF.

33. 2018 also saw a renewed global commitment to children's education. The Global Partnership for Education raised over \$2 billion for the world's poorest children and adolescents. World leaders pledged their support for the International Finance Facility for Education and the World Bank launched its Human Capital Project, which emphasizes the transformative power of education. These initiatives, to which UNICEF provided strategic support, not only advance the organization's goals but provide a more conducive environment for its programmes to succeed.

34. UNICEF continued to play a strategic role in the governance of Education Cannot Wait, the global fund for education in emergencies. It hosted its secretariat and helped to direct additional resources to underfunded education-in-emergency efforts, including in Bangladesh, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Indonesia, Nigeria and Papua New Guinea. In June 2018, at the Group of Seven summit, hosted by Canada and held in Charlevoix, Quebec, UNICEF joined the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative and other civil-society partners in a global advocacy campaign that helped to secure pledges of Can\$3.8 billion for women and girls' education in humanitarian situations. In collaboration with the Girls' Education Initiative and the Global Partnership for Education, UNICEF supported training in gender-responsive education sector planning for government and civil society representatives from 13 countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

35. The capacity to respond to children's educational needs in times of crisis remained a challenge in 2018. UNICEF is committed to strengthening the capacity of regional and country offices, partners and Governments to address the impact of shocks and stresses and avoid possible disruptions of education service delivery.

Figure IV
Selected results in Goal Area 2 in UNICEF programme countries



C. Goal Area 3: Every child is protected from violence and exploitation

36. Reflecting the global nature of violence against children, UNICEF worked in 154 countries in 2018 to deliver violence prevention and response services for children. The total Goal Area 3 expense was \$658 million. The births of over 16 million children were registered in 49 countries through UNICEF-supported programmes; nearly 5 million adolescent girls received prevention and care interventions to address child marriage; and 1.7 million children on the move received protective services (among countries with sex-disaggregated data, 48 per cent were girls). With the Executive Director of UNICEF serving as Chair of the Executive Board of the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children, UNICEF is well positioned to galvanize the political commitment to end violence against children and to translate that political will into concrete, time-bound national policy agendas.



1.7 million children
on the move received protective services through UNICEF-supported programmes



4.9 million adolescent girls
received prevention and care interventions to address child marriage through UNICEF-supported programmes



Over 16 million children
had their births registered in 49 countries through UNICEF-supported programmes

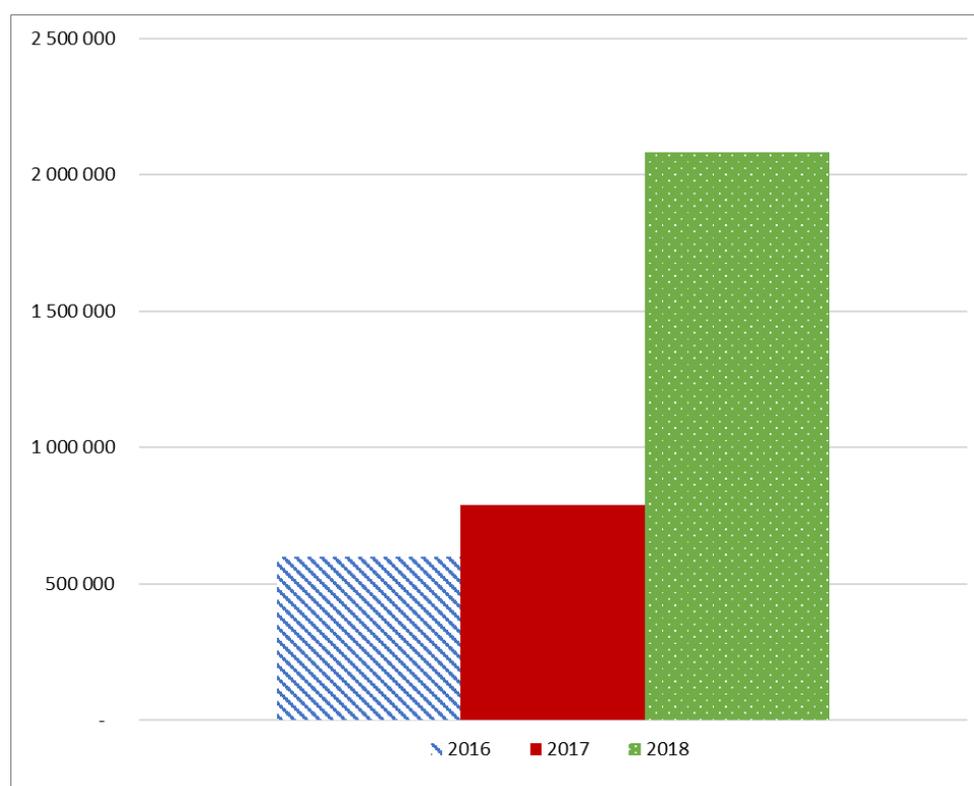
37. In 2018, through UNICEF-supported programmes, health, social work, justice and law enforcement services reached 2.3 million children who had experienced violence. In Nicaragua, a Government-led national campaign against sexual abuse

reached 2.8 million people and led to stronger response services for survivors and pregnant adolescents. Parenting programmes reached over 2 million mothers, fathers and caregivers in 75 countries.

38. Child protection systems strengthening is a key strategy for UNICEF. The number of countries reporting action and progress in social service workforce strengthening rose from 114 to 132 countries between 2017 and 2018. Key efforts in child protection have included the strengthening of data and information management systems in programme countries. In 2018, UNICEF supported 115 countries to improve the availability and quality of data on violence against children. Since going live in 2015, the UNICEF Primero case management software tool has been implemented in 22 active instances and used in complex emergencies, including for the Ebola crisis response in Sierra Leone, the earthquake and tsunami response in Indonesia and the Syrian refugee response in Jordan.

Figure V

Mothers, fathers and caregivers reached through UNICEF-supported parenting programmes as core prevention and response interventions to address violence against children, global, 2016–2018



39. UNICEF supported the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children, the Government of Sweden and others in mobilizing the 2030 Agenda for Children: End Violence Solutions Summit, the first global meeting held on the issue. The groundbreaking event was attended by high-level representatives from 67 countries and generated a series of commitments from national Governments, donors and civil society organizations, including the first-ever multi-country ministerial-level proclamation on violence against children. 2018 also saw the establishment of an alliance between the End Violence against Children Initiative, UNICEF, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern

Ireland and the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative to end violence in every school by 2024.

40. Nearly 100,000 girls and women received prevention and protection services on female genital mutilation through programmes supported by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and UNICEF and nearly 7 million people participated in education, communication and social mobilization platforms to promote the elimination of female genital mutilation.

41. Successful programming by the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage and the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme to Eliminate Female Genital Mutilation led to resource commitments from six new donors, including the first private-sector donor, totaling \$22.7 million over four years.

42. Interventions to improve access to justice, such as specialized legal aid, benefited 190,000 children and young people in contact with justice and administrative bodies. In 50 countries, UNICEF supported capacity-building for justice professionals, 44 per cent of whom received certification to deal with child offenders and 59 per cent with child victims, against 2018 milestones of 54 and 62 per cent, respectively.

43. UNICEF reached 3.6 million children in humanitarian situations, 83 per cent of those targeted, with psychosocial support, including access to child-friendly spaces with intersectoral programming interventions (among countries with sex-disaggregated data, 50 per cent were girls). Taking the lead in protecting children and young people from sexual exploitation and abuse in humanitarian situations, 16 country offices delivered child-sensitive and survivor-centric programmes in high-risk environments.

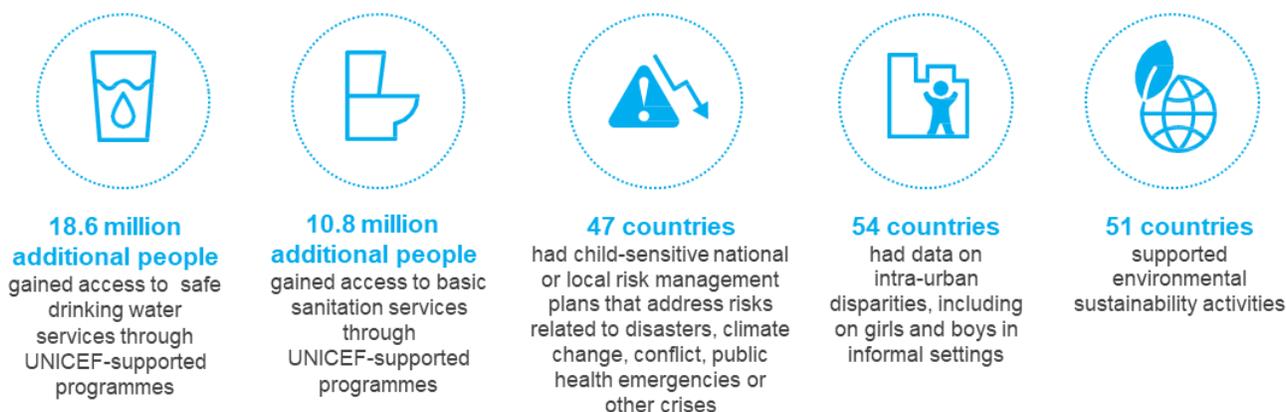
44. In Nigeria, Somalia and South Sudan, among 34 other countries, 61 per cent of unaccompanied and separated children registered with family tracing and reunification services were reunified with their families or received family-based care or appropriate alternative services (among countries with sex-disaggregated data, 44 per cent were girls). This represents an increase from 41 per cent in 2016 and 55 per cent in 2017. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, the Philippines and Somalia, among other countries, 13,600 children, or 99.6 per cent of those targeted, were released or reintegrated with their families and provided with adequate care and services after being recruited and used by armed forces (among countries with sex-disaggregated data, 22 per cent were girls). Mine risk education to reduce injuries from landmines and explosive remnants of war reached more than 3.7 million children with lifesaving messages, including in Myanmar, the Syrian Arab Republic and Ukraine (among countries with sex-disaggregated data, 47 per cent were girls).

45. Gender-based violence in emergencies received renewed attention in 2018, with 1.3 million women, girls and boys provided with risk mitigation, prevention or response interventions through UNICEF-supported programmes, reaching 103 per cent of those targeted.

46. A key challenge for UNICEF programming on child protection is securing greater public financing. To address this issue, UNICEF is increasingly seeking to partner with the World Bank and regional institutions, including the African Union and the European Union, to strengthen public finance analysis and connect social welfare system improvements to those for social protection.

D. Goal Area 4: Every child lives in a safe and clean environment

47. The physical environment in which children are born and nurtured and play serves as an underlying factor shaping many aspects of their well-being, from health to education to protection. A clean, safe and secure environment for children requires that they have access to safe and sustainable drinking water and sanitation and hygiene services. It also entails addressing disaster- and conflict-related risks and supporting urban planning and governance that are responsive to children's needs and rights and child-focused plans and monitoring systems for a sustainable environment.



48. In 2018, UNICEF worked on Goal Area 4 in 147 countries. The total Goal Area 4 expense was \$1.0 billion.

49. Access to safe water services (water from an improved source, with less than 30 minutes collection time, and which meets the respective national drinking water standards) was extended to close to 19 million people, of which 7 million were reached through UNICEF development programming and 12 million through long-term water infrastructure, as part of the UNICEF humanitarian response.

50. Nearly 11 million people gained access to basic sanitation services in 2018. National campaigns to eliminate open defecation reached beyond individual communities to declare entire districts, municipalities and even provinces and states open defecation free. In 2018, this included five districts in Afghanistan, two counties in Kenya, four municipalities in the Philippines and the first-ever open-defecation-free municipality in Niger (Bagaroua). In India, the Swachh Bharat Mission declared 18 states open defecation free in 2018, a result of unprecedented efforts over recent years.

51. In humanitarian settings, UNICEF provided safe water to more than 43 million people in 64 countries through a range of interventions, including water tankering, treatment and long-term water infrastructure, and sanitation facilities to over 13 million people in 46 countries. Close to 4.4 million children benefited from gender-appropriate WASH facilities and hygiene promotion in schools or in temporary learning spaces in humanitarian situations.

52. Through the organization's work on risk-informed programming, 15 countries received technical assistance to roll out programme guidance on risk-informed programming and conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding. Meeting the 2018 milestone, 47 countries had child-sensitive national or local strategies, policies and plans to address and mitigate the risks of climate change, conflict, public-health emergencies and other crises. UNICEF continued to leverage the equitable and effective

management of social services to address the root causes and consequences of violent conflict and to strengthen social cohesion and resilience.

53. UNICEF worked with other United Nations agencies in 22 countries through the Peacebuilding Fund to support conflict prevention and peacebuilding, predominantly in the areas of child protection, youth and adolescent participation, community engagement, education and local governance. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, UNICEF helped to create inclusive dialogue mechanisms that give young people sustainable platforms for voicing their priorities and a role in shaping policies. Working in partnership with other United Nations agencies in 28 municipalities, UNICEF has successfully instituted local dialogue platforms, which will now help to shape priorities for local governance bodies.

54. A growing majority of the world's children reside in urban settings, where, on average, they have greater proximity to services and benefit from higher incomes and improved infrastructure. Yet this urban advantage is not shared by all and urban living also brings different threats to child welfare. The result is that, in some countries, the poorest and most vulnerable urban children fare worse than their peers in rural areas, as evidenced in new UNICEF research. In 2018, UNICEF revitalized its programming for children in urban settings and supported urban and rural local governments in 57 countries to make their development plans child-responsive. The UNICEF Child Friendly Cities Initiative saw increasing demand from developing countries, and mayoral authorities from 14 East Asian cities joined UNICEF in Surabaya, Indonesia, in May 2018 to discuss how the region's fast-growing and dynamic metropolises could engage children and uphold their rights.

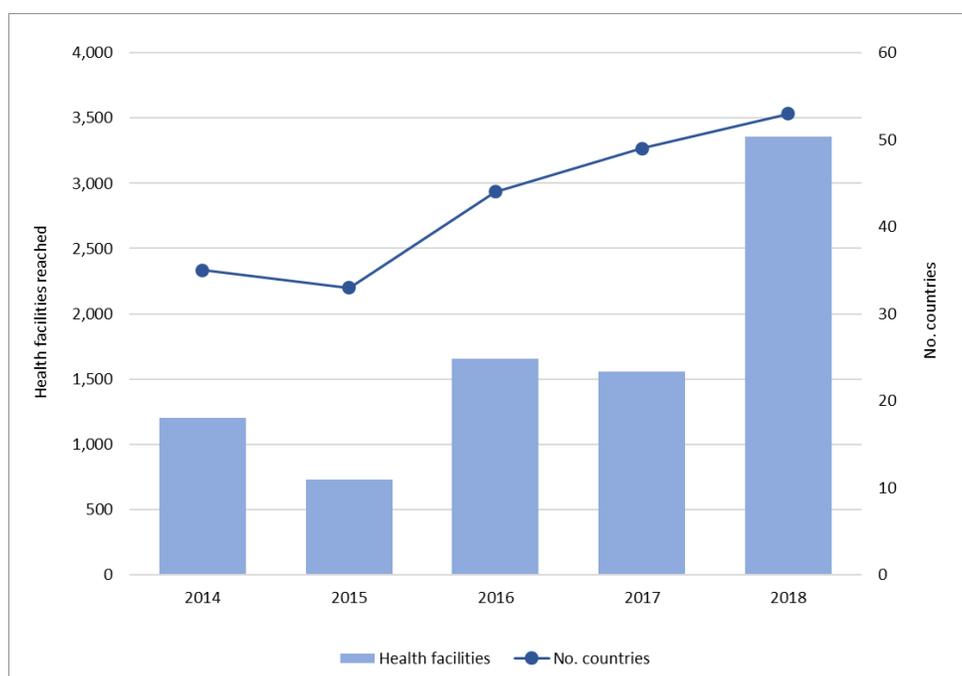
55. UNICEF programming in climate change, energy and the environment was also strengthened in 2018, with a growing focus on promoting climate-sensitive infrastructure in WASH, health and education and supporting young people as drivers of change. In Mongolia, the organization's sustained public advocacy efforts are raising awareness on the impact of air pollution on child health, especially in early childhood. In the Plurinational State of Bolivia, UNICEF convened more than 130 youth leaders to develop proposals and innovations for a sustainable and climate-resilient future.

56. As part of advancing gender equity and gender-specific services in WASH, UNICEF supported 7,710 schools to construct, rehabilitate and maintain gender-segregated WASH facilities. In Indonesia, UNICEF provided direct support to 40 schools and distributed 50,000 hygiene kits containing menstrual pads as part of the Palu earthquake and tsunami emergency response and reached millions of people through online and offline campaigns for Menstrual Hygiene Day.

57. A total of 3,355 health-care facilities gained access to WASH services through UNICEF direct support, the highest number ever and far exceeding the 2018 milestone of 2,000, with a high degree of overlap on the priority Every Newborn Action Plan countries. This was achieved by working hand in hand with WHO.

58. More work is needed to integrate UNICEF programming across this Goal Area and to ensure the sustainability of programming results, particularly in countries that are not fully equipped to institutionalize policies and structures.

Figure VI
Healthcare facilities that gained access to water, sanitation and hygiene services through UNICEF direct support, 2014–2018



E. Goal Area 5: Every child has an equitable chance in life

59. UNICEF works across sectors to address some of the key dimensions of inequity, such as poverty and exclusion due to gender, disability or minority status, that prevent children from realizing their rights. This work includes both stand-alone efforts to tackle exclusion and promote opportunity and the integration of an equity lens into the organization's broader programming. Goal Area 5 underpins all the other Goal Areas and is the clearest manifestation of the organization's commitment to leave no child behind.

60. New global estimates released in 2018 show that 665 million children live in multidimensional poverty, facing deprivations in their living standards as well as in such areas as health and education. Social protection covers only 35 per cent of children globally and as few as 16 per cent in Africa. Of the estimated 93 million children and adolescents with disabilities worldwide, half are out of school.

61. In 2018, UNICEF supported activities in 152 countries. The total expense for Goal Area 5 was \$427 million.



74 countries had nationally owned measurement and reporting on child poverty



Over 38 million children and young people were reached by UNICEF-supported cash-transfer programmes



6 million adolescents participated in or led civic engagement initiatives through UNICEF-supported programmes



Nearly 5 million adolescent girls received prevention and care interventions through UNICEF programming on child marriage, including through life-skills initiatives



1.4 million children with disabilities were reached with programmes and services

62. UNICEF continued its work to make child poverty a central issue in national development plans, agendas, policies and programmes, including by encouraging Governments to monitor child poverty and adapt social and economic policies. Fifty-five countries have established multidimensional child poverty measurement and reporting and 74 countries have routine monetary child poverty measurement and reporting, against 2018 milestones of 45 and 55, respectively. In 22 countries, child poverty is being addressed by specific policies and programmes. In Georgia, a UNICEF analysis highlighting that child poverty had increased contributed to a renewed public debate and the Government's introduction of a fivefold increase in the value of child benefits.

63. UNICEF-supported cash-transfer programmes, whether through technical support or direct financing, reached more than 38 million children in 2018, including over 7 million children in humanitarian settings. As of 2018, 75 countries reported having strong or moderately strong social protection systems. In 2018, 9 countries reported having national cash-transfer programmes that were ready to respond to a crisis, falling short of the 2018 milestone of 12 countries. In partnership with the World Bank, UNICEF continued to support the critical cash-transfer programme in Yemen, which reached 4.5 million children. In 2018, UNICEF contributed \$11 million to support the expansion of the Productive Safety Net Programme contingency pooled fund, benefiting 240,000 households with malnourished children (over 1.2 million beneficiaries) in the two most-affected regions of Ethiopia, following the drought.

64. In 2018, 33 countries reported having policies and legislation in place to support adolescent development compared with the 2018 milestone of 21. Around 6 million adolescents across 102 countries participated in or led civic engagement initiatives through UNICEF-supported programmes, including an estimated 500,000 in conflict-affected or humanitarian contexts across 23 countries. In India alone, 4.2 million adolescents were engaged — a huge increase prompted by a joint strategy with the Government.

65. In its work on gender, UNICEF focused on positive parenting, adolescent girls' empowerment, communication strategies and evidence generation. In humanitarian situations, nearly 34,000 girls and women with disabilities were provided with menstrual hygiene management services, with large-scale disability-inclusive programmes implemented in Bangladesh, Nigeria and the Syrian Arab Republic.

66. UNICEF worked in 123 countries to support children with disabilities. Over 66,000 children were provided with assistive devices and products. In 2018, UNICEF supported 36 per cent of countries with a humanitarian response to provide disability-inclusive humanitarian programmes and services, against the 2018 milestone of 30

per cent. Through an integrated programmatic approach, UNICEF has supported education policy and sector plans for children with disabilities; 93 countries reported progress in 2018. In Egypt, the National Assembly approved a new law on the provision of education for children with disabilities and a ministerial decree declared that all public schools were to be inclusive of children with disabilities.

67. Programme monitoring and implementation for this Goal Area were hindered by data gaps and inadequate tools for measuring inequities. For example, the lack of disaggregated data on children with disabilities, which extends to national administrative data and periodic national surveys and censuses, limited the ability of UNICEF to target this group. Similarly, the measurement of government expenditure on children is often inadequate. UNICEF is collaborating with other international institutions to increase country capacity and improve the availability of data for evidenced-based programming.

F. Cross-cutting priority: humanitarian action¹

68. In 2018, conflicts, natural disasters, epidemics and other crises undermined development gains across the world. As humanitarian needs mounted, reaching children and young people in crises became more challenging. For example, in Mali, heightened insecurity and funding constraints meant that only 8 per cent of targeted children and adolescents could access education services.

69. In 2018, UNICEF reached more than 43 million people in humanitarian settings with access to safe water, while 6.9 million children accessed some form of education; 3.6 million children and adolescents accessed psychosocial support; and 7 million children received humanitarian cash transfers. The total humanitarian expense in 2018 was \$2.7 billion.

70. UNICEF responded to 285 new and ongoing humanitarian situations in 90 countries, including five Level 3² and six Level 2³ emergencies, as well as several smaller humanitarian situations. The organization provided tailored support to countries experiencing new emergencies and scaling up their response, including Papua New Guinea; countries affected by the migration crises in Latin America and Caribbean; and countries in West and Central Africa with outbreaks of Ebola.

71. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, UNICEF provided basic WASH services to more than 1 million people affected by conflict and natural disasters; the organization also responded to cholera and Ebola outbreaks by providing WASH response packages to nearly 2.4 million people in cholera- and Ebola-prone areas. In Afghanistan, nearly 276,000 children in drought-affected areas were admitted for SAM treatment, and over 1 million people received access to water, including in drought-affected areas.

72. In 2018, UNICEF continued to lead the nutrition, education and WASH clusters and the Child Protection Area of Responsibility, using these roles to conduct advocacy and facilitate inter-cluster coordination and inter-agency action planning. With the support of cluster partners, including through standby arrangements, global cluster rapid response teams provided direct coordination and information management support to 28 countries, including in four Level 3 emergencies.

¹ For further details, see the annual report on UNICEF humanitarian action ([E/ICEF/2019/12](#)).

² Refugee crisis in Bangladesh; Ebola outbreaks in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and protracted conflicts in Nigeria, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen.

³ Protracted conflicts in the Central African Republic, Iraq and South Sudan; the refugee crisis in Syrian refugee-hosting countries (Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey); and the migration outflow due to the socioeconomic crisis in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

73. UNICEF seeks to sustain development gains for children in its humanitarian work, just as it seeks to strengthen crisis prevention and resilience in its development programming. Many countries are redesigning their existing programmes to create stronger links between humanitarian and development efforts. UNICEF experience in the Syrian Arab Republic in 2018 demonstrated that a properly designed short-term response provides a natural entry point for long-term interventions that build resilience.

74. In eastern Ukraine, UNICEF has focused its efforts on building the capacity of local authorities and civil society organizations to provide high-quality services that strengthen resilience and enhance social cohesion. In Burkina Faso, one of the pilot countries for the United Nations Sustaining Peace Initiative, UNICEF supported the Government to link humanitarian and development interventions to foster child rights and enhance community resilience.

75. In Afghanistan, a midterm review of UNICEF programming has precipitated stronger links between humanitarian and development efforts, including by expanding work on nutrition beyond SAM treatment to also focus on prevention, with the aim of reducing treatment expenses and promoting long-term solutions. Following the Sulawesi earthquake in Indonesia, community engagement through U-Report and a series of workshops enabled affected children to consider both their immediate and longer-term needs.

G. Cross-cutting priority: gender equality, including gender-responsive programming

76. Advancing gender equality and the rights of women and girls is essential to realizing the rights of all children and young people. Investments in gender equality contribute to lifelong positive outcomes for children and young people and their communities.

77. The UNICEF Gender Action Plan serves as a road map for promoting gender equality across the organization and everywhere UNICEF works. The total expense on this cross-cutting priority in 2018 was \$760 million.

78. In 2018, 101 countries included one or more integrated gender results in their programming. Nearly 5 million adolescent girls in 46 countries received prevention and care interventions to address child marriage through UNICEF-supported programmes. Thirty-four countries included menstrual hygiene management as a priority result and 17,900 schools now offer menstrual hygiene management services through UNICEF-supported programmes, exceeding the 2018 milestone of 2,000 schools.

79. Around 100,000 girls and women received UNICEF- and UNFPA-supported prevention and protection services around female genital mutilation, meeting the 2018 milestone, and 6.96 million people participated in education, communication and social mobilization platforms to promote the elimination of female genital mutilation, exceeding the 2018 milestone of 6.8 million.

80. Together with UNFPA, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the United Nations Development Programme, UNICEF is a core technical partner in the Spotlight Initiative, which is aimed at ending violence against women and girls.

81. UNICEF has made organization-wide efforts to strengthen capacity to achieve gender results. Using the 2018 institutional benchmarks as a baseline, UNICEF will develop a composite measure to track improvements in country-level gender

mainstreaming. All regional offices now have gender advisers and 27 gender specialists are working in country offices.

III. Strengthening organizational performance

A. Change strategies

82. The UNICEF programming approach is designed to achieve sustained results at the largest possible scale. That means leveraging the reach of Government and markets to enable large-scale delivery and driving down costs to ensure that all children can be served. It entails multisectoral programming that provides a holistic and rights-based response to children. And it puts the onus on policy and capacity development and systems strengthening at the national and subnational levels to ensure that high-quality services are provided, and the most disadvantaged children are reached.

83. In 2018, UNICEF country offices invested almost \$1.2 billion in actions related to the institutional strengthening of national systems. By 2018, a total of 87 country offices had evidence-based systems-strengthening strategies. UNICEF increasingly delivered programmatic interventions through integrated platforms, for instance combining efforts in WASH and the education sector to develop menstrual hygiene strategies in schools.

84. UNICEF intensified support for South-South cooperation in delivering results for children. For instance, in Thailand, a partnership between the Thailand International Cooperation Agency, the Ministry of Public Health and UNICEF was formalized to support the Government's role as a provider of technical assistance on the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis.

85. UNICEF contributed actively to global child rights monitoring in 2018 by bringing violations of children's and young people's rights to the attention of treaty bodies, such as the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women; it also offered technical assistance to States undergoing the Universal Periodic Review. UNICEF also focused on scaling up communication for development (C4D) programming to support behaviour change and community engagement. In Europe and Central Asia and Latin America and Caribbean, UNICEF developed C4D road maps to address violence against children and young people in more than 40 countries.

86. UNICEF promotes child rights by winning support for the cause of children from decision-makers and the wider public. In 2018, UNICEF raised awareness of child issues by generating over 300,000 news articles published in independent online media in the six official United Nations languages. One-hundred and thirty-eight countries participated in integrated campaigns connecting global, regional and national efforts. Through the Cause Framework, integrated campaigns successfully reached and engaged target audiences on priority advocacy issues, including ending violence against children (#ENDViolence), migrant and refugee children (#ChildrenUprooted), ECD (#EarlyMomentsMatter), child survival (#EveryChildALIVE) and humanitarian response (#ChildrenUnderAttack) as well as World Children's Day. For instance, working in collaboration with Member States and United Nations and civil society partners on the #ChildrenUprooted campaign, UNICEF secured Member State commitments on the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration that reflected the six policy concerns of UNICEF, including ending child detention and keeping families together. This complements the organization's multi-country and route-based programmes focused on children on the move in over 50 countries. Altogether, the

combined efforts of UNICEF, delivered at the global, regional and country levels, contributed to positive child-focused policy changes in support of children's rights in 150 countries during 2018.

87. Through social media and a volunteer force numbering approximately 996,000 as well as other means, UNICEF increased its base of supporters who volunteer, advocate or donate, engaging nearly 80 per cent of the 100 million people targeted to be engaged by 2021. The Global Volunteer Initiative enabled offices to institutionalize innovative approaches to involve individuals in broader programming efforts. In Nigeria, for example, UNICEF-trained volunteers report on the installation and operation of water stations in rural areas; act as mentors to reduce school drop-out rates; and go door-to-door in previously unreachable communities to deliver on the polio campaign.

88. Children and young people were involved as agents of change more than ever before in 2018. Key platforms included U-Report, which engaged 6.3 million children and young people; the volunteer force, of which young people made up 38 per cent; and child rights education, which engaged 3.5 million children and young people.

89. UNICEF works to effect change by developing and leveraging resources and partnerships for children, including a variety of innovative funding mechanisms. A total of 28 new innovative financing initiatives, leveraging over \$750 million, were explored in 2018, ranging from impact bonds and performance-based public-private partnerships to blended funds and insurance products. An innovative financial arrangement with the social enterprise Conceptos Plásticos was established to build classrooms in Côte d'Ivoire, with a cost saving of 40 per cent through the use of bricks made from recycled plastic waste.

90. UNICEF worked closely with the World Bank and other partners to develop financing mechanisms that leverage public and private resources to enable early action to prevent humanitarian situations from reaching crisis levels. In 2018, the Pandemic Emergency Financing Facility enabled a rapid response to the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

91. UNICEF deepened its engagement with business as a means to innovate, replicate and scale up programming, especially for the most vulnerable children, with a focus on creating shared-value partnerships. Of 42 existing multi-country partnerships, 8 are priority shared-value partnerships. UNICEF forged important new partnerships with LEGO on ECD; with Amadeus to use global flight data to track Zika virus, dengue fever and natural disasters; and with Lixil to reach 3 million households in low- and middle-income countries with affordable sanitation products.

92. Over 1,500 companies engaged in dialogue with UNICEF on strengthening their practices vis-à-vis child rights. Over 340 took action, including integrating child safeguarding into management practices, addressing employment conditions affecting ECD and strengthening online child safety.

93. UNICEF procured \$3.49 billion in supplies and services from over 11,000 businesses across 175 countries in 2018, achieving, through strategic procurement approaches, a savings of \$351.2 million, \$91.2 million more than the 2018 milestone of \$260 million. Eleven separate industry consultations, including a landmark sanitation market shaping consultation in Abuja, held in November 2018, convened over 220 businesses involved in vaccines, medicines, diagnostics, insecticide-treated nets and nutrition and sanitation products. These strategic dialogues helped UNICEF to bridge business interests to enhance and extend the range of innovative, high-quality and affordable products available to meet children's needs.

94. UNICEF worked closely with other United Nations agencies to deliver fully on the reforms of the United Nations development system and the implementation of General Assembly resolution 72/279. Measures to support reform included in-kind staff support and financial commitment. Forty-five per cent of UNICEF field offices have a signed business operations strategy, with estimated savings of \$12 million, compared with the 2018 milestones of 40 per cent and \$5 million, respectively.

95. UNICEF accelerated results for children and young people through innovation, including the use of real-time and digital technologies. In 2018, 57 per cent of programme countries used a real-time information technology, such as RapidPro, U-Report, Primero or Magic Box, at scale. Two innovation concepts were supported for their potential to scale up: bundling pneumonia diagnostics, oxygen and Amoxicillin to reduce child pneumonia deaths; and bundling sanitation, nutrition and booster immunizations with the vaccination of adolescent girls against the human papillomavirus through school and community health systems. Modest investments by UNICEF in these areas will help to accelerate progress on results targets, including by catalysing donors, domestic financing and shared-value partnerships with businesses.

96. UNICEF continued to play a leading role in generating evidence on the situation of children worldwide. The largest-ever round of multiple indicator cluster surveys was initiated, with 67 surveys confirmed for implementation by 2020, enabling the monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals on learning outcomes, water quality and disability, among other issues. As the custodian or supporting agency for the monitoring of 17 Sustainable Development Goal indicators, UNICEF spearheaded new data collection methodologies and tools, including for ECD. In research, together with the Campbell Collaboration, UNICEF launched the Child Welfare Mega Map, which provides a public, living and interactive visual summary of 302 systematic reviews and 16 other evidence gap analyses to help researchers and practitioners navigate the evidence of interventions that support children.

97. The UNICEF decentralized evaluation function delivered 105 evaluations in 2018, the most ever recorded. The quality of evaluations overall remained very high. The evaluation policy was revised following an external peer review and approved by the UNICEF Executive Board in June 2018; it is focused on improving the quality and use of evaluations, especially at the country level. Management responses have been submitted for all 88 evaluations conducted in 2017.

B. Management

98. UNICEF advanced its efforts to strengthen internal management in 2018. The organization prioritized improving its response to sexual misconduct and all forms of workplace abuse. UNICEF undertook several initiatives to reaffirm its five values of care, respect, integrity, transparency and accountability. UNICEF will continue to work closely with the Global Staff Association to further improve the workplace environment on the basis of evidence from staff surveys and other means; the continued participation of the Global Staff Association in global, regional and country management meetings; and the identification and promotion of best practices.

99. In March 2018, the Executive Director launched three external reviews: (a) by the Morgan Lewis law firm, on sexual harassment cases; (b) by the Independent Task Force on Workplace Gender Discrimination, Harassment and Abuse of Authority; and (c) by an independent panel of experts, which reviewed the UNICEF response to protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. A dashboard was launched to track UNICEF management's response to these reviews. UNICEF has appointed a Senior Coordinator, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Workplace Abuse, to support various parts of the organization with an enhanced and accelerated response.

100. A comprehensive strategy on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment is being rolled out to accelerate prevention and response at the country level. UNICEF committed \$11 million in 2018 as a catalytic fund to strengthen and accelerate work on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse in 16 of its high-risk humanitarian country offices. This includes funding for safe and accessible reporting; high-quality and accessible survivors' assistance; and accountability and investigations.

101. The organization played a leading role in galvanizing collective action for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, joining up efforts across the IASC and the United Nations system, and charted the course for accelerating programmes focused on safe and accessible reporting, quality assistance for survivors of sexual exploitation and abuse and enhanced accountability, including investigations in all countries with humanitarian response plans or refugee response plans.

102. As a follow-up to the Morgan Lewis review, UNICEF is strengthening its internal investigative function with new credibility assessments; 10 new posts to strengthen its investigative capacity; specialized training for its investigators; a target of 90 days for the completion of all sexual misconduct-related investigations; and anonymity in the reporting and investigating of harassment and abuse. As of 20 February 2019, the completion rate by staff of the mandatory online training course on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse was 94 per cent globally.

103. In June 2018, after an independent review of its data, policies and practices, UNICEF earned the Economic Dividends for Gender Equality (EDGE) Certification, the leading certification standard for gender equality. It was the first United Nations agency to earn this certification and placed among the top 11 per cent of all EDGE-certified organizations. The action plan developed by UNICEF and EDGE includes more-flexible working arrangements; yearly gender pay-gap assessments; and better communication around the recruitment and promotion process. Complementing this, UNICEF will strengthen family-friendly policies.

104. UNICEF issued 17 audit reports in 2018, generating 196 agreed actions to strengthen governance, risk management and controls. The organization managed 226 investigation cases, of which 92 were closed, 84 per cent of them within nine months of receipt of the allegation. Further details are provided in the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations 2018 annual report to the Executive Board ([E/ICEF/2019/AB/L.3](#)).

105. UNICEF took initiatives to further comply with the latest version of the International Aid Transparency Initiative Standard and improved its monthly publication of data, including on the Sustainable Development Goals and humanitarian data aligned to Grand Bargain commitments.

106. 2018 saw concerted efforts within UNICEF to bolster its management culture. Consistent emphasis was put on supporting staff as the most important asset in UNICEF for delivering results for children. 360-degree assessments were made mandatory for all senior staff, and matrix management is being strengthened across the organization to enhance cross-functional work.

107. A corporate learning agenda to support skills and competencies required for the new Strategic Plan was designed and delivered. Knowledge is being shared digitally through Yammer, with a 560 per cent increase in active users over two years, and the learning platform Agora, which is now being used by UN-Women as well and shares content with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Oxfam Great Britain.

108. Strategic human resource business partnerships provided managers and staff with an enhanced one-stop-shop client experience. The average recruitment time improved from 93 days in 2017 to 62 days in 2018 for regular recruitment.

109. For three years in a row, UNICEF has maintained overall gender parity at the international professional (IP) staff category. Gender imbalances still exist in some regions and offices and at some IP-post levels. Geographical diversity remained unchanged in 2017, with 48 per cent of IP staff from industrial countries and 52 per cent from programme countries.

110. Before the establishment of the Global Shared Services Center, over 40 per cent of the UNICEF workforce performed operational transactions compared with an industry median of 15 per cent. With functions consolidated from 150 offices worldwide and staff reduced, UNICEF has surpassed industry benchmarks in almost all types of transactions.

111. In collaboration with UNHCR and the World Food Programme, the United Nations Partner Portal was launched to facilitate open collaboration between the United Nations and partners. A joint initiative under the Grand Bargain commitments, it is aimed at simplifying and harmonizing United Nations processes for civil-society partnerships.

112. UNICEF rolled out its eTools platform to 46 country offices to support programme delivery, while a new project for mobile warehouse and supply management began to optimize and streamline warehouse functions. The organization advanced its lightweight and agile information technology (LIGHT) concept, moving services to the cloud and eliminating local data centres in more than 100 field locations. This has minimized the complexity of its information technology and improved connectivity and mobility for staff in field offices. It has also resulted in a decrease in greenhouse-gas emissions. The organization's enterprise content management system streamlined ways of working and managing information, while increasing the number of staff engaged.

IV. Revenue, expenses and resource mobilization⁴

113. Total revenue increased by 2 per cent in 2018, to \$6,676 million. Regular resources increased by 27 per cent, to \$1,807 million, while other resources decreased by 6 per cent, to \$4,869 million. Consequently, regular resources as a proportion of total revenue rose from 22 per cent to 27 per cent.

⁴ Financial information is unaudited.

Table 1
Revenue source and type, 2017 and 2018

(Millions of United States dollars)

<i>Source of revenue</i>	<i>2017 actual^a</i>	<i>2018 actual</i>	<i>2018 plan^b</i>
Regular resources			
Government and intergovernmental agencies ^c	580	895	526
Private sector ^d	706	739	745
Other revenue^e	138	173	125
Total — regular resources	1 424	1 807	1 396
Other resources (regular)			
Government and intergovernmental agencies	1 780	2 098	1 414
Private sector	611	558	674
Inter-organizational arrangements	635	286	354
Subtotal	3 026	2 942	2 442
Other resources (emergency)			
Government and intergovernmental agencies	1 765	1 412	1 436
Private sector	184	163	109
Inter-organizational arrangements	178	352	291
Subtotal (rounded)	2 127	1 927	1 836
Total — other resources	5 153	4 869	4 278
Total revenue (rounded)	6 577	6 676	5 674

Note: Due to rounding, the totals may differ slightly from the sum of the columns.

^a 2017 actual data is restated for re-mapping of global programme partners.

^b According to financial estimates provided to the Executive Board in September 2018. The data in this column are not revenue-based.

^c Gross regular resources from Governments include income taxes paid by UNICEF on behalf of the citizens of Governments that contribute to regular resources.

^d 2017 actual and 2018 include contributions of \$36 million and \$47 million, respectively, for specific management activities.

^e Other revenue includes income from interest, procurement services and other sources.

Table 2
Revenue source, 2017 and 2018

(Millions of United States dollars)

<i>Source of revenue</i>	<i>2017 actual^a</i>	<i>2018 actual</i>	<i>2018 plan^b</i>
Government and intergovernmental agencies	4 125	4 405	3 376
Private sector	1 501	1 460	1 528
Inter-organizational arrangements	813	638	645
Other	138	173	125
Total revenue	6 577	6 676	5 674

Note: Due to rounding, the totals may differ slightly from the sum of the columns.

^a 2017 actual data is restated for re-mapping of global programme partners.

^b According to financial estimates provided to the Executive Board in September 2018. The data in this column are not revenue-based.

114. In 2018, 139 Governments contributed to UNICEF resources. Total public-sector revenue (from Governments, intergovernmental organizations and inter-organizational arrangements), came to \$5,043 million (up from \$4,938 million in 2017). Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America were the largest contributors to regular resources. Of special note are the generous increased donations to regular resources, notably a multi-year commitment by Sweden of \$294 million over the four years of the Strategic Plan as well as donations by the United Kingdom (\$122 million, up from \$54 million in 2017), Switzerland (\$61 million, up from \$23 million in 2017) and Germany, which gave its largest-ever core contribution (\$58 million). Private-sector revenue (from National Committees, individual donors, non-governmental organizations and foundations), at \$1,460 million, has remained strong, with a slight decrease of 3 per cent compared with 2017.

115. Revenue for humanitarian assistance (other resources (emergency)), at \$1,927 million in 2018, was 9 per cent lower than in 2017. The humanitarian funding requirement increased to \$3,813 million from \$3,756 million in 2017, representing the largest-ever funding request for humanitarian action by UNICEF.

116. The total humanitarian expense amounted to \$2.7 billion, or 50 per cent of the total 2018 expense; \$1.98 billion of this amount was other resources (emergency). Of the 30 country offices with the largest overall expense, 24 had humanitarian action for children appeals in 2018; these 30 offices accounted for 79 per cent of the total country-level expense (humanitarian and non-humanitarian).

Figure V
Direct programme assistance by Goal Area and resource type, 2018

(Millions of United States dollars)



Note: Due to rounding, totals may differ slightly from the sum of the columns; data as at 2 April 2019.

117. UNICEF made every effort to comply with the cost-recovery policy and Executive Board decisions. Five waivers were granted in 2018, with an impact of approximately \$944,000.⁵ Four of the waivers involved a reduced rate, from 8 per cent to 7 per cent, as required by the governing bodies of the funding partners (Global Partnership for Education, Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and European Commission) and having taken into account the programmatic needs. In one exceptional case related to the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, a joint programme funded by the European Commission, the cost recovery was shared between UNICEF (3.2 per cent) and other United Nations agencies (3.8 per cent) in the spirit of working jointly and in recognition that the other agencies were bearing a higher proportion of the costs.

⁵ See the report for 2018 on the implementation of the Integrated Results and Resources Framework of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021.

Table 3
Cost-recovery waivers, 2018

<i>Donor</i>	<i>Country programme</i>	<i>Type of waiver</i>	<i>Value to which the waiver applied</i>	<i>Impact of the waiver</i>	<i>Rationale for issuing waiver</i>
Netherlands	Ethiopia	Reduction of cost-recovery rate from 8 to 7 per cent	929 600 euros	9 296 euros	European Commission funding channelled through a Member State; urgency of the action (already substantial delay); the reputations of UNICEF and the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); and condition of the European Commission regarding the portion of funds channelled through a Member State.
Netherlands	Sudan	Reduction of cost-recovery rate from 8 to 7 per cent	1 104 097 euros	11 014 euros	European Commission funding channelled through a Member State; urgency of the action (already substantial delay in negotiations); the reputations of UNICEF and UNHCR; and condition of the European Commission regarding the portion of funds channelled through a Member State.
European Commission (European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations)	Lesotho	Reduction of cost-recovery rate from 7 to 3.2 per cent	700 000 euros	7 000 euros	A joint programme between UNICEF, the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The reduction of the overhead rate reflects the agreement that some of the overhead rate needs to be passed on to WFP and FAO, since they cannot charge overhead if UNICEF is doing so.
Global Partnership for Education (GPE)	Multiple country programmes	Reduction of cost-recovery rate from 8 to 7 per cent	\$71 687 158	\$710 687	A harmonized approach with all other grants, for which a maximum cost-recovery rate of 7 per cent was established in 2013; GPE Board of Directors decision; urgency of the action, i.e., decision needed before the June 2018 meeting of the GPE Board to feed into its consideration of its upcoming decisions on grants to be approved for UNICEF as a grant agent.
Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF)	Multiple country programmes	Reduction of cost-recovery rate from 8 to 7 per cent	\$21 475 672	\$210 476	An extension of the waiver issued for the original grant. GF declined to accept an 8 per cent recovery cost and set a cap of 7 per cent for all United Nations agencies and international non-governmental organizations as a condition for receiving its grant, directly or indirectly.

V. Lessons learned

118. UNICEF has noted a number of early lessons from the first year of implementation of the Strategic Plan, 2018–2021 and has incorporated them into its programmatic learning.

119. The UNICEF approach to systems strengthening is critical to achieving results in all Goal Areas. Working horizontally and vertically across sectors and regions is fundamental to avoid siloed approaches and to increase organizational learning. A 2018 evaluation of the organization’s approach to the strengthening of health and child protection systems highlighted the need for UNICEF to improve in these areas. The evaluation concluded that, while making the transition towards systems strengthening is complex and challenging, UNICEF is well positioned to capitalize on its comparative advantage in specific areas, including strengthening subnational governance in an era of decentralization and improving data for decision-making.

120. The importance of multisystem approaches was another lesson to emerge strongly in 2018. This was most apparent in nutrition. In the 10 countries that are home to 70 per cent of the world’s stunted children, UNICEF learned that reliance on the health sector should be complemented with work on the food system to effectively deliver large-scale nutrition programmes. Accordingly, as appropriate for the specific context of each country, UNICEF will increasingly leverage the potential of the food, health, water and sanitation, education and social protection systems concurrently for the same children and young people.

121. Experience gained in 2018 also reaffirmed the importance of strengthening the links between humanitarian and development efforts and building the capacities of Governments and civil society to do so. The work of UNICEF in Burkina Faso, the Syrian Arab Republic and eastern Ukraine showed that short-term emergency responses can be designed to provide entry points for long-term interventions that build resilience, enhance social cohesion and advance children’s rights.

122. UNICEF was challenged by an insufficiency of institutional, human and financial capacities, particularly at the country level. Limited evidence in key areas weakened otherwise effective approaches to reach out to target populations.

123. The results framework of the current Strategic Plan has significantly more disaggregated indicators than the previous Strategic Plan, reflecting the pledge to leave no one and no child behind and to reach the farthest behind first. While UNICEF has stepped up efforts to support national Governments and other partners to generate the necessary disaggregated data, developing robust systems to meet this new reporting requirement is challenging and will take time. Therefore, disaggregation has been reported in the data companion and scorecard where possible, with such reporting expected to increase over the duration of the Strategic Plan period.

VI. Draft decision

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the annual report for 2018 of the Executive Director of UNICEF, including the report on the implementation of the Integrated Results and Resources Framework of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021; the report on the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system; the report on the implementation of the common chapter; and the data companion and scorecard;

2. *Decides* to transmit the above-mentioned reports to the Economic and Social Council, along with a summary of the comments and guidance of the Executive Board.
