Update on the UN80 Initiative and UNICEF Implementation

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UNICEF Executive Board
Informal briefing – 21 August 2026
Item 7: Update on the UN80 Initiative and UNICEF implementation

UNICEF Engagement in the UN80 Initiative

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The measure of success for UN80 is whether the UN system that emerges is better placed to reach children, especially in the most fragile situations

WP 2
New Humanitarian Compact

WP 5
Country Configuration

WP 6
Regional Reset

WP 14
Shared Services & Common Back Offices

Co-lead
WP 16
UN System Data Commons
With UN DESA and EOSG

WP 18
Funding Mechanisms

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The compact is being built in four workstreams:

- Integrated Supply Chains
- Humanitarian Diplomacy
- Nutrition in Emergencies
- The DataQuint

WP 5 | UN Country Configuration

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Modular, context-sensitive approach: evidence-based, guided by globally agreed parameters and country typology (income, fragility, mandate)

In-country presence remains important where UNICEF holds operational mandates, technical expertise and normative responsibilities

CPDs and UNSDCFs are complementary and sequential.

Engaged in first country configuration cohort assessments, contributing to the methodology and analytical framework

Configuration decisions should be assessed against their effect on the system's **capacity to deliver for children in each context**

WP 6 | Regional Reset

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Regional Platform for Integration

Value measured by **improved outcomes at country level**: better access to expertise and coherence on cross-border challenges

Linkage with Expertise on Demand (WP 8)

Six pilots (Mali, Jordan, Barbados, Malawi, Tajikistan, Indonesia) via the Joint SDG Fund; UNICEF on the Operational Steering Committee

Clarity Sought

Governance, financing modalities and Member State ownership remain under consultation; early resolution encouraged

Build on What Works

Leverage existing agency expertise; pooled funds should complement, not substitute, agency resource mobilization

Adjustments to the regional architecture should be evidence-based, carefully sequenced and designed to **reinforce results on the ground**

WP 14 & WP 16 | Shared Services and Data Commons

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WP 14 | UNIFIED SERVICE ROADMAP

- **Provider and recipient:** GSSC offers payroll, payment, HR and learning services; provides services to UN-Women and ITU; is already using 4/5 BIG priority services
- **GSSC is source of expertise** on global shared services for UN system
- **Co-lead of three HLCM streams:** treasury, payroll and insurance
- **UNICEF continues to participate in all Common Back Office processes:** planned provider in Senegal and Pakistan (with UNOPS)

WP 16 | UN SYSTEM DATA COMMONS

- **One UN data:** for the first time, UN data can be discovered and accessed through a harmonized and standardized system.
- **AI-Ready:** structured, interoperable data that can be reliably used by AI.
- **AI-powered onboarding:** agentic AI automates data and metadata mapping, lowering the barrier to new data contributors onboarding.
- **Federated governance model:** agency autonomy preserved, with a clear voice for programme countries on national data systems.

USD 100M+
cumulative BOS savings since 2019

53%
offices in common premises (UN average: 32%)

28
UN entities committed to sharing official public data

78
engineers mobilized in technical sprints; UNGA Sept 2026 milestone

Common services work best when they lower costs without slowing operational response:

savings must translate into more assistance delivered

Public sector core is at its lowest level on record. The reform question is the quality of financing, not the choice of modality.

THE EVIDENCE

6%

of UNICEF's public sector income was core in 2025 — the lowest level on record

11% vs 30% target

of Member State contributions to UNICEF were core in 2025, against the Funding Compact target

2023 12% · 2024 14% · 2025 11%

UNICEF'S POSITION

Improve quality across all modalities

Greater predictability, flexibility, multi-year commitments and lower transaction costs — rather than shifting resources between modalities

Distinguish pooled funding governance

Humanitarian funds are crisis-driven; development funds must remain anchored in national ownership

Protect programme delivery

Reform costs must be transparently identified and separately financed — coordination cannot be funded from programme resources

Core, earmarked, thematic and pooled funding play distinct, complementary roles —

the erosion of core carries direct consequences for children

Impact for Children, Risks and the Road Ahead

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Impact on Children

- **Early evidence** points to tangible benefits in operational and efficiency domains
- **Efficiency gains** should be tracked through programming outcomes for children
- **Continuity of essential supplies** preserved during Red Sea, Gulf and Ebola responses

Risks & Safeguards

- **Mandate integrity:** keep child-specific mandates, expertise and accountability distinct
- **Funding quality and engagement demands:** transparent with the Board on resource implications
- **Pace and sequencing:** no faster than field systems can safely absorb

Looking Ahead

- **September 2026:** Launch of common supply chain service request management platform
- **Focus should be on operational benchmarks,** not only structural and process milestones
- **Regular, transparent engagement** with the Executive Board as implementation advances


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Thank you
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