U.S. Delegation Remarks for the UNICEF Executive Board Second Regular Session September 7-10, 2021

Item 10: Formative evaluation of UNICEF work to link humanitarian and development programming, and management response

- The United States welcomes the formative evaluation of UNICEF’s work on the link between humanitarian and development programming, and commends UNICEF for its approaches towards strengthening cooperation, coherence, coordination and complementarity across development, humanitarian, and peacebuilding efforts.

- We are pleased to join the statement of the cross regional statement group on this evaluation as delivered by the United Kingdom.

- Effectively linking humanitarian and development programming impacts critical outcomes and results for children globally, and particularly in fragile contexts. We strongly support the Evaluation’s recommendation to elevate Linking Humanitarian and Development Programming (LHD) in UNICEF’s Strategic Plan, particularly because of UNICEF’s comparative advantage and dual mandate, and to identify areas where UNICEF can incorporate these efforts during country-level planning.

- Following the Evaluation recommendations, we urge UNICEF to:

  - Engage further with convergence approaches for development and humanitarian programming, where appropriate;
    - Support joint planning and programming across humanitarian and development programs, while addressing fragility, crisis and displacement, and strengthening local capacity and resilience; and
    - Integrate displaced populations into program development, where appropriate.

  - Additionally, we encourage UNICEF to connect protection from sexual exploitation and abuse initiatives in all its humanitarian responses with protection, accountability, and participatory approaches in its development activities.

  - We note with concern the Evaluation’s finding that there remains a significant lack of analytical capacity for comprehensive risk and contextual analysis in programming and planning, even after the issuance of the Guidance on Risk-Informed Programming. Also of concern is the finding that, while UNICEF’s coordination has been effective within sectors, such as WASH and nutrition sectors, such coordination remains less effective across other sectors. We welcome additional information on how UNICEF is trying to
address these gaps at the country level.

- The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the importance of using risk-informed programming to embed preparedness for public health emergencies and disaster risk management in development programming. We ask UNICEF to ensure that country offices have the guidance and capacity to apply risk-informed planning and programming across relevant sectors.

- The Evaluation also highlights the importance of clarifying and harmonizing the language used in this sphere, noting terms such as “linking humanitarian and development programming” and “nexus” are understood in different ways and can be limiting in different contexts. We welcome UNICEF’s efforts to address this.