

Statement of ChildFund Alliance:

First Regular Session of the UNICEF Executive Board, 8-11 February 2022

Agenda Item 6: UNICEF Humanitarian Action

Mr. President, Executive Director Katherine Russel and Distinguished Members of the Board, I would like to express ChildFund Alliance's appreciation for the opportunity to address the First Regular Session of the UNICEF Executive Board for 2022.

On behalf of ChildFund Alliance, I would like to extend our sincere congratulations on the appointment of Katherine Russel as the eighth Executive Director of UNICEF.

As the Secretary General of ChildFund Alliance, I address you on behalf of 11 child-focused global development and humanitarian organizations. ChildFund helps over 21 million children and family members in more than 70 countries. ChildFund is committed to the objectives of humanitarian action which are aimed at alleviating suffering and ensuring the safety and dignity of people.

ChildFund welcomes the progress UNICEF has made in implementing the recommendations in the report *"Strengthening UNICEF's Humanitarian Action, The Humanitarian Review: Findings and Recommendations."* We are encouraged to see these recommendations reflected in *UNICEF's Humanitarian Action for Children 2022 Overview*.

We are acutely aware that 2022 poses immense challenges to the safety and wellbeing of children and their families worldwide. This is particularly true for children in Afghanistan where the humanitarian situation has worsened significantly with the recent political and socioeconomic developments.

ChildFund's newest member, WeWorld, recently returned to Afghanistan for the first time since 2017, sensing the urgency of the situation and the inherent risks to women and children in the country. Upon request of their longstanding national partner located in Herat province, the Rural Rehabilitation Association for Afghanistan (RRAA), WeWorld has begun with the implementation of a cash for food project in Northern Herat, supporting widowed households in feeding their families through the harsh winter. RRAA first targeted 110 households headed by widowed women and were later able to expand to 230 households, reaching over 1300 children in need and providing cash for food. The support of ChildFund members will allow this project to be sustained through May 2022, with the goal to scale up assistance to reach almost double the number of women and children in need. WeWorld, with the support of ChildFund, will continue to expand its operations in Afghanistan, through strong, established partnerships with local organizations and relentless efforts to secure greater funding for effective humanitarian action.

Children and their protection must lie at the heart of each humanitarian action. Everyone has a role to play in the protection of children. The international community must increase efforts to fund humanitarian action in Afghanistan, before it worsens. We are immensely grateful to UNICEF for its historic, single-country appeal of \$2 billion for Afghanistan for 2022, to support over 24 million people, half of whom are children.

In closing, ChildFund Alliance expresses its sincere thanks to UNICEF for working tirelessly to help those in need in Afghanistan.