Update on the context and trends

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic unleashed a global crisis that has been unprecedented in both the universality of its scope and the inequality of its impacts. As the pandemic upended the lives of children everywhere, UNICEF’s Public Partnership Division (PPD) responded quickly by redoubling efforts in placing children’s rights at the center of policy agendas at global and national levels, and mobilizing resources for the realization of children’s rights throughout the world. PPD came together both at the level of individual teams and as an entire division to share the burden and support each other to achieve a year of record-breaking results.

Despite the challenges brought on by the pandemic, including the increased workload without additional capacity and the mental health strain the year put on colleagues and the division as a whole, PPD, in close collaboration with other UNICEF Divisions, Regional (RO) and Country Offices (CO), led UNICEF public sector resource mobilization efforts in 2020, reaching a total of $5,451 million in public sector contributions received (from Governments, intergovernmental organizations and inter-organizational arrangements), an increase of $711 million (up 15% from 2019) exceeding the UNICEF Strategic Plan target for 2020 by 16%. Despite the global economic downturn and uncertainty created by COVID-19, 2020 was a record-breaking year for UNICEF, with total (public + private) income of $7,176 million (76% from public sector), an increase of 18% from 2019 – most of which is attributable to earmarked funding for COVID-19. Revenue from the World Bank and other development banks reached $106 million in 2020 and thematic funding as a share of other resources (OR) increased from 6% in 2019 to 7% in 2020.

As the sudden onset of the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated just how critical flexible resources are for mounting an efficient, swift and agile response to emergencies and supporting the long-term resilience of countries and communities, Regular Resources (RR) contributions received from the public sector increased to $592 million in 2020 (from $519 million in 2019). In 2020, 123 Governments contributed to UNICEF resources. The largest contributors in 2020 were the United States of America, Germany, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Norway.

Progress Against PPD Priority Areas
Established by the division in 2019, the four division-wide priorities: Accelerating Partnerships with International Financial Institutions (IFIs), RR Acceleration, Advocacy and Risk Management, continued to be major drivers of results in 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, PPD identified two additional priorities necessary to successfully deliver results in 2020: COVID-19 Resource Mobilization and Advocacy and Business Continuity. A summary of key results achieved within each priority area is available under the major contributions and drivers of results section, together with overall highlights of 2020 PPD results achieved.

Major contributions and drivers of results
PPD, together with PFP, developed strategies and products for the acceleration of Regular Resources and rolled out UNICEF’s new RR acceleration strategy in 2020 with four key components:
· The development of a new narrative, including redesigning the annual RR report
· Private sector engagement and ramping up individual giving
· One-country integrated approach plans in France, Germany, Netherlands, Spain, UK and the Gulf countries to mobilize both public and private sector partners
Targeted selected public sector outreach to reach the PPD stretch target of a $100 million RR in 2 years

As a result of this, **PPD reached over 52% of the stretch target to increase RR by $100 million for 2020-2021.** This was **over performance for the first year of the strategy**, with the strategy as a key contributor to the significant growth. Additionally, PPD was able to attain buy-in from UNICEF senior management and the UNICEF Executive Board, ensuring that RR acceleration is an organization-wide priority. UNICEF now has the tools to gear up acceleration of RR in the coming years.

PPD led the **acceleration of UNICEF partnerships with IFIs** in 2020, nearly tripling the country footprint for the UNICEF and World Bank partnership compared to 2016-2019:

- 79 agreements in 43 countries were signed, compared to the annual average of 25 agreements in 17 countries for 2016 to 2019.
- UNICEF was the top UN responding agency for the World Bank’s Pandemic Emergency Financing Facility (PEF), mobilizing $56 million in resources to UNICEF programmes.
- In Fragility, Conflict & Violence (FCV) countries (Yemen, South Sudan, Somalia), $96 million was mobilized by UNICEF.

2020 saw a major shift in the relationship between UNICEF and regional development banks (RDBs) as they are increasingly seeing UNICEF as the natural go-to, partner-of-choice on the socio-economic development issues that are their core business. PPD led collaboration with RDBs on COVID-19 response, resulting in $61.5 million in resources for supplies, WASH, support for children on the move and health system strengthening.

In 2020, PPD established the objectives of the **advocacy** priority area as: a) position children’s rights and child voices/participation within the political, policy and financial spaces where climate change and environmental degradation are discussed, and b) identify advocacy and resource mobilization opportunities on this issue among public sector partners and position UNICEF as a relevant and reliable partner.

Progress-to-date include development of the first partner facing document (*The COVID-19, Climate Change and Environmental Degradation Crises: A triple threat to children’s rights or an opportunity to reimagine a fairer, greener more sustainable world for all?*), successful strategic dialogues with France and the EU, EU Group of Friends Roundtable under German EU Presidency, Round Table on Climate Change and Children in Africa with the EU, and Internal Guidance note and webinars on engaging the EU on climate change and children.

2020 saw a cultural shift in PPD and UNICEF on **risk management** through strengthening of timely and risk-informed decision-making processes. The need for enhanced risk management has been made evident by the COVID-19 pandemic and PPD has had a strong focus on internalization of the concept by developing a system for continuing to identifying and working on both residual risks and new risks.

Key achievements in 2020 were the rapid shift in priorities as a response to Covid-19, a stronger collaboration with the Office of Internal Audit and Investigation (OIAI) and the Division of Finance and Administrative Management’s (DFAM) Audit team, a stronger support to teams on risk management and advisory functions, and the development of tools and guidance, including regional toolkits, SoPs, and policies on contributions in kind (CIK) and programming in High-income countries (HICs).

PPD rapidly identified the need for the division to prioritize **COVID-19 resource mobilization and advocacy** and led the early establishment of a resource mobilization structure. Regular coordination efforts and reporting across the organization led and convened by the PPD Humanitarian Team proved
to enhance fundraising efforts and coordination. Funding trends for UNICEF indicate that we have been successful to date to identify and take advantage of opportunities with our public and private sector partners. In 2020, UNICEF received $1.23 billion for our COVID-19 response, 91% from the public sector. Constant strategic guidance and information sharing via different channels contributed to high-level results. Key tools and guidance notes were developed by PPD and PFP in support of COs. Webinars coordinated and implemented to build capacity of all 7 regions for fundraising, grants management and reporting. PPD guided internal system enhancements to ensure ability to monitor and report humanitarian results with all the resources available. We are working with other divisions to translate these solutions beyond the COVID-19 response.

Thanks to advocacy from PPD and strong coordination with EMOPS and ROs, 2020 saw an increase in the flexibility of funding, receiving a record level of $131 million of flexible funds for the COVID-19 response.

PPD increased the frequency of reporting and created a website together with DOC for COVID-19 funds to give visibility and recognition to resource partners. Timely and regular external reporting was a key enabler for the successful resource mobilization. Having UNICEF dedicated reporting vehicles was important for fundraising and visibility.

As the COVID-19 pandemic became imminent PPD successfully enacted our business continuity plan. This helped to ensure a strong continuation of PPD’s work as colleagues transitioned to working from home without major disruptions. To ensure business continuity, support to our staff, and enable effective collaboration with the advent of remote work in many locations, PPD adapted ways of working. This reinforced PPD’s participation in ongoing efforts to make UNICEF’s systems more agile, efficient and people-centered. Use of online collaboration tools, including virtual meetings and digital signatures, were introduced and standardized. PPD also put a greater focus on flexibility in office hours and working locations as well as on staff well-being through regular “pulse checks”. According to UNICEF’s Global Staff Survey, PPD had a 19% increase in staff engagement between 2017 and 2020 – despite the pandemic.

Other key highlights of 2020 PPD results include:

**PPD secured new funding commitments and cultivated existing commitments.**

- Income from traditional partners including the United States, European partners, Japan, the Republic of Korea and the EU increased in 2020. UNICEF’s partnership with the U.S government expanded through COVID-19 and demonstrated the value-add of UNICEF in crisis, including a historically high level and early receipt of RR. Twenty per cent of all UNICEF funds mobilized for COVID-19 was from European partners and they accounted for 45% of the total flexible funding mobilized for COVID-19 in 2020. PPD developed new EU partnerships in Angola, Zambia, Iran, Cameroon and Haiti and signed the first grant with DG Employment to address poverty inside Europe. Despite ODA cuts by the government of Korea, PPD secured the highest-ever revenue, the highest-ever humanitarian funding, the first and largest-ever single ORE contribution for UNICEF China country office, the largest-ever contribution in-kind to any U.N. agency of 7.4 million masks targeted towards donor-orphan countries in Africa and Latin America, from the Government of Korea. UNICEF, through PPD Tokyo, was the quickest UN agency in responding to Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ queries on the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in UNICEF being the top recipient of COVID-19 funding from the Government of Japan among UN agencies, and Japan being the one of the first donors to UNICEF’s COVID-19 response.
- Over the last five years, UNICEF established Global Programme Partnerships (GPPs) as a long-term resource stream, currently contributing about 10% of overall resources. With GPPs continuing to proliferate, their share of UNICEF’s incoming is expected to grow. PPD advanced the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) / Innovative Finance agenda, including the Children First in Cocoa PPP initiative and the WASH in Fragile Contexts finance mechanism. By advancing PPD's role as convener of new sustainable financing mechanisms the ambition is to address programme areas facing long term
funding gaps.
· PPD increased efforts around partner recognition and visibility. PPD continued to take a ‘human centered design’ approach to partner visibility, conducting a comprehensive survey with partners to identify our strengths and weaknesses in visibility and recognition and what activities should be prioritized. PPD continued to leverage key social media channels (Executive Director, PPD Director/Deputy Director Twitter) to showcase partnerships - both donors and programme countries; and produced a number of video assets for partner visibility and recognition.

PPD deepened and expanded new partnerships with several partners including with the Governments of Singapore and China, leading to a breakthrough in the relationship with Singapore and funding secured for the first time, and additional resources from the Government of China was mobilized. PPD coordinated the establishment of a partnership with the India-UN Development Partnership Fund and mobilized funding from the Government of India through this fund. This has the potential of setting the foundation for a stronger partnership between India and UNICEF and for South-South and Triangular Cooperation.
· PPD broadened the partnership base both for financial resources as well as technical assistance from the Governments of Korea, Canada, the United Kingdom and the Gulf countries. This included three new Korean donors (Ministry of Health; Seoul Metropolitan Government; and Gangwon Provincial Government). UNICEF signed Memorandums of Understanding with the Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI) and the Korea Institute for Curriculum and Evaluation (KICE). PPD unlocked new partnerships with the Canadian International Development Research Centre and the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives, which opens the window to future collaboration and funding opportunities. As part of the transition of UNICEF’s partnership with the United Kingdom, PPD led the first strategic engagement with the new Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) of the UK Government in the form of joint session of a Strategic Dialogue, as well as key meetings between FCDO and UNICEF technical experts and regional colleagues addressing areas of joint interest. PPD co-led with Qatar on passing the UN resolution to protect schools under attack. Progress on thematic conversations with Gulf partners also occurred this year, including GIGA with Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.
· PPD developed a high-level engagement strategy to increase engagement with programme countries to ensure that they are represented in the partnerships sphere. Two plans for high-level engagement with the AU, African Heads of States and key partners were developed, on education and nutrition, in collaboration with the UNICEF African Union Liaison Office, PD and the ROs. ALEP Education provides a framework for regional multi stakeholder platforms and alliance with African leaders and development partners to influence investment and leveraging of resources to address the learning crisis and reimagine education in Africa. ALEP nutrition provides a roadmap for strategic engagement with African leaders and development partners for a special focus on Africa in the lead up to Nutrition Summits in 2021. PPD developed a strategy that looks to mobilize the Lebanese diaspora to help with rebuilding efforts following the Beirut explosion. PPD led discussions on how to innovatively engage with Gulf countries in a manner that reflects their decision-making processes. As a result, a pilot initiative, The Women’s Leadership Circle, is currently being developed to engage with influential women in UAE (with an eye for wider regional involvement in the future.) This initiative will open new doors for engagement and holds promise for deeper relations between UNICEF and the Gulf countries. Furthermore, PFP and PPD developed a joint plan for a virtual field visit in the first quarter of 2021 to showcase the value of RR. It is expected that these virtual visits will provide UNICEF’s RR-partners tangible examples on the impact of RR in Africa.

PPD raised the visibility of and strengthened our position on child issues, with strategic advocacy and engagement to the public sector.
· The Group of Friends of Children (GoF) and the SDGs continues to be a strong force for children's rights and voices in intergovernmental spaces. UNICEF’s GoF membership has strengthened our relationship with the co-chairs and other members of the Group. The SDG Support Package, developed by PPD, continues to be a heavily used and widely appreciated resource within the organization,
providing UNICEF offices with a comprehensive set of policy asks that position child rights centrally. This year PPD piloted the concept of Voluntary National Review (VNR) "Clinics" that provide member states with examples of good practices, tools and techniques to make their VNRs more child sensitive and child inclusive. The High-level Political Forum continued to be a space for showcasing child rights and voices with strong interventions made by UNICEF senior management. PPD’s and UNICEF’s ongoing partnership with the Nord Anglia School System and the World’s Largest Lesson has not only yielded the result of millions of children learning about the SDGs in and outside of school, but has also resulted in a multi-year donation of 250K per year from NAE. PPD was a key member and leading voice within interdivisional advocacy working groups, including the COVID-19 Advocacy Working Group and the Re-imagine Campaign Taskforce. UNICEF leveraged our strong relationship with the Group of Friends into a joint and public statement to "Protect our Children" in the face of the Pandemic, which was subsequently endorsed by 172 Member States.

- PPD helped to organize the high-level event Opening Up Better: Back-to-School for Every Girl, which was joined by the Members of the UNICEF Education Partner Group, UNICEF National Committees, parliamentarians, partners from the private sector, academia, international and national NGOs and UN sister agencies. It featured important commitments and calls to action from key participants and served as an opportunity to build on. This moment was also a product of an exemplary teamwork across UNICEF family with joint forces of PD, National Committees and PPD colleagues.
- PPD advocated for the Government of Italy’s inclusion of strengthening the protection and reception systems of unaccompanied migrant children in the Ministry of the Interior’s programming, and garnered support within the U.S Government for global COVID-19 funding on behalf of the UN/international organizations. The advocacy, on PPE in particular, from PPD allowed UNICEF to respond to a critical need given the PPE shortage. PPD led on the inclusion of birth registration in the French parliamentary report on “enfants fantômes”, and recommendation of an contribution specifically for UNICEF’s work.
- Following political advocacy, strategic communication and policy dialogue with the EU, UNICEF put education higher on the EU agenda. As a result, EU funding for education increased, reaching 24% of ORR and 13% of ORE of the EU funding signed in 2020. This included significant funding for education for the COVID-19 response. Having strengthened its visibility and credibility in this area, PPD is optimistic that UNICEF is well positioned to mobilize significant funding for this sector under the new EU 2021-2027 budget. UNICEF continued to spearhead and coordinate the UN advocacy on the future 2021-2027 EU budget. PPD together with Programme Division and Supply Division strengthened UNICEF’s positioning in health through its role in COVAX. PPD’s efforts to influence EU processes to include the voice of children and young people in developing policies and decisions impacting their lives led to the first-ever cross continental consultation with youth in Africa and Europe. 115,000 adolescents and young people shared their opinions and priorities through U-Report. Additionally, PPD facilitated the first-ever consultations with children on the upcoming EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child. This joint UNICEF-EU-AU initiative has set a precedent in how to scale up engagement with youth in policy making, positioning UNICEF as a partner of choice for youth engagement and participation. It has also opened doors to high-level and strategic discussions with potentially leveraging additional resources for children at country-level.
- PPD established regular high-level bilateral meetings between UNICEF and World Bank senior management. These relationships have delivered concrete results for countries and jump-started initiatives at the working level, such as Reimagine Education. UNICEF’s Executive Director spoke at 10 high-level World Bank events in 2020, amplifying UNICEF priorities and work on behalf of children to a global audience, signaling a strong UNICEF and the World Bank partnership.

PPD continued to play a key role within the organization on coordination and leadership within UNDS and humanitarian fora.
- PPD advanced UNICEF’s position in humanitarian financing, both internally and externally with special focus on flexible funding. PPD led and represented UNICEF in high-level humanitarian financing policy discussions with focus on quality funding including the Grand Bargain were a case study for cascading of flexible funding to IPs was developed. PPD is driving UNICEF's change in
system strengthening and greater flexibility to implementing partners. PPD advanced UNICEF’s position in humanitarian financing through participation in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Results Group 5 – the key driver of inter-agency humanitarian policy and guidance documents. This included evidence building on impact of flexible funding.

- PPDs was the penholder of the resource mobilization chapter in the revised Core Commitment to Children in Emergencies (CCCs).
- PPD drove results and action in the effort of internalizing UNDS Reform within the organization, from senior executive management to working level. This included a country representative survey, Senior management understanding of reform rollout, improved information sharing, UNSDG Cost Review, mobilizing knowledge from working level to OED to field.

PPD provided strong field support and capacity strengthening for COs and ROs for partnerships and resource mobilization:

- PPD spearheaded Resource Mobilization bootcamp for colleagues in the East Asia and Pacific Region, an Advanced Resource Mobilization bootcamp for partnerships colleagues throughout the organization, development of guidance and tools, and hosting four session on public sector partnerships as part of the 2020 Virtual Skills Share (VSS) organized by PFP.
- In 2020, the PPD Seoul office successfully initiated a series of global dialogues on inclusive education and technology, focusing on what UNICEF can learn from the Korean experience of COVID-19 in education. In partnership with multiple agencies of the Government of Korea as well as Korean educational institutions, five global dialogues were held in 2020 and early 2021 with an average attendance of close to 200 UNICEF staff members per session, promoting horizontal cooperation and exchange of knowledge across our country offices using the Korean experience.

Lessons Learned and Innovations

2020 was a challenging year for PPD as a division and for UNICEF as a whole. During the annual review for the year, three key challenges were identified:

Challenges:

- **External: COVID-19 and economic recession** – As an effect of the global COVID-19 outbreak led to PPD having to work even harder to maintain UNICEF’s existing public sector partnerships, being our traditional resource mobilization partners, were faced with the same crisis domestically coupled with the economic turmoil that followed, PPD had to advocate to partners to convince them that UNICEF should remain the partner of choice. This put a considerable additional workload on PPD. PPD played a key role in UNICEF advocacy efforts aimed at public sector partners on the importance and strength of UNICEF as an organization being well equipped to take on a leading role in the global COVID-19 response, both in humanitarian and development contexts. Not only was it a crucial necessity for PPD to advocate to partners at the early onset of the pandemic that children are at the center of this crisis but also that it was crucial for partners to maintain their support to UNICEF’s existing programmes. Managing this brokerage proved a challenging task for PPD but ultimately, thanks to a concerted effort by all colleagues and in collaboration with other UNICEF divisions and offices, UNICEF has remained as a strong partner of choice for the public sector, both in terms of COVID-19 resource mobilization as well as for UNICEF regular programmes.

- **Internal: new, additional and shifting priorities** – PPD was challenged in managing priorities in 2020 because of the constant shifting and addition of priorities, as a result of the pandemic. This was made more difficult given the lack of additional staff capacity. While PPD did manage to shift staff from some teams to other teams, overall, PPD found itself having to do far more with the same capacity – and in some cases, with less capacity, given personal situations of staff...
members.

- **Staff: workload, work-life balance** – Like all offices in UNICEF, PPD staff had to adapt to new ways of working in 2020, including working away from the office for the better part of the year. This change in work-life balance, managing working from home with family lives, remote learning for kids and sickness, with the extra workload stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic added to that, coupled with a lack of capacity and untimely organizational initiatives severely added to the mental health strain and challenges both for individual colleagues as well as for the division as a whole. Despite these challenges, the division came together both at the level of individual teams and as an entire division to share the burden and support each other.

**Learnings:**

A few key observations from PPD’s work with our public partners over the course of 2020:

- To meet the child-focused SDGs, **public sector engagement and partnership excellence needs to be on par with programming excellence**—and integrated with it. Our capacities and resources must follow suit, and we must continue building our knowledge and capacities across the organization. Investments into PPD, as an income-generation centre, and partnerships expertise particularly for humanitarian action and tapping into innovative financing opportunities and IFIs, must be prioritized.

- We must **embrace digital transformation and prioritise our investments for digital success**. This includes investments into platforms such as UNISON and sophisticated tools for income forecasting.

- **We must invest to grow** – and there are proven fundraising activities that can be scaled up (e.g. IFIs, RR Acceleration) and emerging innovative opportunities (e.g. Public private partnerships) that can be seized to realise this potential. At the same time, PPD sees a tougher donor environment, including more fiscal restraint from partners, meaning that there will be more competition for resources and more risks to be managed. It’s critical that PPD continues to build strong partnerships.