The UNICEF Private Fundraising and Partnerships Division (PFP or “the Division”) aims to achieve results for children by maximizing income and influence from the private-sector jointly with UNICEF country offices and National Committees around the world. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, 2021 has been another record-breaking year in all income streams in which UNICEF continued to grow its partnerships and engagement with the private-sector.

This last year of the UNICEF Private Sector Plan 2018–2021: IMPACT for every child (IMPACT Plan) brought unprecedented results in private-sector fundraising, partnerships and advocacy. The ongoing COVID-19 crisis continued to challenge ways of working, but supporters and partners stepped up beyond expectations in the call to action to mitigate the pandemic, respond in emergencies and engage across sectors to uphold the rights of children everywhere. In financial terms, the result was that in 2021, UNICEF raised $2.08 billion in net income from the private-sector, the largest amount ever in one year.

In 2021, total private-sector revenue reached $2.08 billion, of which regular resources represented $755.1 million and other resources represented $1,323.0 million. Overall private-sector revenue was $574.9 million (38.2 per cent) higher than the planned 2021 target of $1.50 billion and 29.1 per cent higher than in 2020.

The private-sector contribution to emergency revenue for 2021 reached $541.2 million, a $250.3 million (86.0 per cent) increase over the 2020 actual revenue. This growth was the result of joined efforts to mitigate the risks associated with COVID-19 pandemic, which harnessed $286.9 million for Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-A), including a $70 million donation from the LEGO Foundation.

UNICEF largely surpassed target set for 2021 of mobilizing 100 million individual supporters – who volunteer, advocate and donate for the cause of children – reaching a total of 160.7 million, including 114.9 million digital supporters, 18.8 million U-Reporters, 12.6 million volunteers and over 9.8 million individual donors. An estimated 4.6 million children were reached with education to be advocates for their rights.

In 2021, PFP and the Information and Communication Technology Division (ICTD), with contributions from country and regional offices, further developed the Supporter Engagement Strategy by designing a core package configuration for a digital fundraising platform. This new configuration will connect the system and database for customer relationship management to the payment systems, social media and email accounts, as well as to call centres and face-to-face teams, while ensuring that the data and privacy of donors are protected. The platform will increase supporter retention, their conversion into donors, and efficiency in operations.

The goal areas of the IMPACT Plan 2018-2021 (which includes financial and non-financial results) are outlined below.

- **Goal 1 – Individuals:** By 2021, 100 million people are changing the world with UNICEF through their voices and donations
• **Goal 2 – Key Influencers:** Impact and effectiveness of key influencers maximized to advance children’s rights and well-being, in accordance with UNICEF priorities through meaningful and effective relationships

• **Goal 3 – Business:** Power, reach and influence of businesses are fully maximized for children

• **Goal 4 – Governments:** Governments at all levels in countries with a National Committee presence deliver on UNICEF priorities for children defined in the Strategic Plan, both domestically and globally, including through the implementation of the Cause Framework

• **Goal 5 – Brand:** UNICEF is the leading children’s organization mobilizing support for every child

• **Goal 6 – Enablers:** UNICEF (including HQ divisions, regional offices, country offices, PFP and National Committees) is best positioned, with a common culture, to deliver on ambitious results with the private sector (and public sector in National Committee countries)

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**Major contributions and drivers of results**

The pandemic forced UNICEF staff to continue working remotely and finding compelling ways to fundraise and develop partnerships. Digital and broadcast channels marked extraordinary results, and partners and prospects continued to be engaged online and through virtual events and field trips. More businesses than ever were engaged in 2021, and the foundations and philanthropy portfolios grew with remarkable outcomes. The outstanding results of 2021 are outlined below in the goal areas of the IMPACT Plan.

**Goal 1 – Individuals:** By 2021, 100 million people are changing the world with UNICEF through their voices and donations

The year 2021 was yet another record-breaking one for Individual Giving in the Cash and Pledge income streams, as well as a very good year for Legacy revenue. Gross revenue from individual donors crossed $1.4 billion in 2021, surpassing the previous record of $1.35 billion in 2020.

There were some standout performances in National Committees and country offices, with Australia, India, Ireland, the UK and the US registering impressive growth in gross revenues. The drivers of growth were three-fold:

1. **Strong performances in digital and DRTV drove acquisition to record levels:** More donors were acquired in the first six months of 2021 compared to all of 2020.
2. **Audience-centric approaches allowed for better segmentation of donors and the opportunity to address them with new products and propositions:** The use of products such as the ‘Ring of Hope’ in the Republic of Korea and the use of subscription products have enabled breakthroughs with new audiences. Emergencies continued to work well for some key audiences.
3. **Investments in Individual Giving by UNICEF and National Committees were a key growth driver:** The availability of Investment Funds including the innovative World Bank instrument, contributed to growth.

Digital-first approaches are working in many markets, but the investments must continue – technology, people and skills need additional investments. There were increased investments in fintech, customer relationship management (CRM) systems, data and insights capability, and marketing automation.
systems that have enabled growth and form the foundation for the next few years. The provision of high-quality, audience-centered content and products has improved donor acquisition and engagement with donors. The current growth can be sustained and increased with the availability of strong investments in Individual Giving.

Goal 2 – Key Influencers: Impact and effectiveness of key influencers maximized to advance children’s rights and well-being, in accordance with UNICEF priorities through meaningful and effective relationships

The compounding crises of the past two years – the health and economic emergencies of COVID-19, the widespread reckoning on racial justice, growing political polarization and violence, and the looming threat of climate change – have marked a watershed moment for philanthropy. In 2021, key influencers responded to the threats to children’s rights and wellbeing by providing record-setting levels of support to UNICEF and finding new ways to leverage their unique influence. Over the past year, private philanthropists provided $218 million, foundations $266 million and membership and faith-based organizations $114 million.

The foundations portfolio grew to 100 foundation partners, with a remarkable increase to 19 partnerships of over $1 million. This was attributed to continued, sustainable income growth achieved through expanding existing partnerships, such as with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), Children’s Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF), Power of Nutrition (PON) and Mastercard Foundation, as well as growth in new business, with more than $84 million in income in 2021 from new partners such as ELMA Philanthropies, FIND, Porticus and Jacobs Foundation.

Additionally, while foundations do not typically fund ad hoc requests for emergencies, COVID-19 presented new opportunities with top foundations, resulting in $20 million in contributions to UNICEF directly related to COVID-19 and over $770 million leveraged for UNICEF vaccine procurement and delivery.

UNICEF International Council membership grew by 25 per cent in 2021 and members’ giving grew by 100 per cent to over $76 million. This collective of UNICEF’s most significant individual donors – each member has given a minimum of $1 million – was motivated by the impact for children they make through their partnership with UNICEF and the sense of community and recognition of their philanthropic leadership, offering each donor experiential engagement and an opportunity to write the story of their life.

Goal 3 – Business: Power, reach and influence of businesses are fully maximized for children

In 2021, the total adjusted figure reported is 108,324,849 children reached and/or benefitted globally as a result of partnering or engaging with the business sector. There were a number of clear trends that contributed to this number. Firstly, there was a clear upward trend in the numbers of businesses that were engaged globally, UNICEF engaged more than 5,000 businesses across all its offices to achieve results for children; secondly there was an increase in strategic and multi stakeholder partnerships, which was important in forging sustainability, responsible conduct and scale and growing the influence needed to achieve UNICEF goals towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); thirdly, there was a clear trend to anchor the engagement in business more systematically into the programming processes – generating more data on the impacts of business on children in the Situation Analysis or complementary analysis, considering the positive and negative impact of business in country level theories of change and in the design of country programme results frameworks. Finally, there continued to be a broad spectrum of engagement and partnerships across different thematic programme areas.
As part of the roll out of the Business for Results initiative (B4R) by December 2021 more than 60 countries have now benefited from training and workshops that equip staff to integrate business engagement in their country programming and to fully utilize the spectrum of engagement. This trend is expected to continue as the power, reach and influence of business was strategically positioned in the new UNICEF Strategic Plan 2022-2025, as a mid-term change for country offices to achieve by 2025. Business for Results was linked to the Strategic Plan results frameworks and the programmatic goals for the longer term 2030 agenda.

Private-sector donors and partners contributed $285.8 million net revenue to support the ACT-A Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC) appeal in 2021, which represents 47 per cent of all private-sector humanitarian funding in 2021 ($602 million in total). Out of 100 companies that combined contributed $143 million, five companies contributed over $10 million. Private philanthropists and faith-based organizations provided over $78 million, including four donations over $10 million. The LEGO Group and Foundation was the single largest private-sector contributor to UNICEF’s COVID response with a $70 million donation, and Jen Rubio and Stewart Butterfield had the largest philanthropist pledge with $25 million. UNICEF’s partners’ and donors’ historic generosity helped accelerate in-country work in rolling out vaccines, diagnostics and treatments to protect at-risk populations, health and social-care workers, including educators and primary caregivers, to reduce deaths and impact on health systems, and minimalize further disruption in children’s lives. The donations also supported UNICEF’s work with countries to strengthen their cold and supply chains, train health workers, protect them with personal protective equipment, and address misinformation and build trust in vaccines and in the health systems delivering them. Examples of other COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX) corporate contributors were DP World, Expedia, Novacyt SA and Zurich Z Foundation.

Goal 4 – Governments: Governments at all levels in countries with a National Committee presence deliver on UNICEF priorities for children defined in the Strategic Plan, both domestically and globally, including through the implementation of the Cause Framework

In 2021, the National Committees successfully advanced the rights of children and young people at the national, regional and global levels. This work had accelerated despite persistent challenges in the operating environment, predominantly due to COVID-19. Children in high income countries were facing multiple and overlapping deprivations linked to the pandemic, which had triggered social and economic shocks. In many countries, newly vulnerable groups of children were suffering while official responses continued to overlook the severity of the disruptions the pandemic was causing in the lives of children. The National Committees advocated for governments to consider the best interests of children in decision making. This required a range of influencing tactics and strategies, partnerships, capacity building and evidence generation to spotlight the challenges and generate solutions to the most pressing child rights challenges.

National Committees leveraged their positions in capitals to strongly influence multilateral outcomes for UNICEF. In 2021, the UK and Italy hosted the G7 and G20 Summits respectively and co-hosted the COP26 Summit. Both UNICEF UK and UNICEF Italy provided significant capacities and leadership to contribute to the Summit outcomes and ensure visibility among government and public audiences. Regional coordination between European National Committees was further enhanced in 2021 with the development of the Europe Strategy under the leadership of the UNICEF Public Partnerships Division’s (PPD) Brussels Office and the EU Presidencies of Slovenia and Portugal. One highlight was the publication of the first Brief for Europe of the State of the World’s Children Report, which UNICEF and the European Commission launched in October along with young people from Belgium, Ireland and Spain and an activist from Bulgaria.
The global advocacy priorities on education, climate change, mental health and child health provided National Committees with a clear roadmap on the organizational objectives. National Committees were included among the champion countries and will influence and shape the development of the global strategy while driving action domestically.

Internal developments such as the release of the Programming Guidance for High-Income Countries (HICs) in April 2021 provided a framework for UNICEF’s engagement in these countries. The participation of the six pilot countries (Finland, Germany, Italy, Japan, Slovenia and Spain) provided key insights and learning on the implementation of the framework and will inform the development of future tools and processes.

**Goal 5 – Brand: UNICEF is the leading children’s organization mobilizing support for every child**

The overall objective of the Brand Strategy 2018–2021 was to strengthen audience trust in UNICEF to deliver on its mandate for children. The UNICEF Global Communication and Advocacy Strategy 2019–2021 called for deepening supporters’ trust in UNICEF to help drive results for children and young people. UNICEF identified strategies to improve public trust in the organization in two areas:

1. Improve understanding of UNICEF on a rational level by:
   - Launching an updated brand identity with a stronger link to children
   - Ensuring the meaningful presence and voice of children in communication
   - Leveraging global key moments/occasions linked to children (e.g. World Children’s Day)

2. Improve image perception of UNICEF on an emotive level by:
   - Highlighting UNICEF staff and their stories (‘compassionate’)
   - Leveraging UNICEF’s achievements (‘get things done’)
   - Communicating systematically about UNICEF’s efficiency to supporters (‘efficient’)

With a strengthened level of trust, people’s willingness to donate to UNICEF and advocate on its behalf was expected to improve. According to the 2020–2021 Barometer study, UNICEF is among the three most trusted organizations in almost all markets and shares the position of being most trusted with the Red Cross and Médecins Sans Frontières. This was the outcome of the implementation of the UNICEF Brand Strategy 2018–2021 to strengthen audience trust in UNICEF to deliver on its mandate for children.

UNICEF used its global convening power and brand to launch the first ever Global Forum for Children and Youth 2021 (CY21) in December 2021, co-organized with a wide range of partners and co-hosted with the Governments of Botswana and Sweden. At this global virtual platform for children and young people, leaders focused the world’s attention on the urgent needs of children to identify and celebrate proven and new solutions for children, drive actions and mobilize transformational resources to scale-up and advance child rights and meet the ambition of the SDGs.

The Forum resulted in a remarkable success. The programme, jointly developed with a Youth Advisory Board, included more than 40 thematic sessions with 230 high-level speakers from over 80 countries in representation of more than 200 organizations from all sectors; 155 commitments were made by governments, international institutions, businesses, foundations and civil society organizations from 57 countries. CY21 was the key moment that both demonstrated the power of
UNICEF brand and further solidified the brand of UNICEF as a voice for children.

Goal 6 – Enablers: UNICEF (including HQ divisions, regional offices, country offices, PFP and National Committees) is best positioned, with a common culture, to deliver on ambitious results with the private sector (and public sector in National Committee countries)

In 2021, PFP continued to align its processes, systems and people to support results. There was a focus on innovation to support income and influence, preparation for the UNICEF’s next Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, and continuing to respond to evolving business impacts due to COVID-19.

Innovative ways to support income growth were explored and UNICEF launched the World Bank instrument to strategically invest in private-sector fundraising in country offices to improve predictability and sustainability of investments to accelerate revenue generation. A commitment was made to integrate and align partnerships within a central data system (UNISON) across PFP, PPD, National Committees and regional and country offices.

PFP also prepared people, policies and infrastructure to deliver against the new Strategic Plan 2022-2025. PFP consulted with National Committees and country offices on existing planning processes. Based on feedback, the Joint Strategic Planning process and system were revised and simplified for National Committees, and similar improvements were planned for the Private Sector Planning process and system for country offices. Capacity building was a cross-cutting theme, with planning and delivery progressing for training and learning opportunities in priority areas such as data security, unconscious bias, risk management, innovative finance, impact of regular resources and data systems.

The second full year of the COVID-19 pandemic presented new challenges to the way PFP works and interacts with key stakeholders. PFP took the opportunity to respond to evolving restrictions while also piloting new ways of working as the organization considered its path to a new normal. PFP transitioned its week-long Virtual Skill Share event into an ‘Academy’ for continuous learning throughout the year, reaching 3,767 staff across 142 countries in 82 sessions. PFP also piloted a new hybrid meeting space and technologies in office premises to test modalities to ensure that the organization is ready for a new normal.

Strategic priorities: 2022-2025

The Division, together with the National Committees and country offices, aims to generate income and influence at scale from the private sector to contribute to the delivery of results established in the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2022–2025, based on the following six strategic priorities:

- Scaling up digital fundraising;
- Optimizing major donor engagement by generating income, and by leveraging their voices, investments and expertise;
- Developing effective strategies for fundraising growth in frontier markets;
- Continuing to mainstream working with business to deliver results for children, to generate income and to leverage non-financial resources, such as innovation, expertise and core assets;
- Scaling up financing for children; and
- Supporting National Committees and country offices on programming in high-income countries.
Lessons Learned and Innovations

Goal 1 – Individuals

A new donor was recruited every 14 seconds through digital channels and a total of 62.5 per cent of all new pledges acquired between July 2020 and June 2021 came through digital channels, which serves as a testament to the speed of change and opportunity a digital fundraising model offers UNICEF. There were other significant successes as well, as Canada, Chile, India, Ireland, the UK and the US saw increases in revenues and donor numbers.

One of the key drivers of growth was the emphasis on audience-centric approaches to fundraising. Products and propositions that were based on a more nuanced understanding of the donor did extremely well and were central to pledge success in Australia, Hungary, Ireland, Japan, the Republic of Korea and the UK. Subscription-based products are a good example of audience-centered products that are helping to drive growth in digital fundraising. Emergencies and the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX) have also played a role in some key markets.

The Supporter Engagement Strategy (SES) Digital Platform advanced with the publication of the SESCORE Package Application and the launch of the LACRO SES Digital Platform in the Colombia Country Office. This new platform, accessible by all country offices and National Committees, supports UNICEF to deliver the best experience to individual supporters while realizing operational efficiencies in a secure, payment card industry compliant environment.

The SESCORE Package is a Salesforce application that is central to the Digital Platform, available to all markets. With almost 1,000 fields, over 20 key features and a centralized CRM, the application seamlessly integrates with payments, fundraising, communication and marketing solutions to form the SES Digital Platform, which can be quickly localized across markets.

Goal 2 – Key Influencers

The engagement of major donors continued mostly online in 2021 through creative, informative and meaningful virtual experiences. Over 1,000 partners and prospects joined virtual high-value briefings and trips throughout the year. The inaugural Global Forum for Children and Youth (CY21) in December 2021 presented a unique opportunity to bring together major donors with other private-sector partners, government and young people for meaningful discussions designed to put children and young people at the centre of the Global Agenda. The UNICEF International Council Symposium was hosted in conjunction with CY21, offering members a range of experiences over the three days, including a session hosted and led by Council members on the role of private philanthropy in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for children.

Foundations were also key participants in CY21, with over 50 foundation participants joining, numerous foundation partners showcasing key commitments, and speakers from many influential partners including BMGF, Oak, Botnar, MERI, Minderoo, and Bernard Van Leer Foundations.

In early 2021, the UNICEF International Council was invited for the first time to learn about the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2022–2025, as it was in development, and to provide feedback into the process as private-sector stakeholders. Members also attended a mid-year meeting for the first time to hear progress updates from senior leadership on the plan and programmatic priorities. The meeting was hosted twice to ensure members across the world could participate.
In addition to virtual trips and briefings, philanthropy teams in National Committees held timely round-table events for exclusive groups of donors and prospects to highlight UNICEF’s historic role in the equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccines for the COVAX initiative and make a call to action. Several gifts over $1 million were secured because of these efforts.

**Goal 3 – Business**

Some examples of the diverse initiatives related to fundraising and other resources in countries include: the establishment of a multi-stakeholder platform for nutrition which engaged pledged partners and initiative partners to contribute meaningfully to the survival agenda. Engagement with social media companies and telecommunications companies to address online abuse and exploitations of children. Leveraging CEOs to mobilize resources for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) services, funding and other resources from their businesses such as distribution channels, ICT technologies and so on. Working with tea estates’ management to support diverse facets of child rights and early childhood development by incorporating the Child Rights and Business Principles and Family Friendly policies; the development of strategies of “Companies that Care” that reached not only big companies but also small and medium enterprises (SMEs); the development of Child Rights and Business training in a number of regions; the establishment of Advisory Boards on Child Rights to co-create a strategic national business engagement agenda.

**Goal 4 – Governments**

The Child Friendly Cities Initiative (CFCI) grew slowly but steadily over the past years. At the end of 2021, 1,036 cities and communities had been recognized as ‘child-friendly’ in countries with National Committees, reaching almost 14 million children.

**Goal 5 – Brand**

Collaborative work on virtual donor experiences for non-emergency and emergency work – 20 events were held over 2020 and 2021 – helped to strengthen UNICEF’s brand among high-value donors. PFP also managed and produced much of the creative content for the CY21 event, over 60 video pieces (newly produced and repurposed) including new animations and opening plenary videos, as well as live social media assets and short edited videos.

PFP co-led the Imagery Working Group supporting markets with clear guidance and discussion forums on the sensitive topics of stereotypes, race and discrimination. The training events were well attended and aimed to shape a move towards well-informed, ethical imagery choice.

**Goal 6 – Enablers**

PFP management of private-sector results was further enhanced through several initiatives, including improvements to the IMPACT Platform system and the private fundraising, partnership and engagement Situation Analysis; through systematic capturing and sharing of good practices in fundraising and partnerships with business; and through knowledge-sharing events, with the main highlight being the first Virtual Skill Share that brought together over 3,000 UNICEF and National Committee staff to share and learn the latest skills on private fundraising, partnerships and engagement.