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Updated roadmap to and outline of the medium-term strategic plan for 2014-2017

Summary

This paper provides an outline of the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan (MTSP) for 2014-2017 and an updated roadmap of the development process. The lessons learned from the extended MTSP 2006-2013 have served as an important input. The next MTSP will also be based on the outcome of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) of United Nations operational activities for development, as well as a detailed analysis of the situation of children, a review of emerging challenges, lessons learned and partnerships within the United Nations system and other global, regional and national partners.

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I. Overview of global developments

Historic progress but with growing disparities

1. Since 2000, progress towards the Millennium Development Goals has lifted millions of children out of poverty and given millions more a better life and greater opportunities. Many States are on track to reach most or all of the Goals. This is not just a statistical fact, but reflects historic improvements in promoting the rights of children, women and the poor. Fewer children are dying before their fifth birthday than ever before; more girls and more boys are in school than ever before; far fewer children fall sick from infectious diseases or die from AIDS or measles than a decade ago. More and more people have access to improved drinking water, and fewer women die from causes related to pregnancy or childbirth. Recent developments offer real promise for even faster progress for the world's children.

2. These successes, however, are tempered by the unfinished agenda that remains: the 19,000 children who still die every day from largely preventable causes; the great disparities and divides in child survival and development among and within nations; the lives of millions of children across continents, threatened in fragile States and conflict-affected areas; and the silent emergencies of extreme poverty, undernutrition, abuse, exclusion and displacement.

3. Moreover, serious challenges — the prolonged economic crisis, rising food and fuel prices, continued violence and conflict as well as the increased impact of natural disasters and the resulting humanitarian emergencies in many countries — are taking a great toll on the lives of the poorest and most vulnerable children and their families. Around the world, millions of children remain at risk from violence and abuse, exploitation and neglect. None of the countries designated as “fragile” by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD/DAC) have reached any of the targets of the Millennium Development Goals, indicating that in chronically unstable contexts, sustainable progress for children continues to elude governments and their international partners.

4. Achievements for children at the national and global levels should be celebrated. However, progress in the aggregated trends for a country or region as a whole mask the situation of children facing multiple disadvantages, millions of whom have been — and are being — left behind on critical fronts of child well-being and rights. Even as there has been tremendous progress in both saving and enhancing children's lives, disparities in child survival, development and protection — both among and within nations — have often widened. Specific groups of children and adolescents, most notably girls, children from minority and indigenous communities, and children living with disabilities, continue to face significant discrimination and challenges in making progress on survival, protection, development and rights. Similarly, children living in specific settings — urban slums, rural areas, fragile settings and areas where women face heavy constraints — are at a disproportionate risk of not benefiting the unprecedented gains made in child survival and development of recent years.

5. While income poverty is only one dimension that leads to exclusion, across the developing world, children in the poorest quintile are twice as likely to die before their fifth birthday when compared to the richest. They are twice as likely to be stunted, nearly three times as likely to be underweight and much less likely to attend

primary school. Very often, income poverty is aggravated by other dimensions of inequity, such as disability, ethnicity or gender. The most disadvantaged and excluded children, living in the poorest and most remote communities, are often subjected to multiple deprivations of their rights. In many contexts, the interplay of these factors exacerbates a child's exclusion. Undertaking a detailed mapping of each country's persistent disparities has proven to be effective in shedding light on the dimensions of exclusion and their interplay.

6. The rapid pace of demographic transition, migration, climate change and the growing frequency of disasters present strong challenges for national and subnational governments to ensure that services keep pace with demand and that disparities between population groups, already broad, do not widen further. The effects of climate-related change are on the rise, endangering communities and their ways of life, particularly the most disadvantaged and excluded children and families — who are most likely to suffer most from the adverse effects of climate change and environmental degradation. Where conflict is chronic or disasters recurrent, they are even harder to reach and often the worst affected by shocks.

7. The growing numbers of young people — growing also as a proportion of the population in some countries and regions, particularly in Africa — present an incredible opportunity to accelerate progress; however, in order to mobilize and harness this growing asset, sufficient and comprehensive support will be critical. Providing opportunities for young people to participate in processes and decisions that affect them has led to better policies and programmes, and contributed to positive change at the local level.

8. Development assistance, on the rise in the early years of the opening decade of the 21st century, has slowed in recent years and even declined slightly in 2011. Given the ongoing fiscal constraints in Europe and the United States, a strong rise in aid appears unlikely in the near future. Emerging economies may take a more important role in official development assistance in the coming years — although it is unlikely that this will reverse the overall downward trend. Fiscal austerity measures, being implemented in a number of countries across the globe, make it challenging to maintain and increase expenditures on vital child-related services, such as education and healthcare, while high food and fuel prices make access to basic commodities more difficult in many countries, with pernicious impacts on poor families. This means that UNICEF will need to leverage the contributions of development actors for the survival, development and protection of children, increase its partnerships with private-sector actors and enhance programme and operations coherence with United Nations agencies.

9. Economic, social and climatic changes are interrelated, and are concurrently accelerating the pace of positive change and exacerbating the risks to children. In the midst of all this turmoil and uncertainty about the future, it is clear that many children are affected by global risks in a way that jeopardizes their lives and well-being in the short term, and undermines their potential and development in the longer term. In this regard, acceleration and sustainability of results for children would require greater integration of the social, economic and environmental dimensions of development.

II. Strategic focus of the medium-term strategic plan 2014-2017

10. The end-of-cycle review of the MTSP 2006-2013 (summarized in E/ICEF/2013/4) provided an opportunity to analyse the progress made towards the child-related Millennium Development Goals; assess the effectiveness of each programme strategy to achieve results; and review the changing context as a key input to the planning of the next MTSP. The next MTSP will include limited but strategic shifts in the substantive emphasis of the plan as well as more significant modifications in the mix of programme strategies to support countries to achieve results while retaining enough flexibility to enable UNICEF to develop country programmes of cooperation that respond to the specific needs of each country context.

Substantive focus: what UNICEF will do

11. To respond to the growing disparities across various sectors, the MTSP will build on the successes achieved as the basis for the shifts in the substantive, programmatic focus of the organization by leveraging innovations and dynamic partnerships to scale up interventions for the most disadvantaged and excluded children. A stronger focus will be on investing in the health, education and protection of the most disadvantaged and excluded; this is based on the evidence that such investments are critical to breaking the intergenerational transmission of poverty; creating more stable societies; and promoting sustained economic growth. Specifically, investing in the youngest years of a child's life, including early childhood development; providing high-quality primary and secondary education; and establishing effective child protection systems and child sensitive social protection and justice have proven to be the most effective means of enabling disadvantaged and excluded children to have a fair chance to survive and thrive.

12. The focus on equity represents a practical implementation by UNICEF of the principles of children's rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, as well as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other human rights instruments. Promoting greater equity in the development process within the framework of the organization's commitment to human rights principles remains the overarching goal and will guide UNICEF work in the coming years. The MTSP will reflect this commitment in five main areas:

(a) The focus on equity addresses the principle of non-discrimination. The new MTSP will support the rights of disadvantaged and excluded children to survive and to thrive, while simultaneously strengthening the foundation for an expanded, sustainable and inclusive development for all children, including by strengthening the capacity of duty-bearers to realize their obligations;

(b) The equity focus will allow for direct application of the concluding observations to States parties by the monitoring mechanisms of treaty bodies, such as the Committee on the Rights of the Child, to identify and address disparities affecting specific groups of children;

(c) The approach to equity will underpin the application of special measures as supported by human rights treaty bodies to level the playing field for disadvantaged and excluded groups and communities that have historically suffered discrimination;

(d) Accountability as a human rights principle will be at the core of UNICEF work to strengthen the capacity of rights-holders, including children, families and communities, to demand access to quality social services;

(e) Greater equity will be promoted when children and groups are able to exercise their right to information, as rights-holders, and meaningfully participate in decisions that affect their lives and well-being.

13. UNICEF and its partners have learned the power of identifying, analysing and addressing the specific factors — referred to by UNICEF as barriers and bottlenecks — that hinder the achievements of results for the most disadvantaged and excluded children. Such barriers and bottlenecks must be explicitly addressed while building the foundations for a sustainable, expanded and more inclusive prosperity. There is an unprecedented level of global resources — economic, technological, financial, and human capital — along with the knowledge, skills, capacity and networks in place, to address these growing challenges. It is now even more critical to work together to overcome the barriers and bottlenecks that prevent millions of children from realizing their rights to survive and hindering them from thriving and reaching their full potential.

14. The fact that children living in fragile, conflict-affected and humanitarian contexts are often particularly disadvantaged poses a growing challenge. Given the risks associated with a rapidly changing world, building resilience is critical for the most disadvantaged and excluded children, families and communities. It is hard to imagine anyone more vulnerable to conflicts, natural disasters and humanitarian emergencies than the most disadvantaged and excluded children and women.

15. The next MTSP will emphasize a stronger linkage between humanitarian action and development programmes, which will result in systematic strategies to build resilience and deliver sustainable change for disadvantaged and excluded children. The next MTSP will give humanitarian action more visibility and set concrete measurable targets not only for humanitarian response, but also for the organization's work in building resilience and addressing the underlying causes of instability and conflict. This will enable even stronger linkages between development and humanitarian interventions in UNICEF-supported country programmes of cooperation that are informed by a sound risk and conflict analysis. Specifically, the benchmarks and indicators of the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action will be integrated into the structure of the new MTSP. Targets for enabling systems and structures, including the contribution of UNICEF to humanitarian coordination, will also be included.

16. The rapidly changing world is prompting UNICEF to build on its traditional proven comparative strengths in promoting child survival, development and protection, and further emphasize global contexts and trends that have bearing on the future progress in these areas. Greater attention will be directed to the adolescent and youth population, which is growing in many countries and continues to be underserved. Children are increasingly affected by the impact of climate change, with the need for greater focus on climate change adaptation, disaster risks reduction and promotion of resilience. Accelerating rates of urbanization and migration in many countries have resulted in the need for enhanced support in certain areas; however, they also present opportunities to further accelerate progress.

17. Within the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) of the United Nations operational activities for development, addressing the changing global context will be emphasized in the medium-term strategic plans of the related United Nations organizations. For UNICEF, engagement in these emerging programme areas will be country-specific, based on an assessment of each national context and the comparative advantage, complementarity and available financial and human resources of the organization.

Programme strategies to achieve results: how UNICEF will work

18. The next MTSP will support the following changes in emphasis in the mix of programme strategies to achieve results for the most disadvantaged and excluded children: greater emphasis on strengthening systems for real-time monitoring of outcomes; increased support for innovations at scale; broadening and deepening partnerships, particularly with organizations and networks with the potential to catalyse and support social movements that support children's rights; and stronger attention to the implementation of results-based management at all levels of the organization.

Real-time monitoring

19. Greater emphasis will be placed on strengthening national, and local real-time monitoring, with a particular focus on promoting the use of disaggregated and real-time data and evidence to enhance the planning and management of policies and programmes intended to address disparities. UNICEF will bolster its capacity to track major disparities and trends through appropriate, well-designed programmes with measurable expected results. Recognizing that the immediate, underlying and structural causes of inequities between groups of children are often overlapping, participatory processes to develop high-quality situation analyses of children will be supported to inform policy-making and programming processes. There will also be greater emphasis on multidimensional responses based on a comprehensive analysis of the determinants of inequities in each context.

20. For many of the enduring challenges, sufficient evidence on the positive impact of proven strategies exists across diverse contexts. The way forward in these areas is to maintain and scale up high-quality implementation in an integrated and effective manner. This is based on one of the substantive findings of the end-of-cycle review, namely, the need to support well-coordinated, synergistic approaches across sectors, within the overall focus on the most disadvantaged and excluded facing multiple deprivations. With the accelerating pace of change, there will be new and emerging challenges for which the global community will need greater flexibility, ability for innovation, and the capacity to learn and respond quickly.

Innovation

21. Some challenges require new, refined or innovative approaches. Building on the great strides in knowledge and lessons learned, coupled with an opportunity to innovate, based, in part, on technological developments, the world now has a unique chance to speed up progress on child survival, development and protection. UNICEF will continue to place great emphasis on innovation, investing in new technologies, and embrace fresh ideas to reach the most disadvantaged children and excluded communities. These will include supporting the design of new, life-saving

interventions; promoting innovations that increase the quality of education and effectively promote learning; scaling up new ways of reducing violence; and promoting competitive markets and strengthened supply chains. Innovative approaches will be employed to increase efficiency in difficult economic environments, improving the organization's ability to target resources and to better monitor and manage results.

22. Innovation has often proven critical to the achievement of results. In recent years, innovations have begun to revolutionize development practices. Today, SMS and other technologies have dramatically reduced the amount of time to transfer data and information between service providers and support structures. Recent developments in communication technology, along with increased access and coverage in almost all countries, present an opportunity to promote broader participation in accessing service, to monitor the quality of services and to shape outcomes. Initiatives have been effective in fostering greater engagement of adolescents and creating more transparent and democratic processes of accountability. Use of new technologies has the potential of considerably improving the efficiency of humanitarian action.

Partnerships

23. The MTSP will outline the organization's approach to partnerships as a central strategy to achieve results — principally with governments and United Nations agencies, but also with civil society, faith-based organizations, the private sector, academia, multilaterals and others. Partnerships are at the heart of comprehensively addressing barriers and bottlenecks that affect disadvantaged and excluded children. This is central to delivering equity-focused programmes, to increasing the use of cost-effective and efficient innovations, and to responding rapidly and effectively in emergencies. Stronger partnerships at the local level will help to address the demand-side barriers for the most disadvantaged and excluded to accessing services, and to provide greater support to changing behaviours and promoting positive social norms. Another area of focus will be strengthening policies and measures to remove financial barriers hindering access to services, in part by regulating private-sector service provision for the most disadvantaged and excluded children, families and communities. Catalysing and supporting social movements for child rights will be the focus of the Organizations' work in partnership during the new MTSP period.

24. The growing number — and growing importance — of these partnerships requires greater flexibility, while the increasing capacity, as a result of information and communication technologies, allows the organization to move from more traditional, top-down, United Nations and donor-dominated partnerships to more inclusive, broad-based, bottom-up collaborations. Social movements are advancing collective change and bringing new opportunities for advocacy and partnerships. Technology can enable UNICEF to be innovative in mobilizing networks that are both inclusive and dynamic, bringing together traditional and new partners — agencies, coalitions, and individuals — to share information, coordinate activities and review progress.

25. Under the new MTSP, UNICEF will strive to be a better partner itself, becoming more accountable for results and transparent in processes and collaborations, and more nimble and efficient in strengthening existing networks and in creating new ones with governments, United Nations agencies, civil society

and the private sector. UNICEF will continue to play an active role in support of the Transformative Agenda of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, aimed at ensuring that the humanitarian response to major crises is more effective and that national systems are supported by international humanitarian assistance in a manner that builds up their capacity to respond to such disasters in the future.

26. UNICEF partnerships will take greater account of the changing world. Many middle-income countries now have the potential to finance social investments largely through domestic resources and are taking a greater role in donor relations and bilateral cooperation. An increasing number of international non-governmental and faith-based organizations are playing an increasingly influential role in development cooperation. As economies expand, the private sector is taking on a leading role in generating wealth and employment, and engaging in many social and economic processes at various levels, including financing national and international development and corporate social responsibility.

Results-based management, including better reporting

27. To strengthen results-based management at all levels, the new MTSP will make a clear distinction between means and ends by outlining the expected impact, outcomes and outputs from the work of the organization, and the programmatic and operational strategies that will be employed to achieve the expected results across a diverse range of national contexts. In order to achieve greater coherence in the context of the QCPR, the MTSP will align its results framework with those of other United Nations organizations to the extent possible. The three results-based management principles outlined by the United Nations Development Group, namely accountability, national ownership of results and inclusiveness or stakeholder engagement, will guide the approach.

28. The new MTSP will place stronger emphasis on risk-informed programming, aiming to identify priority subnational geographic areas and population groups facing risks. It will also promote integrated programmatic approaches and partnerships, across organizations and programme sectors, to make concerted action more efficient and synergistic. It will explore systemic capacity development for resilience building, assisting governments to adapt basic social services, strengthen social protection and enhance risk management in national and subnational planning and budgeting.

29. The shift towards identifying the organization's strategic contribution to the achievements of results will necessitate a corresponding adjustment in the performance-monitoring system, including strategic evaluations and an enhanced accountability system focusing on decision-making and partnerships. The measurement of the status of key performance indicators will be undertaken through improved national monitoring systems. Investments in enhanced performance monitoring in humanitarian action will be designed in a manner that builds national emergency management systems. The United Nations Development Group highlights the following principles related to results reporting: (a) mutual accountability; (b) transparency; (c) efficiency in utilization of resources; and (d) effectiveness in attaining development results. Consistent with these principles, reporting on the implementation of the MTSP will focus on the contribution of the organization to reducing disparities. Emphasis will be placed on strengthening government and partner monitoring systems to track the status of barriers and

bottlenecks in real time. Every country will report on the status of barriers and bottlenecks (as “significant”, “moderate”, etc.) within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework; over time, changes in the barriers and bottlenecks will be aggregated. By reporting on these obstacles, each office will enable sharing of lessons and experiences and improve planning of support to identified areas.

30. The achievement of selected outputs will be reported on an annual basis by the relevant country offices — those that have programmes of cooperation supported by UNICEF that work in the respective area — and aggregated at the global level. Emphasis will be placed on outputs that absorb significant resources, are strategically important and relate to many countries. Outputs will be related to either quantitative (e.g. number of insecticide-treated bed nets distributed) or qualitative changes (e.g. large-scale communication campaigns promoting key behaviours).

31. Evaluation will play an important role in operationalizing results-based management principles. It will synthesize and integrate a broad set of information and data as the basis or supporting evidence for forming a judgment on the merit of results. Evaluation will also validate macro-level results, informing learning and action at national, regional and global levels. It will increasingly be used as a tool to test and check the logic of underlying programme interventions by considering global, national and local contexts. Under the new MTSP, evaluations will review alternative impact pathways (through counterfactual analysis) and undertake contribution analysis, further validating plausible association between actions, interventions and results at various levels. Emphasis will be placed on defining the plausible association of UNICEF work with the achievement of results, based on an appropriate theory of change and backed by evidence that is qualitative, quantitative and evaluative in nature. In humanitarian settings, working with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, UNICEF will emphasize the timeliness of evaluations in the response, to inform a better designed and more effective response.

32. Specifically, strengthening results-based management will focus on the following elements:

(a) Strengthening monitoring systems of governments, particularly those related to the status of barriers and bottlenecks for the most disadvantaged and excluded children and their families and communities;

(b) Leveraging these monitoring systems to report on the contribution of UNICEF in achieving results;

(c) Enhancing performance monitoring systems to measure the contribution of UNICEF to broader, systemic change and to track performance in humanitarian action;

(d) Promoting evaluative exercises that enable quantitative and qualitative analyses of the organization’s contribution to broader and systemic change;

(e) Assessing programming quality and strategic choices at all levels to complement the monitoring and evaluation of programme results and management effectiveness of country and regional offices as well as related headquarter divisions;

(f) Strengthening UNICEF capacity at various levels through the revision and enhancement of tools related to results-based management, based on experience

to date and on recent developments related to United Nations coherence, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action as well as the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation.

33. The next MTSP will promote improved reporting in several additional key areas:

- (a) Results achieved vis-à-vis the expected results at each level;
- (b) An improved reporting process through the new UNICEF enterprise resource planning software system (known as VISION), which is globally accessible;
- (c) The Monitoring Results for Equity System (MoRES), including more intensive local-level monitoring and ongoing analysis of a comprehensive set of barriers and bottlenecks;
- (d) An independent peer review of evidence on results and performance of country offices at midterm reviews;
- (e) Integration of relevant indicators to monitor implementation of the QCPR and the contribution of UNICEF to system-wide coherence efforts.

34. To monitor the specific performance in humanitarian action, UNICEF will supplement the generic approach to results-based management by supporting a systematic approach with national and international partners. This will include:

- (a) Providing frequent coverage estimates, based on partner implementation reporting on priority indicators (e.g. monthly reporting on 2-3 indicators per sector);
- (b) Undertaking frequent field monitoring to provide qualitative feedback. This provides information on access to services and their use, and allows for open probing of additional bottlenecks to implementation or unintended negative impacts while fostering engagement with local capacities (particularly during early recovery);
- (c) Monitoring milestones related to cluster coordination, particularly in the areas in which UNICEF has specific commitments to support;
- (d) Tracking of key UNICEF operational indicators, including the availability and use of key resources.

35. Underpinning the MTSP will be efforts for greater management and operational excellence, including through deliberate enhancement of programme and operations efficiency and effectiveness in the context of United Nations coherence and the roll-out of a second generation of 'Delivering as One'. This will entail further simplification and harmonization of business practices and programming instruments. In recent years, UNICEF has undertaken major improvements in its management, accountability and reporting structures and processes. However, there is room for further improvement, and the next MTSP will place a strong emphasis on strengthening these areas.

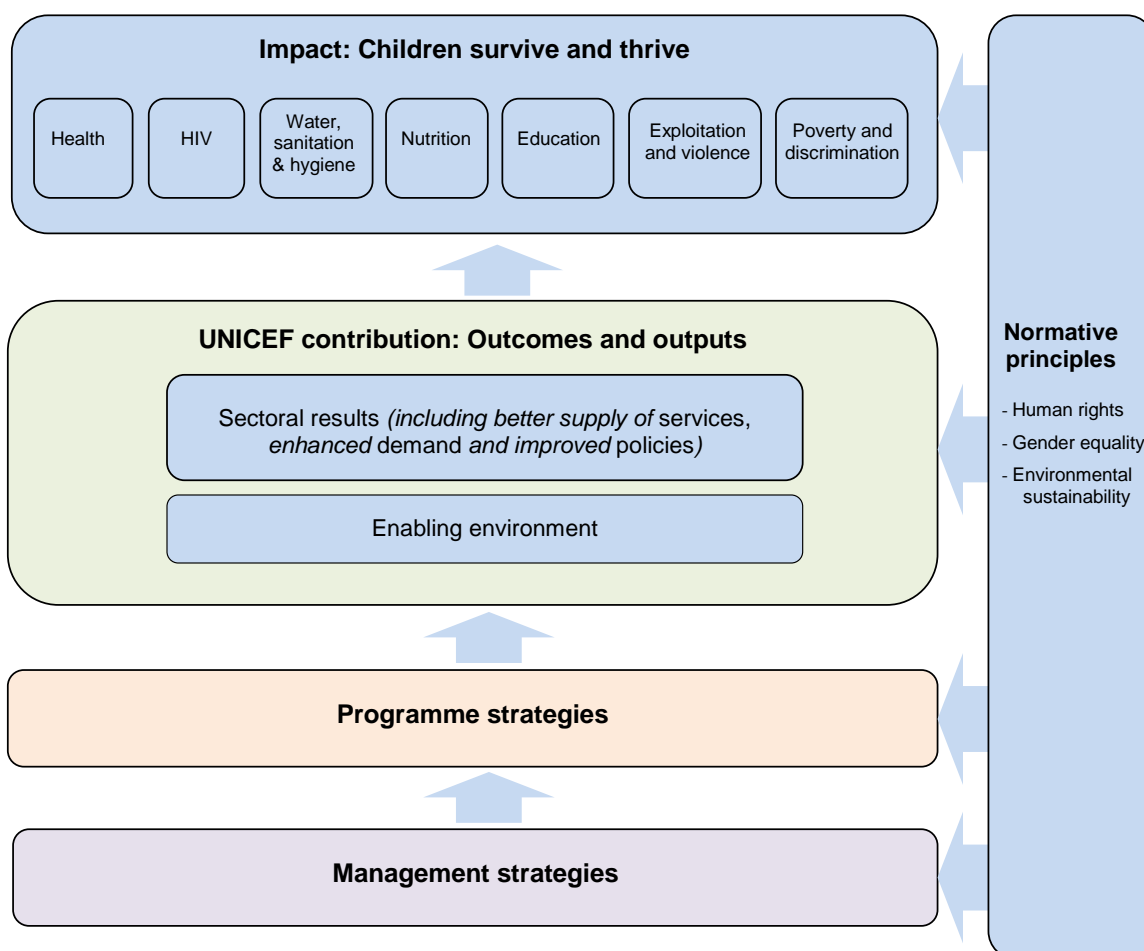
36. UNICEF staff remains the organization's greatest asset. Implementing the next MTSP will take a collaborative effort, involving staff at all levels and in all regions, along with the support of the National Committees. It will likely involve a range of challenging environments, with many external risks and possible constraints in financing. Nevertheless, given its history and mission, UNICEF and its dedicated staff, supported by committed donors and collaborators, will make every effort to rise to these challenges.

III. Draft outline and structure of the medium-term strategic plan 2014-2017

Components of the plan

37. The medium-term strategic plan 2014-2017 will outline results for children based on the impact of outcomes and outputs, and will specify targets for each result. For each impact, measurable outcomes and outputs will be identified and clustered as follows: (a) strengthened supply of services; (b) improved key behaviours and increased demand; and (c) an enhanced enabling environment. Indicators and corresponding monitoring systems will be sensitive to changes in the status of disadvantaged and excluded children; they will therefore include an analysis of disaggregated data by relevant characteristics of children that reflect disparities in each context to the extent possible. The expected results in humanitarian contexts will be clearly articulated and measured, and reported separately. The normative principles, as defined by the United Nations Development Group, namely human rights, gender equality and environmental sustainability, will be mainstreamed in all components of the plan and will be monitored and reported as a component of the performance management system.

Chart: Overview of the structure of the medium-term strategic plan



38. Results will be developed and articulated based on the following criteria:

- (a) Mission and mandate;
- (b) Comparative advantage;
- (c) Magnitude and relevance for children, particularly the most disadvantaged and excluded children;
- (d) Potential multiplier effect with other results;
- (e) Extent of disparities;
- (f) Potential for resource mobilization and leverage of resources and budgets;
- (g) Number of countries for which the result is relevant;
- (h) Measurability (while recognizing that some changes will require a longer-term perspective).

Expected impact

39. The work of UNICEF will contribute to the realization of children's rights, with particular attention given to children in humanitarian contexts, adolescents, and to the gender-specific needs of girls and boys, as well as the gender-specific disadvantages they face. With emphasis on the most disadvantaged and excluded children and families, UNICEF will contribute to the achievement of the following results for children:

- (a) Survival during delivery and the neonatal period and living free from preventable diseases and disability;
- (b) Protected from HIV infection and free from AIDS;
- (c) Drinking clean water, practicing safe sanitation and hygiene, and engaging in creating healthy environments;
- (d) Protected from malnutrition and reach their optimal growth;
- (e) Prepared to start school and complete a quality and inclusive education;
- (f) Protected from exploitation and violence;
- (g) Thriving in supportive family and community environments, protected from the effects of poverty and discrimination.

Expected outcomes and indicative outputs

40. The expected outcomes and outputs of the MTSP and the corresponding indicators and monitoring and reporting systems will be outlined in the results matrices. The contribution of UNICEF in development and humanitarian contexts will be outlined, overall or separately, as applicable. UNICEF will specify the targets for support to humanitarian action, as currently elaborated in the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, and will reflect the minimum quality and coverage standards for humanitarian response and critical interventions, aligned with the Sphere Humanitarian Charter, the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies and other international standards.

41. The results matrices of the MTSP will outline specific outcomes and a corresponding selected list of outputs that are associated with the work of UNICEF. The outcomes and selected outputs will be clustered into the following results: (a) strengthened supply of services; (b) improved key behaviours and increased demand for services; and (c) an enhanced enabling environment.

42. Regarding strengthened supply of services, outcomes and selected outputs will be specified for each impact, including the following as appropriate:

(a) Availability, accessibility and quality of necessary commodities and infrastructure for the most disadvantaged and excluded children;

(b) Availability, capacity and performance of service-providers for the most disadvantaged and excluded children;

(c) Capacity and performance as well as accountability of systems and related institutions for the most disadvantaged and excluded children. Strengthening systems for the movement and delivery of services will include initiatives to empower communities and families to be increasingly involved.

43. Regarding improved key behaviours and increased demand for services, outcomes and selected outputs will be specified for each impact, including the following as appropriate:

(a) Knowledge, awareness and practice of key behaviours for the most disadvantaged and excluded children to survive and thrive;

(b) Social norms conducive for the most disadvantaged and excluded children to survive and thrive;

(c) Establishment or improvement of processes to promote the participation of children, communities and civil society organizations, including demand for services;

(d) Financial and other barriers are addressed to enable disadvantaged and excluded families and their children to demand and access social services.

44. An enhanced enabling environment will include improved sectoral policies, particularly in the areas of policy, legislation, budgets and standards, and improved cross-cutting policies and systems. Outcomes and selected outputs will be defined for each result within the enabling environment area. Cross-cutting policies and systems will include the following:

(a) Increased availability of resources, improved planning and budget management, and enabling systems at all levels for children in the public and private sectors;

(b) Enhanced capacities and systems to support community-based, risk-informed planning and monitoring processes for children;

(c) Increased availability and use of child-related data for decision-making;

(d) Systems and policies that address gender equality, human rights and environmental sustainability that are increasingly paying specific attention to the rights and needs of children;

(e) Improved systems in place to respond to humanitarian crises and fragile environments.

Programme strategies

45. The organization has identified a number of key programme implementation strategies to achieve the envisioned results. All strategies will promote the participation of children and women and support empowering processes for positive change. Each country office will define an appropriate mix of the following strategies:

(a) Capacity development. This includes systems strengthening, especially for real-time monitoring for empowering communities and enhancing the resilience of communities;

(b) Research, evidence and knowledge management. This will include the equity dimension in research and related activities, and an increased emphasis on South-South cooperation;

(c) Policy dialogue, advocacy and communication. This includes related initiatives designed with an explicit theory of change, including involvement of government, civil society and communities;

(d) Communication for Development. This includes social and behaviour change communication, improved processes to promote the participation and voice of children and communities and the demand and utilisation of services;

(e) Partnerships. This includes the broad-based and diverse range of partnerships developed, with value-added defined and measured. Emphasis will be on catalysing and supporting social movements for child rights;

(f) Identifying and promoting effective innovation. This includes innovations effectively introduced at scale to overcome relevant barriers and bottlenecks at various levels;

(g) Service delivery. This includes the direct delivery of services, often as part of a humanitarian response.

46. Each of these implementation strategies will have associated performance benchmarks that are measured and reported on annually. Common performance standards for each strategy will be included in the MTSP (and serve as guidance and benchmarks for reporting by each office).

Management

47. The current MTSP already underscores the need for judicious management and operations in support of UNICEF-supported programmes and humanitarian action as well as the United Nations system-wide efforts to simplify and harmonize business practices to achieve greater efficiency, effectiveness and cost-savings. The rapidly changing world makes it imperative for the organization to become more flexible and responsive to sudden crises and new opportunities to work with governments and other stakeholders to accelerate progress for children.

48. Implementation of the new MTSP will involve strengthening UNICEF management and operations in support of its strategies and results. These functions will need to be more strongly integrated with the MTSP to strengthen synergies among operational and programmatic strategies and activities. It will outline initiatives to achieve management excellence and measure performance based on the agreed inter-agency cost categories as follows:

- (a) Corporate leadership and direction;
- (b) Oversight and assurance (including evaluation, audit and risk management);
- (c) Corporate financial, information and communication technology and administrative management;
- (d) Corporate human resources;
- (e) Partnerships, resource mobilization and leveraging (including advocacy and communication);
- (f) Staff safety and premises security;
- (g) Country office oversight, management and operational support.

49. The initiatives related to management excellence will aim to increase efficiency, effectiveness and value for money. Performance benchmarks will be developed for each management component, while country offices, regional offices and headquarters will review and report their performance against these benchmarks. As part of the midterm management review, the self-assessment of performance against benchmarks will be independently reviewed. These benchmarks will reflect, to the extent relevant, UNICEF contributions to the United Nations system-wide efforts to achieve greater efficiency, effectiveness and cost-savings in operational activities.

50. Financial reporting will include expenditures for each result area, with a breakdown by other dimensions, as required. UNICEF became a signatory to International Aid Transparency Initiative in 2012. Country office annual reports have been made public since 2011. Audit reports are now also publicly available. All evaluations are publicly accessible; country-level results analysis and financial utilization will be made public, starting in 2013 (following closure of accounts and the required IT system changes).

51. UNICEF will continue to work to optimize internal systems and related tools. Unifying the organization's budget and financial management systems for the field and at headquarters, the VISION system presents an enormous opportunity to continue to enhance management system and related processes. The streamlining and simplifying of business processes are under way, using a risk-informed approach to reduce risk-averse behaviour.

52. UNICEF headquarters and regional offices will support country offices to excel in programme and operations through appropriately simplified internal policies that are harmonized with other agencies, provide timely support and guidance, and assure quality of programming across all contexts. UNICEF supply operations will continue to innovate and assure quality and cost-effective solutions for programme goals. These costs are classified as "development effectiveness" in the inter-agency harmonized cost classification, and will have clear results and regularly report on appropriate key performance indicators.

Translating the plan into action through country programming

53. The new MTSP will enable the organization to continue to respond effectively to locally determined priorities based on the programming context, through country programmes of cooperation, while still carrying out global priorities. With the continued growth of emerging economies and also the widening disparities in many

countries, UNICEF will continue to promote child rights in all countries. The focus and mix of strategies to achieve results in each country will be based on the situation analyses of children and women; the comparative advantage of UNICEF vis-à-vis its partners; and the availability of financial and human resource. Planning and review processes will result in focusing on a limited number of programme results, complemented by monitoring and advocacy in a broader set of areas. Country offices facing similar situations are likely to have a similar mix of strategies, which would facilitate articulating the role of UNICEF and its added value in similar contexts, as well as enhance monitoring and performance reporting and sharing of best practices.

54. Within the parameters of the MTSP, UNICEF-supported country programmes will prioritize specific impacts and outcomes based on the situation analyses of children, disaggregated to the extent possible, and with detailed analyses of barriers and bottlenecks. Country offices will determine the particular mix of implementation strategies employed in response to the following parameters:

- (a) Identified issues related to the enabling environment;
- (b) Capacity gaps at all levels to deliver quality services;
- (c) Profile of deprivation (whether large-scale deprivation or limited to certain parts of the population);
- (d) Gross domestic product per capita (domestically available resources).

Conclusion

Looking ahead over the next four years, the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan 2014-2017 will promote a strong, efficient and effective organization that will maximize its contribution to the achievement of results for the most disadvantaged and excluded children.

Annex

Updated roadmap to the medium-term strategic plan 2014-2017

<i>Date</i>	<i>Issue/Topic</i>
First regular session 2011	Thematic discussion on results and lessons learned in the medium-term strategic plan (MTSP) focus area 2: Basic education and gender equality
Annual session 2011*	Annual report of the Executive Director on progress and achievements against the medium-term strategic plan for 2006-2013 (E/ICEF/2011/9) and Data Companion Thematic discussion on results and lessons learned in MTSP focus area 4: Child protection from violence, exploitation and abuse (E/ICEF/2011/P/CRP.15)
Second regular session 2011*	Institutional budget for 2012-2013 (E/ICEF/2011/AB/L.2) Thematic discussion on results and lessons learned in MTSP focus area 1: Young child survival and development (E/ICEF/2011/CRP.24)
November 2011-January 2012	<u>Informal consultation</u> on the UNICEF annual report to the Economic and Social Council (E/ICEF/2012/3) <u>Informal consultation</u> on the thematic discussion on results and lessons learned in MTSP focus area 3: HIV/AIDS and children
First regular session 2012	Road map towards the medium-term strategic plan for 2014-2017 (E/ICEF/2012/5) Updated results matrices and updated Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Framework to the medium-term strategic plan for 2006-2013 (<i>to be posted on the UNICEF Executive Board website</i>) Thematic discussion on results and lessons learned in MTSP focus area 3: HIV/AIDS and children
February 2012-May 2012	<u>Informal consultation</u> with the Executive Board on the annual report of the Executive Director on progress and achievements against the medium-term strategic plan for 2006-2013 <u>Informal consultation</u> with the Executive Board on the thematic discussion on results and lessons learned in MTSP focus area 5: Policy advocacy and partnerships for children's rights

* The presentations to the Executive Board of the items listed for the first, second and regular sessions of 2011 were preceded by informal consultations.

8-9 May 2012	<u>Workshop</u> organized by the Bureau on “Strengthening organizational results-based management in the context of the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan 2014-17”, with participation of Member States and United Nation agencies
Annual session 2012	Annual report of the Executive Director on progress and achievements against the medium-term strategic plan for 2006-2013 (E/ICEF/2012/10) and Data Companion Summary of lessons learned in 2011: http://www.unicef.org/innovations/files/Lessons_Learned_2011.pdf
Second regular session 2012	Thematic discussion on results and lessons learned in MTSP focus area 5: Policy advocacy and partnerships for children’s rights (E/ICEF/2012/CRP.15)
September 2012-June 2013	Joint report by UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA on steps taken and progress made in preparing an integrated budget for 2014-2015. Report to include a mock-up of the integrated budget and the impact of harmonized cost classifications on existing cost recovery policies
June 2012-December 2012	Establishment and interactions with the Peer Review Group, including Member States and United Nations agencies Ongoing consultation with strategic planning units and senior management of various United Nations agencies, including UNDP and UNFPA, in particular on the next strategic plan
5 November 2012	UNICEF engagement in the process for the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, and related issues Finalize the end-of-cycle review and develop outline, structure and strategic focus of the MTSP for 2014-2017. Planning will take into consideration emerging recommendations of the QCPR; findings of the end-of-cycle review of the MTSP for 2006-2013; the fourth Intergovernmental Conference on Delivering as One; the fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness; the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development; the post-2015 Millennium Development Goals agenda; and other key inputs
5 November 2012	Peer Review Group meeting (by video conference) on incorporating result-based management principles and tools in the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main findings of the end-of-cycle review of MTSP 2006-13; • Outline, structure and strategic focus of the MTSP 2014-2017

December 2012-January 2013	<p><u>Informal consultations</u> with the Executive Board on the following reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End-of-cycle review of the MTSP for 2006-2013; • Outline, structure and strategic focus of the MTSP for 2014-2017
First regular session 2013	<p>End-of-cycle review of the MTSP for 2006-2013 and outline, structure of the MTSP for 2014-2017, for review, discussion and comments by the members of the Executive Board</p> <p>Annual report of the Executive Director to the Economic and Social Council</p>
February 2013	<p>Peer Review Group virtual meeting (by video conference) on incorporating result-based management principles and tools in a sample results matrix (levels of results, indicators)</p> <p>Development of the MTSP 2014-2017, including substantive discussion on the results, strategies and principles of the plan with relevant stakeholders, including Member States, United Nations agencies and civil society. The MTSP will be aligned with the integrated budget regarding the resource plan and results frameworks</p>
March 2013	<p><u>Workshop</u> of the Executive Board on the draft MTSP 2014-2017, including the draft results framework</p>
May-June 2013	<p><u>Informal consultations</u> with the Executive Board on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual report of the Executive Director on progress and achievements against the medium-term strategic plan for 2006-2013; • MTSP for 2014-2017, including results, strategies, principles, management and operations. The results matrix will be included
Late May 2013	<p>Peer Review Group virtual meeting (by video conference) on incorporating result-based management principles and tools in global reporting</p>
Annual session 2013	<p>Annual report of the Executive Director on progress and achievements against the medium-term strategic plan for 2006-2013</p> <p>Draft MTSP for 2014-2017: UNICEF to present the draft, including implications of the QCPR, for review, feedback and discussion by Executive Board members. Based on the formal discussion and any follow-up actions requested by the Executive Board, UNICEF will finalize the strategic plan for submission to the Executive Board at its second regular session of 2013</p>

July-August 2013	<u>Informal consultations</u> with the Executive Board on the final MTSP 2014-2017 and the integrated budget for 2014-2017, in support of delivery of the strategic plan
Second regular session 2013	MTSP for 2014-2017, including results matrices: UNICEF to present the plan to the Executive Board for approval, with implementation to commence on 1 January 2014 Integrated budget for 2014-2017, to commence on 1 January 2014: UNICEF to present to the Executive Board for approval the integrated budget that underpins the new MTSP
