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### Report of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund on the work of its first regular session of 2025

(4–7 February 2025)\*

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\* The present document is an advance version of the report of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund on the first regular, annual and second regular sessions of 2025, to be issued as parts I, II and III, respectively. These reports will be issued in final form as *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2025, Supplement No. 14* ([E/2025/34/Rev.1-E/ICEF/2025/7/Rev.1](#)).



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## **I. Organization of the session**

### **A. Adoption of the provisional annotated agenda, timetable and organization of work**

1. The Executive Board adopted the agenda, timetable and organization of work ([E/ICEF/2025/1](#)) for the session.
2. The Secretary of the Executive Board announced that 39 observer delegations, 1 intergovernmental organization, 5 non-governmental organizations and 5 National Committees for UNICEF had submitted credentials in accordance with rule 50.2 of the rules of procedure.<sup>1</sup>

### **B. Opening statements by the President of the Executive Board and the Executive Director of UNICEF**

3. The President opened the first regular session of the Executive Board of 2025 by congratulating the new Bureau members. He expressed appreciation to the Bureau members who had served in 2024 and noted that he looked forward to working with the Executive Board in providing UNICEF with guidance and support in its efforts to achieve meaningful results for children around the world.
4. The President noted that 2025 would be an important year for UNICEF as it prepared to finalize its Strategic Plan for the period 2026–2029. The Board would hear an update on the Plan's development at the first regular session, review a draft at the annual session and consider endorsement at the second regular session. The Board would also continue to consider the review of governance and oversight of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), UNICEF and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) by the Joint Inspection Unit.
5. The President highlighted that the Board would consider an estimated 20 or more new country programme documents in 2025, five of which would be presented at the first regular session. A panel discussion on quality secondary education for adolescent girls was also scheduled. The President pledged to chair the Executive Board with openness, commitment and partnership, emphasizing the ongoing importance of maintaining focus on serving children's needs.
6. The Executive Director thanked the President for his remarks and welcomed the new Bureau members. The Executive Director highlighted several priority items for Board consideration in 2025, including the new Strategic Plan and integrated budget. She noted that UNICEF senior leadership and the Executive Board secretariat were closely following the Member State-led process of reviewing Joint Inspection Unit recommendations on governance and oversight.
7. The Executive Director described the challenging global context of 2025 and emphasized the role of UNICEF in protecting children's rights and their well-being, especially during challenging and unpredictable times. She noted that UNICEF was preparing for reductions in development assistance and was evaluating the impact of funding changes on programmes and partners. The organization would work to position itself effectively by demonstrating value and impact while expanding

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<sup>1</sup> The final number of observer delegations was 52, comprising 39 observer States, 1 intergovernmental organization, 7 non-governmental organizations and 5 National Committees for UNICEF. The final number includes the credentials submitted during the session, after the announcement by the Secretary.

partnerships with multilateral development banks, international financial institutions and global funds.

8. The Executive Director highlighted the importance of innovative financing and private sector engagement, noting that National Committee contributions now accounted for more than 50 per cent of UNICEF regular resources. She emphasized that UNICEF remained committed to effective resource stewardship. To this end, UNICEF was implementing a new anti-fraud and corruption policy and adopting a notification framework for resource partners.

9. The Executive Director outlined key priorities for the new Strategic Plan, including driving results through focus, scale and impact while addressing immediate humanitarian needs and building community resilience. She highlighted the Vaccine Independence Initiative as an example of the vital role of effective partnership and noted that between 2020 and 2024, the Initiative had supported more than 100 countries with a throughput of over \$1.7 billion in essential supplies for children, which had included nearly 1 billion doses of vaccines.

10. The Executive Director highlighted the organization's renewed strategic emphasis on reaching the most vulnerable children, including the 240 million children with disabilities worldwide. She noted progress in implementing the Disability Inclusion Policy and Strategy launched in 2023. The Executive Director also highlighted the commitment of UNICEF to girls' rights and agency, noting that programming across all major sectors explicitly focused on adolescent girls and that the organization was increasing its efforts to work with Governments and partners to ensure that girls were not left behind.

11. The Executive Director said that UNICEF estimated that more than 213 million children in 146 countries and territories would need humanitarian assistance in 2025. She highlighted that in 2024, nearly 50 per cent of humanitarian funding received by UNICEF went to only five emergencies due to earmarking. She emphasized the urgent need to reverse that trend by increasing the proportion of regular resources and flexible humanitarian funding. She stressed that all children had the same rights under international law and must have access to principled humanitarian action, regardless of location.

12. The Executive Director concluded by restating the mission of UNICEF and thanking those present for their collaboration and insights.

13. The President thanked the Executive Director for her remarks and opened the floor for general national statements.

14. A Vice-President of the Executive Board, speaking on behalf of the Executive Board Bureau, extended gratitude to the Executive Director for her insightful opening statement and recognized the extraordinary efforts of UNICEF personnel across headquarters and field operations. The Vice-President commended achievements in 2024, particularly in addressing the needs of vulnerable children amid escalating humanitarian crises, while noting that 2024 was one of the worst years on record for children in conflict, with over 473 million children living in conflict-affected areas.

15. A group of 31 delegations emphasized the importance of the 2024 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review in providing a vital framework to accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. The group called upon entities to include a chapter in their strategic plans defining their comparative advantages within the United Nations development system. They further recognized that reliable and sufficient funding was essential and welcomed the new funding compact. In response, the Executive Director acknowledged the importance of cooperation with United Nations agencies, emphasizing that joint programming should be strategic and purposeful to increase overall capacity and coordination.

16. A group of eight delegations highlighted the UNICEF 2024 State of the World's Children report, which had identified three mega-trends: demographic shifts, climate and environmental crises, and frontier technologies. The group emphasized the report's relevance to the African region, where the number of children was expected to reach 890 million by 2050. The group also expressed concern about the learning crisis for children worldwide, particularly African children, and the risk of squandering potential demographic dividends. The group noted that the new Strategic Plan and the strategy on the UNICEF contribution to Africa's development agendas would be important tools for both the implementation of the 2030 and the 2063 development agendas and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which provided the legal framework for the work of UNICEF. The Executive Director welcomed those comments and noted that UNICEF had a new digital education strategy plan for the period from 2025 to 2030.

17. A group of delegations emphasized the importance of prioritizing core funding to UNICEF and said that such funding was critical to ensuring continued preparedness and maximizing the cost-to-benefit ratio for results achievement. Several other delegations commented on the importance of core resources in allowing UNICEF to fulfil its mandate and reiterated their commitment to predictable contributions. The Executive Director expressed appreciation for and acknowledged the importance of core resources and their value in supporting country programming and many core UNICEF functions. She highlighted that core funding enabled UNICEF to respond rapidly to humanitarian crises, provide policy support to countries and maintain essential oversight functions.

18. Several delegations expressed concern over the increasing number of children affected by conflict. One delegation noted that nearly 500 million children lived in conflict zones and around 1 billion were exposed to extreme climate risks. Another delegation highlighted the alarming situation of children languishing in humanitarian crises and encouraged UNICEF to strengthen cooperation with other United Nations agencies and humanitarian partners to bolster relief efforts. The Executive Director acknowledged those concerns and emphasized that while progress towards some of the Sustainable Development Goals was off-track, there were also reasons for optimism, such as an observed improvement in child survival.

19. One delegation commended the long-standing collaboration between UNICEF and government counterparts across key sectors in their country, while another acknowledged the support of UNICEF for their country programme document. A third delegation highlighted the important contribution made by UNICEF to advancing child rights and sustainable development in their country. The Executive Director welcomed those comments and emphasized that UNICEF approached all of its work through a child rights lens, which in turn drove the organization's programming and efforts worldwide.

20. Several delegations emphasized the importance of education. One delegation emphasized the importance of advocacy for the protection of children in armed conflicts. A group of delegations noted that the African Union had declared 2024 to be the "Year of Education" and highlighted the need for enhanced commitments and funding. The Executive Director acknowledged that underfunding was a challenge for the education sector and reiterated that access to quality education continued to be a priority for UNICEF.

21. A number of delegations raised concerns about specific humanitarian situations. One delegation described the challenges faced by children in their country, which included malnutrition, food insecurity and limited access to education. Another delegation reported that 6 million children in their country required humanitarian assistance. The Executive Director recognized those concerns, emphasized the scale

of the impacts of conflict on children, and reiterated that UNICEF would continue to work for a better future for children in those situations.

22. Multiple delegations emphasized the importance of addressing the impacts of climate change on children. One delegation noted that the effects of climate change disproportionately affected small island developing States, while another stressed the need for enhanced resilience-building measures. Several delegations called for increased focus on climate financing for children-specific interventions. The Executive Director acknowledged that children were often most affected by climate crises and confirmed that UNICEF was working to understand the particular climate risks for small island States. She noted the need to increase the proportion of climate financing that was allocated to child-related activities.

23. A number of delegations highlighted the importance of disability inclusion in UNICEF programming. One group of delegations commended the fact that, in 2024, 75 per cent of humanitarian action for children appeals included children with disabilities, and urged systematic integration of disability considerations in future country programme documents. The Executive Director emphasized the importance of ensuring that children with disabilities were included in initiatives, noting that those children could be particularly isolated.

24. Several delegations emphasized the vital role of innovative financing and partnerships. One delegation commended UNICEF efforts to work with international financial institutions. Another delegation highlighted successful experiences with digital innovation hubs. Multiple delegations stressed the importance of expanding private sector engagement to diversify funding sources. The Executive Director noted that partnerships with the private sector were vital, both as a source of flexible funding and in bringing new ideas and innovations. She noted that those partnerships were particularly successful when they sought to address shared challenges.

25. Speaking on behalf of 11 child-focused development and humanitarian organizations, a network of organizations welcomed the commitment made by UNICEF to include children in consultations for the Strategic Plan, 2026–2029. The network shared findings from their recent World Index report, which captured input from 10,000 children across 41 countries, highlighting concerns about safety, child labour and education access for children with disabilities. The Executive Director thanked the network for the report and expressed appreciation for the commitment of the organizations to supporting the rights of children.

### **C. Election of officers of the Executive Board**

26. In accordance with Executive Board decision 2011/11 and rule 11 of the rules of procedure of the Executive Board of UNICEF, on 10 January 2025 the Board had elected a new Bureau consisting of a President and four Vice-Presidents.

27. The Executive Board elected as President the Permanent Representative of Tajikistan to the United Nations, Jonibek Ismoil Hikmat, and as Vice-Presidents the Permanent Representatives to the United Nations of Eritrea, Sophia Tesfamariam; the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Diego Pary Rodríguez; and Estonia, Rein Tammsaar, and the Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations of Germany, Thomas Peter Zahneisen.

## **II. Deliberations of the Executive Board**

### **A. Road map to the development of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2026–2029**

28. The Director, Division of Data, Analytics, Planning and Monitoring, presented the road map to the development of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2026–2029 (UNICEF/2025/EB/5), outlining key trends and directions. The trends included progress against Sustainable Development Goal indicators, persistent crises affecting children, demographic shifts requiring tailored approaches, global debt crisis affecting investments, and changing financial environments. She described key directions in the road map and noted its alignment with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review resolutions.

29. Delegations welcomed the road map and consultation process. A delegation emphasized the importance of differentiation and contextual adaptation, noting that challenges facing children were complex and interconnected. The delegation commended the commitment demonstrated by UNICEF to advancing the humanitarian-development nexus and ensuring that no child was left behind.

30. A group of delegations emphasized that the Strategic Plan should prioritize children's rights in guiding the organization at all levels, including advancing gender equality and protection against violence and harmful practices. The group urged inclusion of strong language on the right to education, including comprehensive sexuality education, and to health, including sexual and reproductive health and rights. The group encouraged continuation of work on disability inclusion and highlighted the importance of receiving a draft of the results framework in a timely manner. The group also requested information about how risk management would feature in the strategic planning process.

31. A delegation recommended emphasis on early childhood development, climate resilience, and data and digital transformation. The delegation noted that investment in the first 1,000 days of a child's life yielded significant returns and highlighted their experience in improving immunization rates through electronic registries. They emphasized that adequate resources, multi-stakeholder engagement and strong political leadership were key to achieving and sustaining progress.

32. Another delegation emphasized the need for robust engagement with other United Nations agencies to ensure that development priorities were rationally allocated across agencies. The delegation noted that inter-agency cooperation at country level should be founded in coherent, jointly developed strategic plans to avoid country teams having to reverse engineer their implementation approaches, which would be time-consuming and distract from the delivery of results.

33. A delegation requested specific information about the consultative process with children and young people and about coordination with other United Nations agencies. The delegation emphasized the importance of ensuring complementarity in terms of content across different strategic plans. Several delegations emphasized the value of common indicators that had been included in the current Strategic Plan and called for continued work with other United Nations agencies on that aspect.

34. The Director, Division of Data, Analytics, Planning and Monitoring, thanked delegations for their valuable contributions and welcomed the overall support for the road map, timelines and deliverables. She emphasized that the Plan would be grounded in accelerating national priorities and tracked through statistical systems and data existing in countries. She noted that most recommendations were already part of the process and would be reflected in the draft presented to the Board. The Director emphasized that United Nations development system reform aimed to see

action at country level, a UNICEF strength, and that alignment between global priorities would continue, as they represented an aggregate of national priorities.

## **B. UNICEF programme cooperation**

### **(a) Country programme documents**

35. The Director, Programme Group, introduced agenda item 5 (a), UNICEF country programme documents, contained in documents [E/ICEF/2025/P/L.1](#) to [E/ICEF/2025/P/L.5](#). The Board considered five new country programme documents. A UNICEF Senior Adviser, Education, shared a short presentation on the theme of quality secondary education for adolescent girls. The Board also heard from three panellists and a guest speaker.

36. The guest speaker, a youth advocate from the UNICEF Global Girl Leaders Advisory Group, addressed the Board. She highlighted the barriers faced by adolescent girls in accessing education and called for increased investment in girls' education. She emphasized that investing in and empowering adolescent girls was both a moral and strategic imperative for sustainable development.

37. A panellist highlighted national efforts to address educational challenges, including measures to increase girls' enrolment in secondary education from 7.5 per cent in 2003 to 44 per cent in 2023. The panellist noted that ongoing challenges included high dropout rates, economic hardship, household responsibilities and cultural barriers.

38. A youth advocate shared her experience of the challenges faced by indigenous girls in accessing education, including economic barriers that required her to work from 13 years of age, and safety concerns in schools. She highlighted issues including the lack of appropriate facilities for menstrual health and the pressure on girls to marry early or leave school to support their families. The advocate emphasized the importance of listening to girls and strengthening protection environments to support their continued education.

39. Another panellist, representing UNICEF in the field, emphasized the importance of addressing barriers to education in humanitarian settings, noting that in the Middle East and North Africa region, adolescent girls were 1.5 times more likely to be out of lower secondary school compared to boys.

40. Delegations commended UNICEF on the preparation of the country programme documents. Several delegations highlighted the value of the participatory process in developing the documents, which involved consultations with line ministries, United Nations agencies and other partners.

41. Multiple delegations emphasized the importance of ensuring alignment between country programme documents and national development priorities. Several delegations welcomed UNICEF efforts to strengthen cooperation with Governments on key priority areas including education, maternal and child health, water and sanitation, and child protection.

42. One delegation requested information about plans for the reintegration of children who had been recruited and used by armed groups. In response, the Regional Director a.i., Latin America and Caribbean, emphasized the commitment of UNICEF to working with local administrations, civil society and community organizations to ensure the successful reintegration of children.

43. One delegation proposed amendments to draft decision 2025/1 (country programme documents), which is typically agreed on a no-objection basis in accordance with Executive Board decision 2014/1. The Executive Board held two votes: first, on



the proposed amendments to the draft decision and second, on the original draft decision.

44. The vote on the proposed amendments to the draft decision resulted in 3 votes in favour, 21 against and 4 abstentions, as follows:

*In favour:* Nigeria, Oman, United States of America.

*Against:* Australia, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bulgaria, China, Cuba, Czechia, Denmark, Eritrea, Estonia, France, Germany, India, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

*Abstaining:* Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Republic of Korea, Tajikistan.

45. The representative of Germany made a statement in explanation of vote after the vote on the proposed amendments.

46. The subsequent vote on the original draft decision resulted in 31 votes in favour and 1 against, with 0 abstentions, as follows:

*In favour:* Australia, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bulgaria, China, Cuba, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Eswatini, France, Germany, India, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mozambique, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

*Against:* United States of America.

47. After the vote on the original draft decision, statements were made by the representatives of Australia, Switzerland, Eritrea, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, France, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, China, Norway, Cuba, Mexico, Colombia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Slovenia.

48. The representative of the United States of America delivered an explanation of vote, expressing concern about certain terms and concepts in the country programme documents that it considered to conflict with its national policies.

49. Numerous delegations expressed disappointment that consensus had not been reached on the decision, noting that it represented the first break in the long-standing practice of consensus-based decision-making at the UNICEF Executive Board.

50. Several delegations emphasized that country programme documents were evidence-based and extensively consulted road maps setting out how UNICEF would deliver its dual mandate in specific country settings, and were developed on the basis of national development priorities and in consultation with national Governments. A delegation stated that the proposed amendments would undermine the fundamental principle of national ownership in the process of preparing country programmes and damage the modalities for the consideration and approval of those programmes, as endorsed in Executive Board decision 2014/1.

51. A delegation highlighted that the country programmes were agreed between UNICEF and the countries in question and that the consultation procedure had already given all members ample opportunities to provide input. Another delegation expressed concern over any proposal that sought to relativize, even tangentially, the capacity of States to clearly reflect their national priorities in programme documents

that set out the framework of their cooperation with other agencies, funds and programmes.

52. A delegation emphasized that supporting those expert-drafted documents with consensus supported the rights of children, young people and the communities served by UNICEF to ensure that no one was left behind.

53. Several delegations urged that the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other core human rights principles remain the basis of UNICEF work, and that those documents be reflected in the new Strategic Plan.

54. A delegation highlighted that country programme documents represented UNICEF validity and authority to operate at country level within the framework of United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks. Multiple delegations stressed the importance of respecting national ownership in the development and implementation of country programmes.

55. Following the vote, the Executive Board adopted decision 2025/1 (see annex).

**(b) Extensions of ongoing country programmes**

56. The Executive Board considered the extensions of country programmes, contained in document [E/ICEF/2025/P/L.6](#). The Board was informed of the first six-month extension of the country programme for South Africa, which had been approved by the Executive Director.

57. The Executive Board adopted decision 2025/2 under agenda item 17 (see annex).

**C. Report on UNICEF follow-up to the recommendations and decisions of the fifty-third and fifty-fourth meetings of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS Programme Coordinating Board**

58. The Associate Director, HIV/AIDS, Programme Group, presented the report on UNICEF follow-up to the recommendations and decisions of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) Programme Coordinating Board meetings (UNICEF/2025/EB/2).

59. A group of delegations welcomed the significant gains in the global fight against HIV and AIDS, including the lowest number of new HIV infections in decades and reduced infections and deaths among children, adolescents and young people. The delegations expressed concern about widening inequalities and reduced funding as obstacles to achieving the goal of ending AIDS as a public health threat by 2030. The delegations emphasized the importance of addressing legal and social barriers, increasing domestic funding and ensuring equal access to information and education.

60. Several delegations highlighted the impact of gender inequality, sexual and gender-based violence, stigma and discrimination on key populations at risk of infection. One delegation requested information about lessons learned from collaborating with other United Nations agencies and how those would inform the next UNICEF Strategic Plan. Another delegation asked about the approach taken by UNICEF to providing support to countries affected by conflicts, crises linked to climate change and deteriorating human rights environments.

61. A delegation highlighted the value of joint United Nations programming in promoting integrated approaches to HIV/AIDS and sexual and reproductive health and rights. The delegation requested information on the potential to expand evidence-based programming to humanitarian contexts. The UNAIDS representative

commended the valuable contribution made by UNICEF to the Joint Programme and Global AIDS Response while noting the challenges of funding reductions and their impact on critical services.

62. In response, the Associate Director, HIV/AIDS, Programme Group, emphasized the importance of maintaining core resources and noted that UNICEF had made additional investment in the adolescent girl strategy to reduce new HIV infections. She described the organization's approach to ensuring continuity of services in conflict situations, particularly for people living with HIV and pregnant women at risk.

63. The Associate Director, HIV/AIDS, Programme Group, emphasized the value of working jointly as part of the United Nations system, particularly through the UNAIDS Joint Programme. She highlighted that UNICEF had taken a leading role in eliminating vertical transmission, closing the treatment gap for children and adolescents, and preventing new infections among adolescents. She emphasized the importance of engaging networks of adolescents and young people in leadership positions to drive change and the success of peer models in generating demand and sharing information.

#### **D. Update on UNICEF humanitarian action**

64. The Deputy Executive Director, Humanitarian Action and Supply Operations, introduced the update on UNICEF humanitarian action, contained in document UNICEF/2025/EB/3. The Director, Office of Emergency Programmes, presented the update.

65. Delegations commended UNICEF on its commitment to delivering humanitarian assistance to vulnerable communities and recognized the organization's critical role in responding to humanitarian crises globally. Several delegations expressed concern over the number of children exposed to humanitarian crises, particularly those affected by climate change. Delegations highlighted several challenges hindering the ability of UNICEF to provide humanitarian responses, including violations of international humanitarian law and increased targeting of aid workers. Many delegations raised the issue of funding gaps and reiterated the value of flexible funding mechanisms.

66. One delegation highlighted the importance of access in humanitarian action and noted that a lack of respect for international humanitarian law could place children and vulnerable groups at increased risk. Several delegations stressed the importance of addressing the root causes of vulnerability, welcomed UNICEF work to develop a policy on the centrality of protection, and commended the commitment and efforts of UNICEF to bridge humanitarian and development work. They also emphasized the need to be more intentional in the next Strategic Plan to focus on the importance of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and to make humanitarian action more visible.

67. A group of delegations welcomed the focus on equity within the humanitarian update.

68. Another group of delegations expressed deep concern about the impact on children of the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. The group emphasized the need for intensive humanitarian work to alleviate suffering and called for increased international humanitarian efforts to provide urgent aid. The group highlighted the importance of ensuring Palestinian children's rights to a decent life and of supporting reconstruction efforts. Another delegation raised concerns about the impact of violence on Israeli children. The delegation highlighted efforts made to minimize civilian casualties and facilitate humanitarian aid delivery.

69. Several delegations commended UNICEF efforts towards disability inclusion and emphasized the need to ensure that children with disabilities were not excluded from humanitarian initiatives. Many delegations commended the commitment demonstrated by UNICEF to localization and meaningful engagement with affected populations.

70. A group of delegations requested an update on the status of implementation of the Humanitarian Review and details of changes that UNICEF believed were needed to address its recommendations. One delegation asked how key lessons from the Humanitarian Review would inform the new Strategic Plan. Another delegation requested additional information on UNICEF plans for risk-sharing as a means of achieving localization.

71. In response, the Director, Office of Emergency Programmes, acknowledged the challenges of working in conflict situations and emphasized that UNICEF remained committed to humanitarian diplomacy and would continue to pursue advocacy for better access. The Director said that UNICEF welcomed the ceasefire in Gaza and outlined three key priorities: delivering integrated packages of services including immunization, nutrition and health services; sustaining water production, particularly in northern Gaza; and providing cash assistance to support vulnerable communities. She emphasized the importance of resuming learning and protection activities for children. The Director noted that these activities were being carried out in conditions that remained very challenging, particularly for children who had lost their communities. The Director also reiterated that UNICEF was there for every child, irrespective of where they were from.

72. The Director, Office of Emergency Programmes, highlighted the efforts made by UNICEF to strengthen local partnerships and systems while ensuring accountability to affected populations. She recognized the importance of the centrality of protection and described how lessons from the Humanitarian Review were informing strategic planning, including through a strategic dialogue with representatives from complex crises to assess organizational requirements. The Director noted that key priorities included strengthening the humanitarian-development nexus, increasing humanitarian diplomacy efforts and enhancing accountability to affected populations through a people-centred approach.

73. The Deputy Executive Director, Humanitarian Action and Supply Operations, emphasized that UNICEF was committed to being present for all children affected by crises and stressed the importance of sustaining the ceasefire in Gaza and enabling humanitarian access where needed and the non-politicization of humanitarian action. He noted that in 2023, 62 per cent of global UNICEF expenditure came from fragile and emergency contexts, which underlined the importance of quality programming in humanitarian settings to achieve results for children and progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

## **E. Extension and expansion of the Vaccine Independence Initiative and its revolving fund**

74. The Deputy Executive Director, Humanitarian Action and Supply Operations, introduced the proposal to extend and expand the Vaccine Independence Initiative (VII) and its revolving fund. The Director, Supply Division, presented the report, which was contained in document [E/ICEF/2025/P/L.7](#).

75. Delegations welcomed the proposal to extend and expand the VII, noting its impressive results and solid track record. Several delegations praised the Initiative's 100 per cent recovery rate and conservative approach to risk management.

One delegation highlighted its experience funding the VII nutrition window and its effectiveness in rapidly delivering treatment for severe wasting during a humanitarian crisis.

76. Several delegations requested additional details about risk management for the proposed high-impact and public health emergency windows. One delegation sought assurance that any defaults would be absorbed through window funds rather than impacting UNICEF core funding. Delegations also requested clarification on the parameters for activating the public health emergency window and how it would complement existing mechanisms such as the World Health Organization and World Bank Pandemic Fund.

77. The Director, Supply Division, outlined the risk management measures planned for the high-impact window and confirmed that any defaults would be absorbed by the VII rather than core resources. She described the criteria for activating the public health emergency window, including formal World Health Organization declarations of public health emergencies of international concern. The Deputy Executive Director, Humanitarian Action and Supply Operations, emphasized that the VII would complement existing instruments.

78. The Executive Board adopted decision 2025/3 under agenda item 17 (see annex).

## **F. Update on the UNICEF Disability Inclusion Policy and Strategy, 2022–2030**

79. The Global Lead, Children with Disabilities, presented the update on the progress of implementation of the UNICEF Disability Inclusion Policy and Strategy (DIPAS), contained in document [E/ICEF/2025/7](#). A UNICEF Pakistan Youth Advocate shared her personal experience of living with disability and called for increased support for disability inclusion, including prioritizing inclusive education, accessible health care, awareness campaigns, financial support and inclusive policymaking.

80. A group of 34 delegations welcomed the progress made through DIPAS and commended UNICEF for reaching 4.7 million children with disabilities across 145 countries. The delegations acknowledged the achievements made by UNICEF in education and social protection and encouraged UNICEF to better integrate disability inclusion with health and nutrition considerations and strengthen cross-sectoral coordination. The delegations urged UNICEF to fulfil all DIPAS commitments, particularly the commitment to have dedicated disability inclusion capacity in regional offices by the end of the year.

81. Several delegations emphasized the importance of timely identification of children with disabilities, particularly for its impact in early childhood and elementary education. They highlighted the need for comprehensive community care and support systems. They noted the particular challenges faced by children with disabilities in humanitarian crises and emphasized the need for specialized approaches in those contexts.

82. Multiple delegations stressed the importance of ensuring that disability inclusion was explicitly integrated into the Results Framework of the next Strategic Plan, including through disaggregated data, with specific targets and sub-targets on disability. A delegation shared examples of national initiatives to support children with disabilities, including regulations covering important services and a National Centre for Autism. The delegation called on all Member States to guarantee the rights of children and persons with disabilities everywhere in the world.

83. A delegation welcomed the Strategy's focus on data and statistical analysis of children with disabilities, noting the value of the upcoming second Global Data Report

with statistics from 60 countries and links to the Sustainable Development Goals. The delegation commended UNICEF efforts to include assistive technology products in emergency supply lists and welcomed efforts by UNICEF to scale up assistive technology for children with disabilities who were affected by crises or conflict. The delegation also recognized the investment made by UNICEF in strengthening young advocates with disabilities and organizations of persons with disabilities to raise their profile as key counterparts in decision-making.

84. A delegation encouraged UNICEF to ensure that every person enjoyed equality of opportunity, while strongly requesting that support for children with disabilities did not include any form of diversity, equity and inclusion programming.

85. In response, the Global Lead, Children with Disabilities, emphasized that UNICEF was committed to robust data collection on children with disabilities. He noted that the Child Functioning Module had been integrated into household surveys and that work was under way to develop a humanitarian version. He highlighted ongoing efforts to expand the availability of assistive devices and strengthen partnerships with organizations of persons with disabilities.

**G. Timeline for the implementation of the entity-specific recommendations from the Joint Inspection Unit note on the review of measures and mechanisms for addressing racism and racial discrimination in United Nations system organizations: managing for achieving organizational effectiveness**

86. The Deputy Executive Director, Management, introduced the timeline for implementation of recommendations from the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) review of measures and mechanisms for addressing racism and racial discrimination, contained in document [E/ICEF/2025/8](#). The Principal Adviser, Division of People and Culture, presented the report.

87. Delegations welcomed the update. A delegation emphasized the importance of implementing an integrated training curriculum on racial literacy and anti-racism to transform organizational cultures. The delegation suggested adopting measures for career progression and increasing representation in decision-making positions, and highlighted the need for sufficient resources to support implementation of action plans addressing racism and racial discrimination.

88. Several delegations encouraged UNICEF to continue implementing the JIU recommendations to prevent and address racism and racial discrimination. One delegation requested information about UNICEF participation in the informal inter-agency group working on anti-racism initiatives and asked about the timeline for implementation of recommendation 6. The delegation also sought clarification on UNICEF efforts to ensure follow-up on recommendation 1 within the broader United Nations system.

89. In response, the Principal Adviser, Division of People and Culture, noted that UNICEF would work with other organizations to learn from their practices regarding career progression and decision-making. He confirmed that UNICEF monitored representation across different groups, regions and levels as part of regular human resources systems. While UNICEF had its own categories, work continued with the High-level Committee on Management to develop system-wide categorization.

## H. Evaluation reports and management responses

### Evaluation of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, and management response

90. The Director of Evaluation presented the evaluation of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, contained in document [E/ICEF/2025/3](#). The Director, Division of Data, Analytics, Planning and Monitoring, presented the management response, contained in document [E/ICEF/2025/4](#).

91. A group of delegations commended the Evaluation Office for the timely evaluation and welcomed the constructive management response. The delegations supported the recommendation to refocus on child rights as the explicit overall framing. They commended UNICEF for recognizing the significance of meaningful participation of children and young people in programming. The delegations highlighted that a clear overall child rights framing would improve coherence between programmatic, advocacy and policy outcomes and help to steer the organization at all levels. The group of delegations supported the recommendation to identify a focused set of priorities in the next Strategic Plan and requested information on the criteria used to select high-level results. The delegations strongly encouraged enhanced internal collaboration between relevant units through joint working agreements within the organization, in line with recommendation 7 (c). They indicated that that collaboration should leverage the expertise of the Evaluation Office as an independent, indispensable partner, whose work required sufficient and predictable funding.

92. A group of delegations emphasized the need for efficient use of resources. One delegation welcomed the UNICEF agreement to recommendation 3, to develop methods for costing identified priorities and thus increasing the alignment between funding and strategic plans. The delegations encouraged UNICEF to ensure more integrated programming and emphasized the importance of multisectoral approaches that drove transformative impact by promoting equity and gender equality.

93. A group of delegations noted the importance of the efficient use of resources related to agency mandates and the need to prevent duplication within the United Nations development system.

94. A delegation acknowledged the special burden on children resulting from the climate crisis and recognized the potential role of UNICEF in climate-related interventions. The delegation asked UNICEF to ensure that work was carefully targeted to add value to the sector.

95. One delegation noted that the dual mandate of UNICEF meant that the organization was well positioned to operationalize the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in programmatic work. Another delegation expressed reservations about the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, emphasizing that humanitarian action should remain independent of political processes following principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence.

96. In responding to the remarks made by delegations, the Director of Evaluation emphasized that the engagement of the Executive Board on the evaluation represented an important milestone in the consultation process around the Strategic Plan. The Director also highlighted that strengthening national evaluation capacity was essential to ensuring that more countries had the most robust statistical readout on the state of children, leading to better programming. Additionally, the Director expressed appreciation to partners for their investment in impact evaluation, recognizing its critical role in driving organizational change amid resource constraints – focusing on what worked and discontinuing what did not.



97. The Director, Division of Data, Analytics, Planning and Monitoring, noted that UNICEF would continue to focus on risk appetite and risk management while maintaining awareness of risks inherent to partnerships. The Deputy Executive Director, Humanitarian Action and Supply Operations, also noted that, as a dual-mandate agency to carry out humanitarian work in a way that sustained systems, UNICEF was strategically positioned to work on humanitarian and development integration.

#### **Evaluation of the UNICEF Gender Policy and Gender Action Plans, and management response**

98. The Director of Evaluation presented the evaluation of the UNICEF Gender Policy and Gender Action Plans, contained in document [E/ICEF/2025/5](#). The Associate Director, Gender Equality, Programme Group, presented the management response, contained in document [E/ICEF/2025/6](#).

99. Several delegations expressed appreciation for the commitment demonstrated by UNICEF to gender equality, and welcomed its ambitious commitments to advancing gender equality, including through the development of a fourth Gender Action Plan, and the inclusion of explicit targets on adolescent girls and gender equality in the next Strategic Plan.

100. A group of delegations commended the organization for being one of the leading performers within the United Nations system in implementing institutional enablers for gender equality. The delegations encouraged UNICEF to deepen its focus on adolescent girls, to strengthen gender integration in humanitarian response programming, and to continue to integrate gender-transformative approaches into its work.

101. A group of delegations noted that fewer than half of UNICEF country offices had a contextualized Gender Action Plan and that these were not always aligned with sectoral strategies. The delegations encouraged UNICEF to strengthen that element and requested details on initiatives to establish sufficient accountabilities and implementation procedures. The delegations also asked about the main challenges in addressing gender imbalances in the workplace.

102. One delegation welcomed the collaboration between UNICEF and UN-Women and encouraged its continuation. The delegation requested information on how UNICEF would ensure alignment of the next Strategic Plan with the United Nations System-wide Gender Equality Acceleration Plan.

103. In response, the Associate Director, Gender Equality, Programme Group, highlighted several actions carried out by UNICEF to improve accountability, including explicit references in performance evaluations of leaders and updated sectoral positions reflecting gender priorities. She noted that UNICEF would consider large-scale, multi-faceted change in the next Strategic Plan, with dedicated targets around girls' secondary education, learning and skills. She also emphasized that the evaluation management response actions were aligned with the Gender Equality Acceleration Plan, namely on financial tracking of gender equality expenditure in programming; boosting internal capacity to deliver on actions to support women and girls, especially in humanitarian action; and consistent advocacy to promote girls' and women's rights by senior leadership.

104. The Executive Board adopted decision 2025/4 under agenda item 17 (see annex).



## **I. Progress on the consideration of the review of governance and oversight of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF and UN-Women by the Joint Inspection Unit**

105. On behalf of the President of the Executive Board, the Vice-President of the Executive Board provided an update on implementing Executive Board decision 2024/15 on the assessment of how the Executive Board executed its governance and oversight functions. The Vice-President reported that nominations for the joint working group had been confirmed and that draft terms of reference had been circulated to the participating Executive Boards.

106. Several delegations welcomed the milestone achieved and emphasized that effective governance was key to the ability of the United Nations development system to deliver tangible development progress. One delegation expressed hope that the working group would achieve early wins to strengthen and streamline Executive Board processes and reduce the burden on United Nations entities and Member States.

107. A group of delegations emphasized the shared goal of ensuring that agencies delivered results on the ground in a way that maximized positive impact in partner countries. The group noted that the process remained timely, with multilateralism and the United Nations system under increased pressure and agencies faced with constrained resources.

108. A delegation expressed support for aligning the content of decision 2025/2 of the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS with the decision to be considered by the UNICEF Executive Board. The delegation highlighted key aspects including taking note of the consultative process, acknowledging the process to identify working group members, and recalling the decision to include progress updates at every formal session.

109. The Executive Board adopted decision 2025/5 under agenda item 17 (see annex).

## **J. UNICEF financial report and audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023 and report of the Board of Auditors, and management response**

110. The Director of External Audit, Brazil, representing the Board of Auditors, presented the report of the Board of Auditors, contained in document [A/79/5/Add.3](#). The Deputy Executive Director, Management, presented introductory remarks before the Comptroller and Director, Division of Financial and Administrative Management, presented the management response, contained in document [E/ICEF/2025/AB/L.2](#).

111. Delegations commended UNICEF for receiving an unqualified audit opinion and maintaining robust internal controls and high standards of financial stewardship. Several delegations praised the efforts made by UNICEF to actively implement the Board of Auditors' recommendations and reduce the number of outstanding recommendations from previous years. Delegations expressed appreciation for the transparency demonstrated by UNICEF and its efforts to detect and report cases of fraud and presumptive fraud.

112. A group of delegations requested additional information on management of implementing partners, including information on system data and controls and any management plans to undertake a systemic review of implementing partners. The group also asked about UNICEF plans to address the emergency monitoring mechanism compliance issues identified by the Board of Auditors. One delegation

requested clarification on the significant increase in investment revenue and details of the investment strategy and risk management approach adopted by UNICEF.

113. A delegation noted that reported fraud losses represented an extremely low detection rate compared with other organizations and the general perceived risk level. The delegation urged UNICEF to enhance its systems to detect fraud, corruption and misuse of funds, and to implement additional controls. Several delegations requested details about the Headquarters Efficiencies Initiative and its expected financial impact, given the inflation of prices in Nairobi.

114. In response, the Comptroller and Director, Division of Financial and Administrative Management, emphasized that UNICEF employed a conservative investment strategy that prioritized protecting principal while maximizing returns. She noted that UNICEF was working to systematize fraud reporting and strengthen cooperation with international financial institutions.

115. The Deputy Executive Director, Management, acknowledged the concerns raised about fraud detection rates and said that a fraud task team within the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations was focusing on high-risk countries. She emphasized that UNICEF remained committed to strengthening the prevention, detection and management of fraud.

116. The Executive Board adopted decision 2025/6 under agenda item 17 (see annex).

## **K. Private Fundraising and Partnerships: 2025 workplan and proposed budget**

117. The Deputy Executive Director, Partnerships, introduced the Private Fundraising and Partnerships 2025 workplan and proposed budget, contained in document [E/ICEF/2025/AB/L.1](#). The Director, Private Fundraising and Partnerships Division, presented the report and an update on the World Bank instrument to facilitate sustained investment in private sector fundraising. The Chair of the Standing Group of National Committees presented an update on the partnership between the National Committees and UNICEF.

118. A group of delegations commended the efforts made by UNICEF to enhance income and influence for children worldwide through private sector partnerships. The group welcomed the alignment of the workplan with the overarching priorities of UNICEF, particularly the focus on scaling digital fundraising, optimizing major donor engagement and expanding private sector partnerships. The group was encouraged by the projected \$2 billion private sector revenue target for 2025, and emphasized the importance of fostering partnerships with high-value donors.

119. A delegation asked whether UNICEF had plans to increase private sector support for regular resources. Several delegations highlighted the important role of National Committees in fundraising and advocacy efforts. One delegation requested information about progress in broadening the geographical scope of fundraising and partnerships.

120. A group of delegations asked how UNICEF was addressing the trend of corporate donors focusing on humanitarian emergencies with heavily earmarked funding. The group also requested information on how Private Fundraising and Partnerships would contribute to joint resource mobilization efforts under the United Nations development system funding compact.

121. In response, the Director, Private Fundraising and Partnerships, said that UNICEF had been successful in negotiating with corporate partners for more flexible

funding arrangements and in incorporating “equity windows” in agreements to support underfunded crises. The Director highlighted the success in scaling up digital fundraising across the ecosystem and particularly in the global South, and noted successful examples of multi-stakeholder partnerships. She noted that UNICEF collaborated with other United Nations agencies to share data and approaches on financing and fundraising.

122. The Deputy Executive Director, Partnerships, described some innovative partnerships established by UNICEF, including those that brought attention to and funding for programmes related to global mental health and psychosocial support for children. She reiterated that UNICEF remained committed to exploring innovative financing schemes to support children.

123. The Executive Board adopted decision 2025/7 under agenda item 17 (see annex).

#### **L. Report of the joint field visit to Cambodia by members of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP, 28 October–1 November 2024**

124. The report of the joint field visit to Cambodia by members of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP (DP/FPA/OPS-ICEF-UNW-WFP/2025/CRP.1), which took place from 28 October to 1 November 2024, was presented by H.E. Ms Lachezara Stoeva, Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the United Nations and Vice-President of the 2024 Executive Board. The visit focused on four main themes: climate change, gender equality, youth empowerment and governance. Participants were divided into three groups visiting different regions to observe various programmes and initiatives.

125. The Vice-President of the 2024 Executive Board highlighted successful collaboration between United Nations entities in supporting national development plans and advancing the Sustainable Development Goals. She noted particular progress in education, given that close to 30 per cent of the 15.6 million people in Cambodia were under the age of 15 years, and in health care, including efforts to eradicate malaria by 2025.

126. A delegation expressed gratitude for the preparatory work by the UNICEF secretariat in planning the joint visit, and noted that the visit had provided an opportunity to observe how work at headquarters translated into concrete actions that benefited communities. The delegation highlighted the importance of demining efforts, strengthening social protection systems and expanding disaster management capabilities.

#### **M. Other matters**

127. The Secretary of the Executive Board stated that the provisional list of agenda items for the annual session of 2025 had been published on the first regular session documents page of the Executive Board website. There were no other matters for consideration.

#### **N. Adoption of draft decisions**

128. The Executive Board adopted decisions 2025/2 through 2025/7 (see annex). Decision 2025/1 was adopted under agenda item 5 (a).

## **O. Closing statements by the Executive Director of UNICEF and the President of the Executive Board**

129. In her closing statement, the Executive Director thanked Board members for their productive engagement and collaboration throughout the session. She acknowledged the growing humanitarian needs and intensifying conflicts that had increased challenges in protecting and supporting children in emergency settings. The Executive Director expressed gratitude to Member States that had announced increased contributions to UNICEF for 2025 and to those that had committed to continued contributions to the core budget. She welcomed Executive Board support for the extension and expansion of the Vaccine Independence Initiative and expressed appreciation for comments and suggestions regarding the development of the new Strategic Plan.

130. The Executive Director highlighted recent successes in work supporting children with disabilities and commended the fundraising and advocacy work of National Committee partners. She thanked Member States for their support of innovative financing efforts and expressed appreciation to the Bureau, the President, the Office of the Secretary of the Board, United Nations interpreters and UNICEF colleagues. Before concluding, she recognized the upcoming retirement of the Director of Nutrition and Child Development and his significant contributions to improving children's lives worldwide.

131. The President of the Executive Board delivered closing remarks in which he highlighted the significant ground covered during the session. He noted the genuine exchange between UNICEF and Board members on a wide range of issues and expressed appreciation for the participation of children and young people during discussions on quality secondary education for adolescent girls and the update on the Disability Inclusion Policy and Strategy.

132. The President outlined the seven decisions adopted during the session, including new country programmes, a country programme extension, evaluations of the Strategic Plan and Gender Policy and Gender Action Plans, extension and expansion of the Vaccine Independence Initiative and its revolving fund, progress on the Joint Inspection Unit Report on governance and oversight of the Executive Boards, and financial reports. He emphasized the importance of continued close collaboration given global challenges including climate change, conflicts, disease and threats to the financial aid environment.

133. The President expressed appreciation to the Vice-Presidents who had served as co-chairs of the session, as well as the UNICEF experts, the facilitators of draft decisions, and the United Nations conference officers, interpreters, document processors and translators. He concluded by thanking the Executive Director, the UNICEF senior management team and the Secretary of the Executive Board for their support in ensuring a successful session.

134. A group of delegations delivered a final statement, thanking the President for his chairmanship and the UNICEF secretariat for excellent preparation of the session. The group emphasized that UNICEF work had become more important but also more difficult given increasing global challenges. The group called for the Convention on the Rights of the Child to remain the fundamental guide for the UNICEF child rights mandate and urged continued work on the Sustainable Development Goals, including promoting gender equality. The group shared its expectation that UNICEF would continue, in accordance with previous Executive Board decisions, to eliminate all forms of discrimination within the organization, and said that it looked forward to continued partnership on those issues.

## Annex

### Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its first regular session of 2025

#### 2025/1

##### Country programme documents

###### *The Executive Board*

1. *Notes* that the country programme documents, including aggregate indicative budgets, for Colombia, Ethiopia, Iraq, Paraguay and Rwanda ([E/ICEF/2025/P/L.1](#)–[E/ICEF/2025/P/L.5](#)) were made available to Member States for their comments and input from 12 November to 2 December 2024;

2. *Approves*, in accordance with decision 2014/1, the country programme documents, including aggregate indicative budgets, for Colombia, Ethiopia, Iraq, Paraguay and Rwanda ([E/ICEF/2025/P/L.1](#)–[E/ICEF/2025/P/L.5](#)).

*First regular session  
7 February 2025*

#### 2025/2

##### Extensions of ongoing country programmes

###### *The Executive Board*

*Takes note* of the six-month extension of the country programme for South Africa, which was approved by the Executive Director and is presented in the table of document [E/ICEF/2025/P/L.6](#).

*First regular session  
6 February 2025*

#### 2025/3

##### Extension and expansion of the Vaccine Independence Initiative and its revolving fund

###### *The Executive Board*

1. *Recalls* the establishment of the Vaccine Independence Initiative in 1991, and the periodic approvals by the Executive Board to extend the Initiative at five-year intervals from 1991 through to 2025 (decisions 1996/17, 2000/14, 2005/12, 2010/15, 2015/5 and 2020/4) and to expand its scope (decision 2015/5);

2. *Approves* a five-year extension of the Vaccine Independence Initiative for the period 2026 to 2030;

3. *Also approves* the *amendment* of the authorized capitalization of the core revolving fund from \$100 million to \$250 million, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions;

4. *Further approves* the establishment of an additional dedicated high-impact window (revolving fund), with an authorized capitalization of \$200 million, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions;

5. *Approves* the establishment of an additional dedicated public health emergency window (revolving fund) to be separately capitalized and activated by a decision of the UNICEF Executive Director, and subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions;

6. *Welcomes* the intention of UNICEF to engage with other United Nations organizations to facilitate their access to the Vaccine Independence Initiative, emphasizes the importance of the continued engagement of UNICEF with other partners regarding access to the Initiative, and calls upon UNICEF to provide updates, within existing reporting, on the results achieved.

*First regular session  
6 February 2025*

## **2025/4**

### **Evaluation reports and management responses**

#### *The Executive Board*

1. *Takes note* of the evaluation reports and management responses presented by UNICEF at the first regular session of 2025;
2. *Notes* the recommendations of the evaluation of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, and encourages UNICEF to use them to inform the drafting process of the Strategic Plan, 2026–2029, as appropriate, inter alia, in order to meet the child-related Sustainable Development Goals and to equitably reach all children everywhere so that their rights can be fulfilled;
3. *Encourages* UNICEF to strengthen its transformative impact and scale up integrated programming approaches, including multisectoral systems strengthening, to improve the coherence, effectiveness and sustainability of UNICEF programmes;
4. *Also encourages* UNICEF to further explore innovative financing mechanisms and to continue to present to the Executive Board strategies and initiatives that aim to secure financing in support of the Strategic Plan;
5. *Welcomes* the intention of UNICEF to identify a focused set of priorities in the Strategic Plan, 2026–2029;
6. *Encourages* UNICEF to conduct inclusive and transparent consultations with Member States and other relevant stakeholders throughout all stages of the preparation of the Strategic Plan, 2026–2029, and to consider their feedback in the formulation of the Plan, as appropriate;
7. *Also encourages* UNICEF to strengthen internal collaboration among the Division of Data, Analytics, Planning and Monitoring, the Evaluation Office and the UNICEF Innocenti – Global Office of Research and Foresight to facilitate, inter alia, a shift towards outcome-level results;
8. *Emphasizes* the need for strong inter-agency cooperation, coherence, coordination and complementarity, in particular at the country level, in line with each entity's respective mandate and comparative advantage;
9. *Recalls* its decisions 2021/3 and 2021/18, and encourages UNICEF, within its mandate, to seek greater cooperation, coherence, coordination and complementarity among development, disaster risk reduction, humanitarian action and sustaining peace;
10. *Encourages* UNICEF to strategically enhance its use of data through global partnerships with a wide set of development partners, taking into account Economic and Social Council resolution 2013/21 on the fundamental principles of official statistics.

*First regular session  
6 February 2025*

2025/5

**Progress on the consideration of the review of governance and oversight of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF and UN-Women by the Joint Inspection Unit**

*The Executive Board*

1. *Notes* the consultative process undertaken to establish a working group and develop the terms of reference for the operationalization of the working group on the Joint Inspection Unit report on the Review of governance and oversight of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women ([JIU/REP/2023/7](#)), and adopts the terms of reference;

2. *Acknowledges* the process undertaken by the Bureau, in coordination with the Bureaux of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), to identify members of the working group, and welcomes their subsequent nomination, in accordance with decision 2024/15, paragraph 16;

3. *Recalls* decision 2024/15, paragraph 8, to include an item for decision on the progress of the consideration of the Joint Inspection Unit report on the agenda of every formal session, until decided otherwise, and reiterates its request to the working group to provide regular updates to the participating Boards, as necessary.

*First regular session  
6 February 2025*

2025/6

**UNICEF financial report and audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023 and report of the Board of Auditors, and management response**

*The Executive Board*

1. *Welcomes* the unqualified audit opinion for 2023 issued by the Board of Auditors, the report of the Board of Auditors for the financial period that ended on 31 December 2023 ([A/79/5/Add.3](#)) as well as the management response ([E/ICEF/2025/AB/L.2](#));

2. *Also welcomes* the progress made by UNICEF in implementing the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, and calls upon UNICEF to take action on the recommendations pending implementation and take into consideration relevant recommendations of the Board of Auditors in its strategic planning for the period from 2026 to 2029;

3. *Recalls* its decisions 2020/6, paragraph 5, 2021/4, paragraph 3, 2023/4, paragraph 4 and 2024/4, paragraph 3, and requests UNICEF to ensure timely implementation of the recommendations related to the management of implementing partners;

4. *Requests* UNICEF to organize an informal briefing by the Office of the Comptroller, ahead of the annual session of 2025, regarding the current projected financial impact of the Headquarters Efficiencies Initiative.

*First regular session  
6 February 2025*

2025/7

**Private Fundraising and Partnerships: 2025 workplan and proposed budget**

*The Executive Board*

1. *Notes* the high, medium and low revenue scenarios for 2025, as shown in table 3 of document [E/ICEF/2025/AB/L.1](#);

2. *Approves* a budget for special-purpose activities of \$186 million from core resources for results, comprising \$105 million for investment funds and \$81 million for other private sector fundraising costs, and the establishment of an other resources ceiling of \$85 million based on the medium scenario in table 3 of document [E/ICEF/2025/AB/L.1](#);

3. *Authorizes* UNICEF:

(a) To redeploy resources between the various core resources for results budget lines (as detailed in paragraph 2, above), up to a maximum of 10 per cent of the amounts approved;

(b) To decrease or increase expenditures up to the levels indicated in columns I and III of table 3 of document [E/ICEF/2025/AB/L.1](#) should the apparent revenue from fundraising decrease or increase to the levels indicated in columns I and III;

(c) To spend an additional amount between Executive Board sessions, when necessary, up to the amount caused by currency fluctuations, to implement the 2025 workplan;

4. *Approves* an interim one-month allocation for January 2026 of \$18.6 million (or 10 per cent of the 2025 special-purpose core resources allocation of \$186 million), to be absorbed into the annual Private Fundraising and Partnerships budget for 2026;

5. *Encourages* the Executive Director to identify and respond to opportunities in new markets, should they arise between Executive Board sessions, and to notify the Board accordingly via informal briefings.

*First regular session  
6 February 2025*