

## Children

In 2014, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) continued efforts to refocus its programmes, operations, partnerships, innovation and advocacy towards a vision of every child having a fair chance in life. It drew worldwide attention to the issue of children and equity, particularly the very poorest, girls, children with disabilities, those living in remote areas and those facing ethnic and religious discrimination. It also maintained focus on seven principal areas: health, HIV/AIDS; water, sanitation and hygiene; nutrition; education; child protection; and social inclusion.

With an estimated 230 million children living in countries and areas affected by conflicts, UNICEF and its partners worked to reach those in greatest need and gain public support for vulnerable children and families. In 2014, UNICEF programme assistance expenditure totalled \$4,130.9 million.

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### Follow-up to 2002 General Assembly special session on children

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In August [A/69/258], pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 58/282 [YUN 2004, p.1175] and 61/272 [YUN 2007, p.1201], the Secretary-General submitted his twelfth report on the follow-up to the Assembly's twenty-seventh (2002) special session on children [YUN 2002, p.1168]. He reviewed progress achieved in realizing the commitments set out in the Declaration and Plan of Action from the session's final document, "A world fit for children", adopted in resolution S-27/2 [ibid., p. 1169], and highlighted gaps in achievement and the strategic shifts necessary for attaining unmet goals. Failure to achieve the commitments would undermine efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. The Secretary-General also reviewed progress in the four major areas of the Plan of Action: promoting healthy lives; providing quality education; protecting against abuse, exploitation and violence; and combating HIV/AIDS.

In the area of health, the global mortality rate for children fell to an estimated 6.6 million in 2012, an all-time low. About 40 per cent of the fatalities occurred during the first month of life. Furthermore, the global under-five mortality rate had fallen by almost 50 percent from the 1990 rate of 90 deaths per 1,000 live births to 48 per 1,000 in 2012. In 2013, the endemic transmission of polio remained only in

Afghanistan, Nigeria and Pakistan, while India was certified a polio-free country in 2014. Since 2000, global measles deaths had decreased by 78 per cent, but the virus continued to be one of the leading causes of death among young children. Regarding malaria, 3.3 million deaths had been averted since 2001 in sub-Saharan Africa, 90 per cent of them in children under the age of five, as a result of UNICEF scaling up its interventions.

Since 2013, several Technical Resource Teams were established to carry out the 10 cross-cutting recommendations put forward by the UN Commission on Life-Saving Commodities for Women and Children to scale up access to 13 life-saving commodities for women and children. Regarding nutrition, globally, one in four children under the age of five was stunted, with an estimated 92 per cent of the world's 162 million stunted children living in Asia and Africa. UNICEF continued to promote the fortification of wheat flour to reduce iron deficiencies and help prevent birth defects in women of childbearing age, as well as provision of vitamin A supplementation to children aged 6 to 59 months in developing countries. For the first time, in 2013, early childhood development reporting was made possible through the Holistic Early Childhood Development Index, which illustrated that, globally, only 63.6 per cent of children under the age of five were developmentally on track.

In the area of education, over 57 million children of primary-school age remained out of school. More than half of them were in sub-Saharan Africa, where the primary net enrollment rate had increased from 58 per cent in 1990 to 77 per cent in 2011. South and West Africa registered the highest gains in reducing the number of children out of school; however, the region's primary net enrollment rate stood at 89 per cent, leaving 12 million children out of school. Progress in guaranteeing that children stayed in school had also stalled since 2009, with a quarter of all out-of-school children entering school late and becoming more likely to drop out. Dropout rates were highest in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. About half of the children out of school, most of them girls, were living in countries affected by conflict. Globally, inequities in education persisted, based on gender, poverty, location and deeply rooted social and cultural barriers. Such barriers were often amplified in secondary education, which in many countries was neither free nor compulsory. Pre-primary education had expanded considerably since 2000, yet half the children aged 3 to

6 remained unreached, with progress unevenly distributed between countries. In 2013, UNICEF helped approximately 3.6 million children in countries affected by conflict or natural disasters to access formal and non-formal education opportunities in safe, protected areas, and considered emergency response through advocacy, preparedness planning, risk assessments and back-to-school campaigns at various levels.

On protecting children against abuse, exploitation and violence, UNICEF issued in 2013 a revised global framework on child labour, seeking to improve understanding of its underlying causes and help eliminate the practice altogether; launched, with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), a comprehensive analysis on female genital mutilation; intensified efforts in several countries with medium and high prevalence rates to put an end to child marriage; and responded to the protection needs of children in more than 50 countries affected by armed conflict and natural disasters.

At the end of 2012, approximately 2.1 million young people aged 10 to 19, of whom 57 per cent were female, were living with HIV. An estimated 260,000 children under 15 years of age became infected with HIV in 2012. Sub-Saharan Africa remained the region most affected by HIV and AIDS, with more than 90 per cent of AIDS-related deaths occurring among adolescents. In 2012, 62 per cent of pregnant women living with HIV received antiretroviral therapy to prevent mother-to-child transmission. For children under 15 years of age, access to antiretroviral therapy increased by 14 per cent between 2011 and 2012.

## Promotion and protection of the rights of children

At the request of the General Assembly [A/69/484], the Third (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) Committee considered the item on the promotion and protection of the rights of children. The Committee had before it a report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict [A/69/212]; a report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the special session of the General Assembly on children (see p. 000); a report of the Secretary-General on the status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child [A/69/260]; the annual report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children [A/69/264]; and notes and letters on issues related to children's rights. At the end of the debate, the Committee recommended that the General Assembly adopt three draft resolutions on child, early and forced marriage; the rights of the child; and on protecting children from bullying (see below).

The General Assembly, by **resolution 68/273** of 20 May (see p. 000), decided to convene, on 20 November (see p. 000), a high-level meeting on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child [YUN 1989, p. 560]. On 18 December, the Assembly, in **resolution 69/157** (see p. 000), urged States to consider acceding to or ratifying the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocols thereto and to implement them effectively and fully. In **resolution 69/156** of 18 December (see p. 000), it urged States to enact, enforce and uphold laws and policies aimed at preventing and ending child, early and forced marriage. In **resolution 69/187** of 18 December (see p. 000), on migrant children and adolescents, the Assembly called on countries of origin, transit and destination to facilitate family reunification as an objective to promote the welfare and the best interest of migrant children, including adolescents, as applicable under national law, due process and the relevant provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocols thereto. By **resolution 69/194** of 18 December (see p. 000), the Assembly adopted the United Nations Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Children in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

### GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 18 December [meeting 73], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) Committee [A/69/484], adopted **resolution 69/158** without vote [agenda item 64 (a)].

#### Protecting children from bullying

*The General Assembly,*

*Emphasizing* that the Convention on the Rights of the Child constitutes the standard in the promotion and protection of the rights of the child and that States parties to the Convention shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized therein,

*Recalling* all its previous resolutions on the rights of the child and the resolutions adopted by the Human Rights Council that are relevant to the protection of children against bullying,

*Recalling also* the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, and noting the adoption of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Declaration of Principles on Tolerance,

*Taking note* of the United Nations report on violence against children of 2006, the report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children entitled "Tackling violence in schools: a global perspective—bridging the gap between standards and practice", the 2014 thematic report entitled "Releasing children's potential and minimizing risks: information and communication technologies, the Internet and violence

against children” and the 2014 report of the United Nations Children’s Fund on violence against children, entitled “Hidden in plain sight: a statistical analysis of violence against children”, which included references regarding bullying.

*Recognizing* that bullying, including cyberbullying, can be expressed through violence and aggression and that bullying in any form can have a negative impact on the rights of children and their well-being, and aware of the need to prevent and eliminate bullying among children,

*Concerned* about the occurrence of bullying in different parts of the world and the fact that children who are victimized by their peers may be at heightened risk for a wide range of emotional problems, as well as potential long-term effects on the individual’s ability to realize his or her own potential,

*Acknowledging* that in some countries, relevant United Nations agencies and mechanisms have been providing, upon request, technical cooperation and support to enhance national capacities to address and prevent bullying,

*Recognizing* that the family has the primary responsibility for the nurturing and protection of children, in the best interests of the child, and that children, for the full and harmonious development of their personality, should grow up in a family environment and in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding,

*Recognizing also* that environments surrounding children can affect their behaviour, and recognizing further the important role that family members, legal guardians, caregivers, teachers and civil society have and that the media should have in the prevention of bullying,

*Recognizing further* the importance of generating appropriate statistical information on bullying,

*Noting* the risks associated with the misuse of new information and communication technologies and applications, including increased vulnerability to bullying, while stressing that these can create new ways to enhance education and, inter alia, learn and teach about the rights of the child, and can be useful tools to promote children’s protection,

*Recognizing* that children in vulnerable situations can be at greater risk of being bullied and that children may face different forms of bullying,

1. *Recognizes* that bullying, including cyberbullying, can have a potential long-term impact on the enjoyment of the human rights of children and negative effects on children affected by or involved in bullying;

2. *Also recognizes* that bullying can be associated with, inter alia, discrimination and stereotypes, and that action must be taken to prevent bullying on any basis;

3. *Encourages* Member States:

(a) To take all appropriate measures to prevent and protect children, including in school, from any form of violence, including forms of bullying, by promptly responding to such acts, and to provide appropriate support to children affected by and involved in bullying;

(b) To continue to promote and invest in education, including as a long-term and lifelong process by which everyone learns tolerance and respect for the dignity of others and the means and methods of ensuring such respect in all societies;

(c) To generate statistical information and data disaggregated by sex, age and other relevant variables at the

national level, and to provide information on disability, with regard to the problem of bullying, as a basis on which to elaborate effective public policies;

(d) To raise public awareness, involving family members, legal guardians, caregivers, youth, schools, communities, community leaders and the media as well as civil society organizations, with the participation of children, regarding the protection of children from bullying;

(e) To share national experiences and best practices for preventing and tackling bullying, including cyberbullying;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General, using information provided by Member States and relevant stakeholders, in collaboration with relevant United Nations entities, to submit a report to the General Assembly at its seventy-first session on protecting children from bullying, with an emphasis on causes and effects, good practices and guidance to prevent and respond to bullying.

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## United Nations Children’s Fund

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In 2014, the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) remained committed to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) [YUN 2000, p. 41] and the goals set out by the General Assembly’s twenty-seventh (2002) special session on Children [YUN 2002, p. 1168] in the document “A world fit for children” [ibid., p. 1169]. The work of UNICEF was also guided by the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the Assembly in resolution 44/25 [YUN 1989, p. 560], and its Optional Protocols. In line with the first year of its strategic plan (2014–2017), UNICEF addressed seven outcome areas: health; HIV/AIDS; water, sanitation and hygiene; nutrition; education; child protection; and social inclusion.

The annual UNICEF flagship publication, *The State of the World’s Children 2014 in Numbers* [Sales No. E.14.XX.1] focused on indicators that detailed the circumstances of children worldwide. The indicators continued to support advocacy and action on behalf of the world’s 2.2 billion children, providing Governments with facts on which to make decisions and take actions to improve children’s lives. Data also revealed gaps and inequities, showing that gains and deprivations were unevenly distributed, depending on whether the children’s country was rich or poor, whether they were born girls or boys, into families rich or poor; or whether they lived in affluent areas or impoverished neighborhoods. Efforts were made to extend data collection to cover groups of children previously undercounted, overlooked or excluded, including children living in institutions or temporary housing, children in detention, children living and working on the street, children with disabilities, trafficked children, migrant children, internally displaced and refugee children, and children from ethnic minorities in remote areas. To improve the reach, availability and reliability of data on deprivations affect-

ing children and their families, the tools of collection and analysis were constantly modified and new ones were developed. While data showed that progress was made, disparities persisted. UNICEF operations in 2014 were described in the *UNICEF Annual Report 2014* and the annual report of the Executive Director on performance and results for 2014, including a report on implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review [E/ICEF/2015/5].

### Executive Board

The Executive Board of UNICEF held its first regular session (4-7 February) [E/2014/34/Rev.1- E/ICEF/2014/7/Rev.1], its annual session (3-6 June) and its second regular session (9-12 September)<sup>49</sup>, all in New York, during which it adopted 18 decisions.

On 6 June [E/ICEF/2014/16 (dec. 2014/5)], the Executive Board took note of the annual report of UNICEF covering 2013, including implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) [E/ICEF/2014/6 & E/ICEF/2014/6/Add.1], and decided to transmit the report to the Economic and Social Council. On the same day, the Executive Board, taking note of the final results of the UNICEF strategic plan (2014-2017) [E/ICEF/2014/16 (dec. 2014/6)], requested UNICEF to, inter alia, update the Executive Board at its 2015 annual session on how country programme results and resource frameworks were aligned with the final results framework of the UNICEF strategic plan (2014-2017); and to provide an annual update on progress made towards achieving the results identified in the strategic plan's final results framework. On 11 September [dec. 2014/16], the Board adopted the programme of work for its 2015 session.

In response to Economic and Social resolution 2013/5 and Executive Board decision 2013/5, the Executive Director submitted an annual report [E/ICEF/2015/5] on performance and results for 2014, including on implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review. He covered the first year of the UNICEF Strategic Plan (2014-2017), including the QCPR of operational activities for development of the United Nations system.

The Executive Director outlined results and analyzed progress in each outcome area of the plan: health; HIV/AIDS; water, sanitation and hygiene; nutrition; education; child protection; and social inclusion. It also covered humanitarian action; gender equality and implementation strategies; and the Fund's organizational performance in 2014. While overall progress had been achieved towards reaching the MDGs for children in many countries, these advances were highly uneven. Strong urban-rural gaps persisted in access to drinking water, as well as the gap between least developed countries and the rest of the world. Piped supplies accounted for 64 per cent of

improved water sources globally, compared with just 17 per cent in least developed countries. The disparity in use of antiretroviral treatment in low- and middle-income countries grew every year between 2007 and 2013. The adolescent age group (10 to 19 years) was the one group in which AIDS-related deaths had not decreased between 2005 and 2013. The numbers of stunted children under the age of five had declined globally; however, regional disparities persisted, with half of stunted children living in Asia and a third in Africa. While globally most children of primary school age were attending school, about 40 per cent in this age group were not learning basic reading and writing. A substantial gap also persisted in the prevalence of child marriage between the poorest and the richest girls, with the poorest girls being 2.5 times more likely to marry in childhood.

During the year, UNICEF continued to support countries, communities and families in improving the rights of all children, particularly the most disadvantaged. With the humanitarian crises at unprecedented levels worldwide, UNICEF assisted 8.6 million children in acquiring formal and non-formal education, and provided psychosocial support to 3.1 million children. In response to the Ebola outbreak in certain parts of Africa, UNICEF mounted its largest-ever supply operation, providing family support and placement services to more than 15,000 children who lost one or both parents to the epidemics, and psychosocial support to more than 36,000 children. @ HDE= Programme policies

### Strategic plan (2014-2017)

At its annual session in June, the Executive Board had before it a report on the final results framework of the UNICEF strategic plan (2014-2017) [E/ICEF/2014/8], which provided an update to the addendum of the strategic plan [E/ICEF/2013/21]. The document refined the summary results and key performance indicators, included baselines and targets for the strategic plan, and presented results and key performance indicators in each of the plan's outcome areas: health; HIV and AIDS; water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); nutrition; education; child protection; and social inclusion. It also covered organization effectiveness and efficiency.

Since the second regular session of the Executive Board in September 2013, an intensive process had been undertaken to develop the baselines and targets. The review helped to reduce the number of indicators by over 20 per cent in 2014, compared to 2013. The results framework reflected, whenever possible, globally agreed targets. The updated status of indicators would be reported globally every year, and support would be provided to strengthen monitoring systems in countries to generate required information.

On June 6, the Board, taking note of the draft [E/2014/34/Rev.1-E/ICEF/2014/7/Rev.1, Annex III, p. 77 (dec.

2014/6)] on the final results framework of the UNICEF strategic plan (2014-2017) [E/ICEF/2014/8], noted that the exact formulation of the indicators, milestones and targets of the final results framework continued to evolve; requested that they be further refined, in consultation with Member States; requested UNICEF to update the Executive Board at its 2015 annual session on how country programme results and resources frameworks were aligned with the final results framework of the UNICEF strategic plan; and requested UNICEF to provide an annual update on progress towards achieving the results identified in the strategic plan. @HdG= Financial estimates

The Executive Board, at its second regular session in September, presented the four-year financial framework [E/ICEF/2014/AB/L.5] of the UNICEF strategic plan (2014-2017), in accordance with the Executive Board decisions 2003/3 and 2013/20. Total revenue was forecast to be \$4,034 million in 2014, projected to remain flat in 2015 and to resume gradual growth thereafter. Total expenditures in 2014 were estimated to exceed revenue by \$244 million. By a draft decision, UNICEF recommended that the Executive Board approve the framework of the planned financial estimates for 2014-2017 and the preparation of programme expenditure submissions to the Executive Board of up to \$1,247 million from regular resources in 2015, subject to the availability of resources and the continued validity of these planned financial estimates.

On 11 September [dec. 2014/17], the Executive Board requested UNICEF to continue to explore incentives, mechanisms and funding windows to broaden the donor base in a cost-effective manner and to encourage donors to increase their core contributions as well as to shift to less restricted or earmarked non-core funding; also to present to the Executive Board a resource mobilization strategic brief towards this end for consideration at its second regular session of 2015; decided to organize, with UNICEF support, on an annual basis during the second regular session of the Executive Board, a structured dialogue with Member States to monitor and to follow up the predictability, flexibility and alignment of resources provided for the implementation of the strategic plan (2014-2017), including information on funding gaps; approved the framework of the planned financial estimates for 2014-2017; and approved the preparation of programme expenditure submissions to the Executive Board of up to \$1,247 million from regular sources in 2015.

### *Programme cooperation*

At its first regular session, the Board had before it a report on modifications to procedures for consideration and approval of country programme documentation [E/ICEF/2014/P/L.1]. The proposed changes were in line with the QCPR of operational activities for development of the United Nations system to

simplify and harmonize agency-specific instruments and processes, and to reinforce alignment of country programmes to the strategic plans of organizations. The changes aimed to further strengthen national ownership, situating cooperation programmes within national development processes. On 6 February, taking note of the report [dec. 2014/1], the Executive Board requested that the country programme documents continue to be developed on the basis of national plans and priorities under the leadership of national Governments and in consultation with the resident coordinator and other members of the UN country team, as well as with other relevant stakeholders at country level; requested UNICEF, in line the recommendations of the QCPR, to further simplify, harmonize and reduce the number of its agency-specific country programming instruments and processes, whenever possible, in particular in “Delivering as one” countries and countries deciding to apply the standard operating procedures; encouraged UNICEF to continue to work with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to further harmonize their country programme documents templates, associated documentation and annexes; and requested UNICEF to ensure that the results and resources frameworks were an integral part of country programme documents and to translate them accordingly.

The UNICEF secretariat, at its annual session in June, informed the Executive Board [E/ICEF/2014/P/L.11] about the Executive Director’s approval of one-year extensions of country programmes for Algeria, Argentina, Lebanon, Libya and Uganda. The secretariat also presented the reasons for the proposed two-year extension of the country programme for Burundi, the extension of the country programme for Guinea-Bissau for the third consecutive one-year, the fourth one-year extension for the Syrian Arab Republic, and a two-month extension, following three one-year extensions, for Madagascar.

On 11 September, the UNICEF secretariat informed the Executive Board [E/ICEF/2014/P/L.16] about the Executive Director’s approval of one-year extensions of the country programme for Iraq and of the common country programme for the United Republic of Tanzania. It also presented the reasons for the proposed two-year extension of the country programme for Botswana, a two-month extension, following two one-year extensions, for Mali, and a nine-month extension, following one two-year extension for Colombia.

On 6 June [dec. 2014/7], at its annual session, the Board approved a two-year extension for Burundi, a third consecutive one-year extension for Guinea-Bissau, a fourth consecutive one-year extension for the Syrian Arab Republic, and a two-month extension, following three one-year extensions, for Madagascar. On 11 September [dec. 2014/18], the Executive

Board approved a two-year extension of the country programme for Botswana, a two-month extension, following two one-year extensions, for Mali, and a nine-month extension following a two-year extension for Colombia.

At its annual session, the Executive Board was requested to approve the aggregate indicative budget for Kenya, covering the period 2014 to 2018, in the amounts of \$54.64 million from regular sources, subject to the availability of funds, and \$124 million from other sources, subject to the availability of specific purpose contributions [E/ICEF/2014/P/L.6]. The Board, at its annual session, on June 6 [dec. 2014/9], approved the country programme document for Kenya. The Executive Board was also requested to approve the following aggregate indicative budgets, combining regular and other sources, and covering the 2015 to 2019 period: Angola (\$108,467,500); Bolivia (\$14,270,000); Timor-Leste (\$60,650,000); Comoros (\$20,885,000); Tunisia (\$9,540,000); Afghanistan (\$665,500,000); Bosnia and Herzegovina (\$30,000,000); Guatemala (\$45,770,000); and Paraguay (\$11,910,000). The Board was further requested to approve two aggregate indicative budgets for Sierra Leone and Ecuador, totaling \$241,365,000 and \$17,000,000, respectively, for the 2015 to 2018 period, as well as an aggregate indicative budget for Palestinian children and women in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the State of Palestine, covering the period 2015 to 2016 and totaling \$27,223,000. On 11 September, at its second regular session [E/ICEF/2014/16, (dec. 2014/15, pp.12-13)], the Board approved on a no-objection basis, and in accordance with the decision 2014/1, the country programme documents, including aggregate indicative budgets, for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ecuador, Guatemala and Paraguay.

### *Joint programming*

The joint meeting of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), UNICEF, UN-women and the World Food Programme (WFP) (New York, 3 February) [E/ICEF/2014/Rev.1-E/ICEF/2014/7/Rev.1] discussed the performance standard on gender mainstreaming across the strategic plans (2014-2017) of the six agencies with emphasis on country experiences and the UN system-wide action plan on gender equality and the empowerment of women, and coherence of the UN action against poverty and vulnerability and towards resilience, with emphasis on “Delivering as one” at country level to ensure coherence of action.

The six agencies were encouraged to prioritize several themes in the post-2015 development agenda, including promotion of family-based solutions to global problems; strengthening of efforts to combat sexual violence against women and girls; enhancing the sexual and reproductive health of women; strengthen-

ing gender equality laws; and ensuring access to quality education and skills application for women and girls. The six agencies reported that there was still room for improvement despite the progress made so far; recommended that gender mainstreaming initiatives consider the specific needs of girls and the protection of the rights of both boys and girls. They also indicated that the new UNICEF Gender Action Plan, still under development, was aligned with the 2014-2017 strategic plan. The six UN agencies further reaffirmed their commitment to the “Delivering as one” plan and to United Nations reform, and stressed the need for enhancing joint evaluation and monitoring.

### *Gender equality*

In response to Executive Board decision 2013/9 [YUN, 2013, p. 1142], UNICEF reported [E/ICEF/2014/10] on progress in its work on gender equality and empowerment of women, and on implementation of its new Gender Action Plan (2014-2017). On 6 June [E/ICEF/2014/16 (dec. 2014/8)], the Executive Board encouraged UNICEF to implement the plan in an effective and efficient manner, including by stressing the importance of UN system-wide cooperation and implementation; and requested that UNICEF prepare annual reports on the implementation of the Gender Action Plan, as well as strengthen gender reporting in all of its work.

On 6 February [E/ICEF/2014/16 (dec. 2014/2)], taking note of the report on the progress of gender equality work in UNICEF [E/ICEF/2013/12], the Executive Board encouraged UNICEF to continue to consult it and the other relevant stakeholders and partners with a view to finalizing the costed Gender Equality Action Plan (2014-2017), by mid-April 2014, for its presentation to the Executive Board at its 2014 annual session, together with the annual report on the progress of work in gender equality.

### *Field visits*

At its second regular session in September [E/2014/34/Rev.1-I/ICEF/2014/7/Rev.1], the Executive Board had before it the reports of the Executive Board field visits in 2014. Members of the UNICEF Executive Bureau visited Burkina Faso (26 April-2 May), to gain first-hand knowledge of UNICEF work at the country level and to better understand the challenges facing women and children in Burkina Faso. Child labour in gold mines remained a major problem; female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) was still widespread despite being legally banned; and malnutrition continued to be a major concern. The Bureau noted the increased cooperation among UN agencies and encouraged their coordinated efforts under the framework of “Delivering as one” programme.

A UNICEF Executive Board delegation visited the Sudan (26 April-2 May), where the political

and security context was complex. Children under 18 years of age constituted half of the estimated population, and a firm and stronger commitment by the Government to put children at the heart of the national development agenda was crucial. The delegation visited Zam Zam camp at El Fasher where 40,000 internally displaced persons, most of whom had been there for more than a decade, lived in deplorable conditions, and malnutrition was also of great concern. The delegation was impressed with the innovative and multifaceted approach and involvement of stakeholders in the FGM/C “Salem” campaign, but highlighted the need for more support for the campaign at the federal level. However, the Sudan had made remarkable progress towards achieving universal primary education and Education for All.

After a joint visit of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP to Panama and El Salvador (23 March-1 April), members of the delegation reported on the productive interaction between the UNICEF regional office and the Panamanian authorities, and the extraordinary support from the Government of El Salvador to the UN system. In El Salvador, where most of the visit took place, the delegation recommended an integrated strategy mechanism incorporating all elements of response, recovery, involvement of community organizations and women into disaster risk management. Panama, despite its classification as a middle-income country, faced major challenges, including economic inequality affecting boys, girls and adolescents, and especially concentrated in rural areas or among indigenous groups, and those of African descent.

### Programmes by sector

In 2014, UNICEF direct programme assistance in seven outcome areas totalled \$4,130.8 million. The largest share of expenditure, \$1,229.0 million, went to health, followed by \$826.2 million to education; \$727.4 million to water, sanitation and hygiene; \$524.4 million to child protection; \$484.4 million to nutrition; \$242.6 million to social inclusion; and \$107.1 million to HIV/AIDS.

#### Health

In the area of health, UNICEF increasingly focused on the first month of life, based on the finding that approximately 44 per cent of deaths under the age of five occurred during the neonatal period. Pneumonia, diarrhea and malaria were responsible for most under-age-five deaths, most of which were preventable with proven, low-cost interventions. Efforts by UNICEF included development of costed maternal, newborn and child health implementation plans in 62 of 75 *Countdown to 2015* countries, up from 52 in 2013 and development of related communication plans in 43 UNICEF-assisted countries, up from 16 in

2013. UNICEF continued to assist in polio eradication, including the delivery of 1.7 billion doses of oral vaccines, which contributed to a significant reduction in the number of reported cases in Somalia, from 194 in 2013 to 5 in 2014, and in Nigeria, from 53 in 2013 to 6 in 2014. In response to the Ebola crisis, UNICEF developed a “community care centre” model and supported the establishment of 65 such centres, whose location in communities reduced by 30 per cent the time between onset of symptoms and diagnosis. UNICEF was most active in supporting these centres in Sierra Leone, where over 6,000 patients underwent community-level triage by the end of 2014.

#### HIV/AIDS

In 2014, UNICEF focused on achieving an AIDS-free generation, in which children were born free of HIV and remained so for the first two decades of their lives, and children living with HIV had access to treatment and care. Yet, despite a 40 per cent decline in new HIV infections among children in the previous four years, the target of 90 per cent reduction between 2009 and 2015 remained out of reach, with an estimated 190,000 children under the age of 14 dying of AIDS-related causes in 2013. UNICEF-backed programmes supported equitable use of HIV prevention and treatment interventions for children, pregnant women and adolescents in 22 Global Plan priority countries, and provided greater geographical coverage of services for prevention of mother-to-child transmission in Chad. UNICEF also began implementing innovative community-based social norm programmes in Somalia and South Sudan. In June 2014, UNICEF and UNAIDS announced the *All In* initiative to end adolescent AIDS, which established targets to reduce AIDS-related deaths among adolescents by 65 per cent and new HIV infections among adolescents by 75 per cent by 2020.

#### Water, sanitation and hygiene (wash)

In response to the Ebola crisis, UNICEF supported a large-scale hand-washing promotional campaign, construction and management of water and sanitation systems in treatment centres, and distribution of hygiene kits and disinfectant. Lack of WASH services disproportionately hindered the lives of women and girls. In response, gender assessments were commissioned in Kiribati, Rwanda and the Sudan in 2014, and UNICEF encouraged the participation, especially the leadership, of women in managing community WASH committees. In 2014, UNICEF also convened a high-level meeting on Water and Sanitation for All, that brought together ministers of finance and ministers responsible for water and sanitation, as well as representatives of donors and development banks who made commitments to eliminate inequities and improve sustainability. Additionally, UNICEF facili-

tated South-South cooperation initiatives that supported the sharing of experiences and best practices on hygiene packages for schools, hand-washing and technical developments.

### *Nutrition*

UNICEF assisted 91 countries in developing or revising their national nutrition policies or plans for equitable use of nutritional support and improved nutrition practices, up from 83 countries in 2013. As part of an inter-agency response, UNICEF worked with WFP to expand its field presence and establish rapid response teams, particularly in South Sudan and the Horn of Africa. The two agencies reached over 600,000 people with nutrition services in locations affected by the Ebola epidemic. Through creation of the Iodine Global Network, UNICEF played a leading role in harmonizing efforts to address iodine deficiency disorders, and was a lead partner in various initiatives to improve nutrition.

### *Education*

In 2014, UNICEF country-level support for education enrollment drives and cash transfer schemes brought 360,000 girls into schools in five northern states in Nigeria. UNICEF mounted a robust response to serve the millions of children who were losing access to school because of emergencies, including five million children kept out of classrooms by the Ebola outbreak in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Access to formal and non-formal basic education was provided to 3.1 million children in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, and 2.4 million children affected by Ebola in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone; education by radio was used to reach the children after the outbreak forced schools to close. UNICEF assisted 38 countries in incorporating risk assessment into their education sector plan or policy, and helped establish community-based mechanisms to prevent and respond to gender-based violence as well as provide teacher training on gender-sensitivity in conflict-affected areas in Somalia and Uganda. A UNICEF-supported replenishment event for the Global Partnership for Education programme mobilized \$26 billion in domestic resources from developing-country partners and \$2.1 billion from other donors.

### *Child protection*

In 2014, UNICEF reached approximately 5.6 million children through initiatives to prevent armed violence, and an additional 14.6 million children through birth registration initiatives. UNICEF also supported 137 countries to strengthen child protection services, up from 74 in the previous year. At least 70 UNICEF country offices supported government and civil society efforts to prevent and respond to sexual abuse and exploitation. Eighty countries applied child-friendly

procedures or approach for dealing with children in contact with the law. UNICEF and partners took action in 35 countries affected by conflict or natural disasters to prevent and respond to various forms of gender-based violence, especially sexual violence, including through training and awareness programmes for more than 420,000 girls, women, boys and men. Among key results achieved with UNICEF support in 2014, the National Army of Chad was “delisted” from the annexes of the report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict; an action plan was signed with Yemen; age assessment protocols were developed in Afghanistan; and children were released from armed forces and groups in Myanmar.

### *Social inclusion*

In 2014, UNICEF assisted 23 countries in collecting data through its household survey program, Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys, which allowed disaggregation of data by geographic location, wealth quintile, ethno-linguistic group and other factors. Since children were particularly vulnerable to stigma and discrimination, UNICEF efforts to promote the social inclusion of children with disabilities expanded to Armenia, Mozambique, the Republic of Moldova and the United Republic of Tanzania, and aided Serbia to conduct a household survey on the needs of Roma families. UNICEF also supported 115 countries in integrating issues of climate, disaster and conflict into national development plans. In Burundi, conflict sensitivity and peace-building competencies were incorporated into school programmes; in Zimbabwe, the Government developed a child-sensitive national climate change response strategy, and Morocco integrated climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction into municipal agendas.

### *Humanitarian action*

During the year, UNICEF responded to 294 humanitarian situations in 98 countries. In South Sudan, UNICEF contributed by providing direct response where there was insufficient partner presence through the inter-agency Rapid Response Mechanism. It also contributed by vaccinating about 238,000 children under the age of five against measles in displacement camps in the Central African Republic; providing access to education for 2.8 million children in Syria; providing psychosocial support to more than 600,000 children in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey; supplying life-saving items to 74,000 displaced people in Iraq; providing safe drinking water to 60,000 people in Ukraine and providing psychosocial support for 230,000 children in Gaza. An emergency simulation exercise conducted with WFP and aimed at training emergency response teams strengthened the capacity of UNICEF to respond to large-scale emergencies.



## Organizational and financial matters

### Organizational matters

#### *Evaluation system*

In accordance with the UNICEF evaluation policy [YUN 2008, p.1287] and relevant Executive Board decisions, UNICEF in April submitted an annual report [E/ICEF/2015/10] on the Fund's evaluation function in 2014 and progress in implementing the revised evaluation policy. It concluded that the evaluation of UNICEF operated well at every level and was improving every year. However, the annual report also highlighted several areas requiring improvement, including the need for adequate attention to gender issues.

In response to the revised UNICEF evaluation policy and relevant Executive Board decisions [YUN 2013, p. 1145], UNICEF submitted an annual report [E/ICEF/2014/12] on its evaluation function and major evaluations. The report provided information on global developments in evaluation and the current UNICEF evaluation function, concentrating on activities at regional level, and concluded that there was continued improvement in UNICEF evaluation function, including its role in supporting harmonization within the United Nations and the wider agenda around national evaluation capacity development. The key challenge for UNICEF in the next four years would be to further improve its evaluation performance and that of its partners in meeting future challenges.

At the first regular session of the Executive Board in February, the UNICEF Evaluation Office submitted a plan (2014-2017) [E/ICEF/2014/3] containing its guiding principles and objectives for global thematic evaluations, and a prioritized list of topics, along with details of the resource framework, approach to implementation, key risks and reporting arrangements. The purpose of the plan was to provide a coherent framework within which useful evaluation evidence could be systematically generated on the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of work carried out under the UNICEF strategic plan (2014-2017), and evidence provided on impact and sustainability. The key evaluation principles guiding the evaluations were utility, credibility and independence. Progress in the implementation of the plan would be reported in the annual report of the Evaluation Office and the annual report on the evaluation function presented to the Executive Board each year.

On 6 June [E/2014/34.Rev.1 (dec. 2014/10)], the Executive Board of UNICEF took note of the annual report on the evaluation function in UNICEF [E/ICEF/2014/12], and requested UNICEF to report in 2015 on steps taken to implement the revised evaluation policy and on implementation of the plan for global thematic evaluation (2014-2017); and to present to the Executive Board on an annual basis a comprehensive review of evaluation coverage, including, coverage by

region, theme and programme expenditure level. The Executive Board further requested UNICEF to inform the Executive Board of the implementation of the plan for global thematic evaluations, as part of the annual report on evaluation.

#### *Ethics Office*

In March [E/ICEF/2014/11], pursuant to Executive Board decision 2010/18 [YUN, 2010, p. 1190], the UNICEF Ethics Office submitted its fifth annual report covering its activities in 2013. The report provided information on the Office's mandated areas of work: standard setting and policy support; training, education and outreach; advice and guidance; the Financial Disclosure Programme; protection of staff against retaliation; and participation in the United Nations Ethics Committee and Ethics Network for Multilateral Organizations. During 2013, the Office focused on increasing staff awareness of ethics, understanding and acting to avoid or mitigate conflicts of interests and fostering a "speak up" culture in UNICEF. The main means towards achieving these goals were: administering the Financial Disclosure Programme; developing training materials for use at country level; and bringing an ethics lens to standard setting and policy support and sharing experience within the United Nations system. The Ethics Office received 271 requests for its services in 2013, up from 221 in 2012. Of the 271 requests, 121 concerned services provided under the advisory and guidance functions of the Office. Requests related to training (51), the Financial Disclosure Programme (24), advice on alleged wrongdoing (21) and inputs to standard and policy setting (23) were also common. Meanwhile, the number of requests for ethics advice decreased from 146 in 2012 to 121 in 2014. Such requests mainly concerned conflicts of interests in the broad sense: outside activities, gifts, family relations and post-employment. The number of staff participating in the Financial Disclosure Programme decreased from 2,694 in 2012 to 2,498 in 2013. The decrease was the result of a more stringent scrutiny process regarding the type of staff selected to participate in the programme.

On 6 June [E/ICEF/2014/16 (dec. 2014/12)], after taking note of the annual report, the Board requested the Ethics Committee to improve protection for whistleblowers by developing and implementing an effective policy on protection against retaliation that specified a statute of limitations of a minimum of six months for reporting retaliation; and was in line with the management indicator on this issue included in the UNICEF strategic plan (2014-2017); and also requested the Ethics Office to continue to submit annual reports to the Executive Board at future annual sessions containing recommendations to management that would strengthen the organizational culture of integrity and compliance.

### *JIU reports*

In June, the Executive Board had before it a report [E/ICEF/2014/9] summarizing the response of UNICEF to recommendations contained in seven reports and two notes of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) issued from September 2012 through December 2013. According to the report, UNICEF had continued to work with the JIU on various reviews conducted under its auspices, as well as on the follow-up to recommendations issued by JIU. This interaction had increased the relevance of the reports, improved implementation of recommendations and enhanced transparency.

The Executive Board took note of the report at its annual session in June.

### *Management for results*

In June [E/ICEF/2014/AB.L.4], the Executive Board considered a proposal to create a fourth position of Assistant Secretary-General/Deputy Executive Director in the context of strengthened management for results across the organization. The proposal recommended that the new Deputy Executive Director focus his attention on management for field results, overseeing the performance of UNICEF regional offices, and, through regional directors, the performance of country offices in achieving pragmatic results and sound financial management.

Taking note of the proposal on 6 June [E/ICEF/2014/16 (dec. 2014/13)], the Executive Board approved the establishment of the position of Deputy Executive Director for field results at the level of Assistant Secretary-General; requested UNICEF to update the Executive Board ahead of the 2015 annual session on structural and governance changes within UNICEF, including clarifying reporting lines, responsibilities and new accountabilities, and other effectiveness and efficiency initiatives; and also requested UNICEF Executive Director, in his 2015 annual report, to update the Executive Board on effectiveness and efficiency initiatives.

### **Finances**

In 2014, UNICEF revenues totalled \$5,169 million. Income was derived mainly from Governments, which contributed \$3,181 million, and from the private sector and NGOs, which contributed \$1,397 million. The balance came from inter-organizational arrangements, with contributions of \$497 million, and other sources, with contributions of \$94 million.

UNICEF expenditures amounted to \$4,868 million. Expenditure on development, including programme and development effectiveness totalled \$4,438 million. The balance included expenditure on management (\$309 million); other costs, including private fundraising and partnerships (\$102 million); special purpose expenditures, including capital

investment (\$11 million); and UN development coordination (\$8 million).

### *Budget appropriation*

In June, the Executive Board had before it nine draft country programme and common country programme documents for approval [E/ICEF/2014/16 (dec. 2014/14)]. On 6 June, the Board approved the following regional aggregate indicative budgets for those programmes, distinguishing between regular and other resources, respectively: East Asia and the Pacific: \$5,650,000 and \$50,000,000; Eastern and Southern Africa: \$92,262,500 and \$91,730,000; Latin America and the Caribbean: \$4,270,000 and \$10,000,000; Middle East and North Africa: \$13,340,000 and \$23,423,000; South Asia: \$210,000,000 and \$455,500,000; and West and Central Africa: \$35,780,000 and \$205,585,000.

### *Resource mobilization*

In 2014, UNICEF continued to collaborate with the public and private sectors to mobilize other resources. A total of 135 Governments contributed to UNICEF resources. Total income from public sector donors—Governments, intergovernmental organizations and inter-organizational arrangements—amounted to \$3,679 million. Private sector contributions, mainly comprising resources from UNICEF National Committees, individual donors, NGOs and foundations, amounted to \$1,397 million. Income for humanitarian assistance totalled \$1,579 million. The increase of 19 per cent over the 2013 level of \$1,332 million, was attributed primarily to funding for humanitarian emergencies in the Central African Republic, Iraq, the Philippines, South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic, and the Ebola crisis.

Humanitarian needs grew exponentially during 2014; the funding requirement increased from \$2.1 billion in January to \$3.1 billion by the end of 2014.

### *Private Fundraising and Partnerships*

In February, the Executive Board had before it a report on the 2013 Private Fundraising and Partnerships (PFP) workplace and proposed budget [E/ICEF/2014/AB/L.1], which stated that PFP in 2014 would generate a projected \$1,010.6 million in net revenue, of which \$480.6 million would be for regular resources and \$530 million for other resources. Planned expenses for 2014 would amount to \$128.4 million.

On 6 February, [E/ICEF/2014/16 (dec. 2014/4)], the Executive Board approved budgeted expenditures of \$109 million, and authorized an expenditure range of \$107 million to \$112 million, depending on final revenue from fundraising. The Board authorized UNICEF to redeploy resources among the various budget lines up to a maximum of 10 per cent of the amounts approved, and, when necessary, to spend an additional

amount between Board sessions, up to the amount caused by currency fluctuations. The Board also approved allocation of renewed investments funds, with \$49 million for 2014, and an interim one-month allocation for January 2015 of \$13.14 million, to be absorbed in the annual PFP budget for 2015.

In September, the Executive Board considered a report [E/ICEF/2014/AB/L.6] on UNICEF private fundraising. According to the report, net revenue for the UNICEF PFP in 2013 amounted to \$1.13 billion. This was \$198 million (21 per cent) more than the planned target of \$932 million and \$227 million (25 per cent) more than the \$903 million generated in 2012. The 2013 net income included private fundraising (\$437 million), sales of UNICEF cards and products (\$16 million), and fundraising for other resources (\$677 million).

### *Audits*

In an annual report [E/ICEF/2014/AB/L.2] to the Executive Board, the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations (OIAI) provided information on its internal audit activities in 2013. OIAI issued 55 internal audit and advisory engagement reports in 2013, consisting of 39 new audits and advisory engagement reports and finalization of 15 audits and 1 advisory engagement that were ongoing at the end of 2012. The 51 audits completed in 2013 included 42 country-office audits, 1 regional audit, 6 headquarters audits and 2 inter-agency audits. The 51 OIAI internal audit reports contained a total of 517 recommendations, of which 129 were rated as high priority and 388 as medium priority. In 2013, issues related to the risk area of organizational strategy and neutrality were primarily addressed at the country level under the category of governance and accountability. At the end of 2013, there were five outstanding recommendations older than 18 months, one related to country offices and four to headquarters, regional offices and thematic areas. OIAI also managed 148 investigations in 2013, including 21 cases carried over from 2012 and 128 allegations received in 2013. The overall caseload intake more than doubled from 62 cases in 2012 to 127 cases in 2013.

In June, the Executive Board had before it the UNICEF management response to the annual report of OIAI for 2013 [E/ICEF/2014/AB/L.3], which contained management actions and plans to address overall findings; recommendations of country-office audits; recommendations regarding headquarters, regional offices, joint audits, and advisory services; findings from investigations; and concluding observations in the 1023 annual report of the UNICEF Audit Advisory Committee.

Taking note of the reports of the Board of Auditors [A/68/5/Add.2]; the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ASABQ)

[A/68/381]; and the report of the Secretary-General [A/68/350], the Executive Board, on 6 February [E/ICEF/2014/16 (dec. 2014/3)], requested UNICEF to continue strengthening its core business practices and internal controls, as well as monitoring and oversight of implementing partners; encouraged UNICEF to continue strengthening the monitoring and oversight of the implementation of its cooperation agreements with National Committees for UNICEF; and also encouraged UNICEF to prioritize the finalization of the revised framework for the harmonized approach to cash transfers, in coordination with other members of the UN Development Group, and to ensure improved oversight when the revised framework was implemented.

On the same day, the Board took note of the annual report of OIAI for 2013 [dec. 2014/11] [E/ICEF/2014/AB/L.2] and the UNICEF management response to that annual report [E/ICEF/2014/AB.L.3]; expressed its continued support for the strengthening and resourcing of UNICEF internal audit and investigations function, and welcomed continued UNICEF commitment to greater accountability and implementation of recommendations arising from its internal audits.

### *Financial report and audited financial statements*

In a report to the General Assembly [A/69/5/Add.3] on UNICEF financial statements for 2013, the UN Board of Auditors reported that, during that period, UNICEF continued to improve its governance, risk management and programme and operations management at its headquarters and field offices. There was, however, room for improvement in the areas of cash transfers to implementing partners, cost management and programme management. Of the 26 recommendations made for 2012, 19 (73 per cent) had been fully implemented and 7 were under implementation. Total revenue in 2013 amounted to \$4.85 billion, an increase of \$908 million compared with 2012. The main sources of revenue continued to be voluntary contributions from Governments, private organizations and individuals (97 per cent); the remaining revenue (3 per cent) was generated from the sale of greetings cards and products (\$70 million), interest (\$29 million), procurement services for partners (\$46 million) and miscellaneous services (\$13 million). Total expenses increased by \$467 million, from \$3.62 billion in 2012 to \$4.08 billion in 2013. Approximately 33 per cent of expenses in 2013 (\$1.33 billion) were in the form of cash assistance to implementing partners. At the end of 2013, UNICEF total assets amounted to \$7.76 billion, \$4.04 billion (52 per cent) of which comprised cash and term deposits as well as investments. The total budget utilized in 2013 was \$4.23 billion.