

## Item 8. Evaluation of UNICEF work for children in urban settings, and management response (E/ICEF/2021/3, E/ICEF/2021/4)

### Statement

I have the pleasure to deliver this joint statement on behalf of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, UK, USA and my own country, Norway. Let me start by thanking UNICEF's independent evaluation office for a comprehensive evaluation identifying important issues and providing fruitful recommendations. An additional thank you for the positive and ambitious management response.

In supplement to the ambitions outlined in the management plan, we would like UNICEF to pay attention to eight additional issues:

Firstly, we would like to request UNICEF to place a **particular focus on marginalized and vulnerable children**, including refugees, displaced children, children with disabilities, children without birth registration, orphaned children and pregnant and parenting adolescents in the assessments of needs and the provision of quality education and health, healthy and sustainable food and nutrition, water, sanitation, hygiene and social protection services in urban settings.

Secondly, we would like to request that **multisectoral, human rights-based and gender-transformative approaches** are made systematic use of, in order to ensure that no child is left behind. In this regard, we also have a brief question: How will UNICEF ensure a gender equality and human rights lens as it addresses inclusive urban development?

Thirdly, we would encourage UNICEF to closely engage with other UN entities and maintain partnerships with other actors such as **civil society organisations, the private sector, national committees and all tiers of government** to identify suitable strategies and approaches at country level to deliver results for children in urban settings.

Fourthly, we encourage UNICEF to clearly differentiate between what UNICEF does within urban programming **relative to UN Habitat and other relevant UN agencies**. By the same token, we would like to ask if UNICEF has established – or is planning to establish – clear parameters for working together, in order to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication?

Fifthly, we would like to point to the finding of the evaluation stating that, except for WASH and immunization, **sectoral strategies for urban contexts** are lacking. UNICEF should base its programming in urban settings on a strong conceptual foundation. Strategies should also pay particular attention to promoting multi-sectoral and integrated approaches, linking humanitarian and development programming and working together with other United Nations agencies.

Sixth, we would like to emphasize the necessity of **meaningful participation and inclusion of children and youth** in urban planning and decision-making processes, to achieve a child friendly environment and identify and address barriers for inclusion. The focus should go beyond promoting child participation to ensure the integration of contributions from children and youth in the design and implementation of activities.

Seventh, different strategic actions are proposed in the management response. We encourage UNICEF to aim for an **integrated and well-coordinated approach** to strategy development for urban settings, focusing on UNICEF's comparative advantages and promoting a systems-strengthening approach.

Last, but not least, we appreciate that UNICEF will consider urban contexts in relevant results areas and targets more strongly in its **Strategic Plan 2022-2025** and we appreciate that UNICEF strives to strengthen its organisational capacities on this topic. We believe that it is crucial to provide sufficient **financial and personal resources** to programming in urban contexts, given the fact that the number of marginalized and vulnerable children living in urban areas are expected to grow significantly over the coming years and decades.

We would like to suggest that a **report on the follow-up** of the evaluation is presented to the Executive Board in 2023.

Thank you.

## Decision

*Takes note* of the evaluation of UNICEF work for children in urban settings, its summary (E/ICEF/2021/3) and [Germany/Norway: and welcomes] its management response (E/ICEF/2021/4) and of the evaluation of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, its summary (E/ICEF/2021/5) and its management response (E/ICEF/2021/6);

2. [Germany/Norway: *Requests* UNICEF to place a particular focus on marginalized and vulnerable children in the assessments of needs and in the provision of quality education and health; healthy and sustainable food and nutrition; and water, sanitation and hygiene and social protection services;

3. [Germany/Norway: *Also requests* the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in urban settings, by enhancing and accelerating gender mainstreaming through the full implementation of the System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, to ensure that no child is left behind;]

4. [Germany/Norway: *Further requests* UNICEF to adequately reflect UNICEF work for children in urban settings in results areas, targets and indicators of the new Strategic Plan, 2022–2025; and to strengthen sector-specific approaches in urban contexts, and incorporate therein a special emphasis on multisectoral, human rights-based and integrated approaches, linking humanitarian and development programming and working together with other United Nations agencies to overcome silos; in line with the QCPR.]

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