

**African Group Statement on Item 4: UNICEF Strategic Plan,
2022–2025, draft for review**

June 4, 2021

Thank you, Mr. President,

I'm delivering this statement on behalf of the African Group of the Executive board.

Mr. President,

As we enter the decade of action of the SDG, the group welcomes the focus of the Strategic Plan on addressing the underlying causes of children's vulnerability, leveraging financing for children; access to essential supplies and services; brokering global partnerships for children; and supporting families and parenting. Mobilizing resources to meet children's needs and working with their families are to remain at the core of UNICEF actions to assist program countries protect children in a way that builds foundations for a lasting development.

These aspects are present in the current draft of the Strategic plan and need to be further reinforced.

The group also welcomes that through the Strategic Plan UNICEF will strengthen the programs and systems related to the survival, health and well-being of children, including immunization, nutrition and early childhood development. The Covid-19 pandemic highlights the importance of ICTs to provide every child with the education and skills they need and to increase work on social policy and social protection to ensure that children live free of poverty, for governments to prioritize children in their budget allocation schemes and support families in new and innovative ways as they cope with the ongoing economic fallout of the pandemic. We support UNICEF's leadership role in mitigating the impact of Covid-19 in all sectors that affects children's lives.

Mr. President,

Currently the executive board members of the African group are all program countries. The Strategic plan will govern all UNICEF programs, projects and activities including the UNSDF and the

CPD'S in each of our countries. Our needs, priorities and national contexts should therefore be taken into consideration in the Strategic Plan.

Social and economic development is utmost priority for our countries to ensure the wellbeing of the child. UNICEF, as a development agency dedicated to children has a comparative advantage in dealing with socio-economic dimension of children's development. In this regard we take note with appreciation that the five thematic goal areas of the next strategic plan cover those issues.

We are confident that with guiding principles such as anti-racism and non-discrimination, access and equity, the draft of the strategic plan goes in the right direction for changes at the country level by 2025. The compliance with its mandate on children and in areas where UNICEF has a comparative advantage especially when it comes to cross-cutting issues, as well as with UN agreed terminology throughout the draft Strategic Plan would further improve the draft under consideration.

Finally, the African group would like to hear from UNICEF how the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action embedded in the strategic plan will be implemented in non-humanitarian settings. We would also appreciate details on the medium-term changes that the Strategic plan will bring at the country level in 2025.

To conclude, **Mr. President**, allow me to thank UNICEF for the draft of the Strategic Plan 2022-2025 and to commend the consultative process undertaken for its development.

I thank you Mr. President.