

**Annual Session of the UNICEF Executive Board  
1 - 4 June 2021**

*Check against delivery*

**Intervention by the Chair of the Standing Group of National Committees to  
Item 4: UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022- 2025, Draft for Review**

Mr President, ED Fore, distinguished delegates, National Committee colleagues,

It is with great excitement and a profound sense of duty that National Committees have provided inputs to the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025. We agree this is a pivotal time to brainstorm and refocus our efforts towards achieving our common goals for every child.

Today I would like to focus on two key points described in the draft.

The first one is how National Committees, individually and as a group, have already started championing and investing in several key change strategies as proposed in the Plan mainly: Digital transformation; Public and Private Partnerships; and evidence-based advocacy.

The way we have approached these important transformational changes is to take stock of existing excellence in National Committees and foster Communities of Practice engaging not only our own organizations, but also headquarters colleagues and Private Sector Country Offices. This way, we hope to be able to scale and multiply existing investment and resources, avoid duplication of efforts and distribute knowledge, freely, to key staff all over the world. Our vision is to enable our vibrant and generous community to grow and evolve, learning from each other and helping each other become stronger and better. Together, we will be unbeatable against any challenges that may come our way and will be able to accelerate results for children even further.

This leads me to my second point.

The Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025 proposes a tectonic shift in the way UNICEF works!

Paragraph 4 in the supporting document informs how “*UNICEF is shifting its focus beyond what the organization can do alone, towards using its mandate to mobilize other actors to maximize the collective impact.*” National Committees are one of these other actors not only in terms of resource mobilization, but also in advocacy and programming.

Paragraph 91 then proposes a “*decentralized and empowered governance and decision-making*”, “*streamlined for greater efficiency and effectiveness.*” It goes further by affirming that “*Oversight and decision-making will follow the principle of subsidiarity (that is, making decisions closest to where they need to be made).*” What a bold and necessary move.

National Committees applaud UNICEF’s intention to decentralize and empower its local presence. Many decisions should indeed be made locally, namely in National Committees and Country Offices, because that is where UNICEF’s mandate is accomplished.

National Committees recognize this principle of decentralization and empowered governance as one of the key pillars of the new Strategic Plan. In our interactions with ED Fore and many UNICEF colleagues, we have witnessed how this vision is confirmed and has gained momentum inside the organization. It is a crucial element in many key joint projects such as the European Strategy for enhanced collaboration and also Programming in High-Income Countries, to be discussed by the Executive Board in September.

Our joint success, to a great extent, depends on how we are able to fulfil this promise. Seeing it in the new Strategic Plan brings it one step closer to becoming mainstream, globally. That is why this pillar should, from now on, inform and shape every initiative we jointly develop and take. It will enable us to play to our strengths and will invite our supporters to co-own and fully partake in the revolution we are trying to lead for every child.

Thank you,

Suzanne Laszlo

Chair of the Standing Group of National Committees