

**United States Remarks for the
UNICEF Executive Board Annual Session
June 1-4, 2021**

Item 6: Annual report on implementation of the Gender Action Plan 2018-2021

The United States is a lead supporter of UNICEF's work because we endorse its mission, approach, and accomplishments on improving the situation of girls and boys and advancing gender equality worldwide.

We support UNICEF's focus on nutrition, water, sanitation, and hygiene; gender-based violence; and girls' health, education, and empowerment.

We support an approach that centers on gender equality and the empowerment of girls in UNICEF's work, while advancing UNICEF's important global role in building a more equitable world for all people.

We encourage UNICEF to take into account the disproportionate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on women and children, including on caregivers and frontline workers in the formal and informal health sector. We recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic has increased vulnerability to and risk to gender-based violence, and negative coping mechanisms such as child, early, and forced marriage, which adversely affects girls.

The United States commends UNICEF for its investments in measuring the results of its gender transformative policies. We note with satisfaction the increase in these areas from 2019 to 2020 from 14 to 20 percent.

We agree that the organization should collect and analyze data, including sex- and age-disaggregated data, in development and humanitarian contexts to strengthen evidence-based programs and responses.

We welcome UNICEF's collaborative approach in working with other UN agencies and processes, including UN Women and the Generation Equality Forum. This helps leverage scarce resources and mobilize the full support of the UN system to address challenges facing girls, particularly during the current pandemic.

We congratulate UNICEF for either meeting or exceeding 88 percent of its benchmarks in 2020. This represents a steady increase from the 2019 and 2018 reporting.

- What are UNICEF's specific plans to increase gender staffing and program integration benchmarks?

For all these reasons, we encourage the Board members to voice support for UNICEF's implementation of its three-year Gender Action Plan and look forward to further progress under the new Gender Policy and Gender Action Plan.