INPUT FOR THE UNICEF EXECUTIVE BOARD PRESIDENT - ECOSOC

Improving Executive Boards

- UNICEF Executive Board is an important forum for oversight by member states,
- The focus of governance in our boards must be strategic performance, management by results, program outcome and country/states response.

- The board's role in governance is particularly important over the four year Strategic Plan, integrated budget and country programmes.
- The Executive Boards should maintain a bottom-up approach to governance, focused on country-level results.
- Seek outcome level results to the strategic plan; to be sure that operation and practice achieve the mission focus of "children" wherever they live.
- The current Board works well, and should be complemented by sound system-wide structures, not replaced.

- Board effectiveness is demonstrated by being invested in the work of the agency, not just financially, but equally emotionally; yet however, this effectiveness must not be to the extent of being so close to be medalling with operation.

- So for the boards to be effective, we have to find the balance within our type of operation to foster state's meaningful participation

- We must get that balance moving from the extremes of being overly attached to the opposite end of the scale of overly dis attached. We cannot just display a donor financial interest, the mission and the practice must be central to our decision of support.

- So what are we? Counsellors to the chief exec and his team, defenders of the donor interests, representatives of the member states and countries and peoples at the grassroot levels.

- Of course, governance is based on clearly articulated policies. So a brief of those policies are useful for all incoming boards.

- There are some good examples of the UNICEF Board engaging in some more detailed strategic discussions around areas of relevance and focus for UNICEF, including Strengthening Humanitarian Action, and evaluations of key programmes.

- **The field visits, are of great important to the board as it allows for sharing information and ideas between staff and board, and for board to see first-hand project and the work of the agency on the ground.**
- **An additional** option would be to review the use of informal board meetings to engage a broader constituency, including programme countries, private sector, civil society and National Committees.
- As it currently stands, the Joint Meeting of the Executive Boards largely mirrors discussions in ECOSOC, but with a more limited sub-set of entities. It's often remarked that this is not very useful.

   We note that UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Executive Board has a joint segment to discuss issues like internal audit and investigations, ethics, and the joint field visit, one possibility as we move to a more corporative working relationship between the agencies, would be to explore whether it was possible to broaden this joint segment to include UNICEF and UN Women's Boards.

   o This could replace the Joint Meeting of the Boards – with system wide issues continuing to be considered as part of ECOSOC's agenda.

Let me turn my attention briefly to ECOSOC

- 2017 presents a perfect opportunity to re-examine the unique and specific role played by ECOSOC in relation to sustainable development and the UN system's role in supporting SDG implementation.
- ECOSOC's key role is in accountability – reviewing implementation of key General Assembly decisions like the QCPR and making recommendations for adjustments or further action.
- It will be important to consider how to make ECOSOC's Operational Activities segment as focused and useful as possible. Options could include:
   o Moving the Operational Activities Segment to the middle of the year – both to allow annual reporting and data from the previous year to be ready and feed into the segment; and to increase alignment with the ECOSOC humanitarian segment.

   Another might be to change the format of discussions, including inviting more country-level UN staff from across funds, programmes and specialized agencies to participate in these meetings.