



# Economic and Social Council

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**For decision**

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## United Nations Children's Fund

Executive Board

**Annual session 2024**

11–14 June 2024

Agenda item 13

### **Draft decision submitted to the Executive Board**

### **Assessment of how the Executive Board executes its governance and oversight functions**

#### *The Executive Board*

1. *Recalls* its decision 2022/21, which requested the Bureau of UNICEF, in consultation with the relevant Bureaux of United Nations development system entities, to provide options and cost estimates for an assessment, including the feasibility of a third-party assessment by an entity external to the United Nations system with independent expertise on governance and oversight, of how the Executive Board, in collaboration with UNICEF, as well as the United Nations system, executes its governance and oversight functions, with a view to ensuring that these functions are aligned with the highest international standards and best practices;

2. *Welcomes* the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) titled Review of the governance and oversight of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women ([JIU/REP/2023/7](#)) and takes note of its recommendations;

3. *Recalls* its decisions 2022/21, paragraph 10, and 2023/13, paragraph 11, in which the Executive Board expressed the need to further consider relevant recommendations made on governance and oversight, addressed to the Executive Board;

4. *Stresses* the importance of inclusive and meaningful participation and consultation of Board members and observers, in particular of programme countries, including through cross-Board and cross-regional consultations, and stresses the need for phased, inclusive, transparent and balanced processes when proposing action on the JIU report;

5. *Also stresses* that improvements to the way the Executive Board executes its governance and oversight functions should contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals by enabling UNICEF to deliver



effectively and efficiently on its mandate and by ensuring that it is responsive to the needs and priorities of programme countries;

6. *Commits*, therefore, to a two-track process that constitutes (a) an information-gathering exercise and (b) the establishment of a working group;

7. *Confirms* that consultations and information notes on the JIU report do not prejudice any decision of the Executive Board on how to address the report and its recommendations;

8. *Decides* to include an item for decision on the progress of the consideration of the JIU report on the agenda of every formal session, until decided otherwise;

9. *Requests* the Bureau to provide, in consultation with the Bureaux of the participating Boards, an update on the implementation of this decision at the second regular session of 2024;

*With regard to additional information required:*

10. *Requests* the management of UNICEF to provide, in an information note, its initial views on the JIU report;

11. *Also requests* the Directors of the independent offices of UNICEF to provide, in an information note, their initial views on the JIU report;

12. *Further requests* the Bureau to organize, in coordination with the Bureaux of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), a joint informal consultation of the Executive Board with the JIU on the review by the first regular session of 2025, while taking into consideration other United Nations processes, to ensure inclusive and meaningful participation, particularly of programme countries;

13. *Requests* the Bureau to undertake an open and inclusive consultation with Executive Board members and observers on information and analysis needs relating to the JIU report and its recommendations, to support the JIU working group;

*With regard to the working group:*

14. *Decides* to participate in the joint working group to study and report on the JIU report, as established by decision 2024/12 of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS;

15. *Requests* the Bureau of UNICEF, in collaboration with the Bureaux of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS and potentially UN-Women, to develop, through a cross-Board and cross-regional consultative process, a terms of reference that enables the operationalization of the working group, and to present it to the Executive Board, for adoption at the first regular session of 2025;

16. *Decides* that the Bureau, in consultation with the regional groups and in collaboration with the Bureaux of the participating Boards, will facilitate the nomination of Executive Boards' members or observers to participate in the working group, up to an aggregate total of 15, with equal representation from the five regional groups, to be confirmed by the participating Boards through a silence procedure, ahead of the first regular session of 2025;

17. *Requests* that the secretariat provide information and support services, when and as requested by the JIU working group, to further its work;

18. *Also requests* the working group to provide regular updates to the participating Boards, as necessary, starting after the first regular session of 2025.

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