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UNICEF report on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit

Summary

In accordance with Executive Board decision 2001/4, the present report summarizes the response of UNICEF to the recommendations contained in the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit issued from 1 January through 31 December 2019. Of the nine reports publicly issued during the period, seven contained recommendations directly relevant to UNICEF. The organization greatly appreciates the insight of the Joint Inspection Unit and the observations and recommendations included in the reports.

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[*] E/ICEF/2020/6.

Note: The present document was processed in its entirety by UNICEF.

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I. Overview

1.   The Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) annually issues reports and notes addressed to the executive heads of United Nations organizations that have accepted its statute. Each report or note contains a series of recommendations for consideration by either the executive heads or the legislative/governing bodies of the organizations. This UNICEF report to its Executive Board provides, inter alia, a brief overview of the organization's response to relevant reports publicly issued by the JIU from 1 January through 31 December 2019 and comments on JIU recommendations that have been directed to UNICEF (see annex I). The complete reports and notes of the JIU and any additional annexes and comments – for example, those by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) – can be obtained through the JIU website (www.unjiu.org) or through the hyperlinked titles of each report in section II.

2.   UNICEF has continued to work with the JIU on various reviews. UNICEF follows up on the recommendations contained in the reports and provides updates to the JIU on their implementation. Furthermore, as a member organization of the CEB, UNICEF contributes to the drafting of consolidated responses to various JIU reports.

3.   In 2019, the JIU issued nine reports,[1] of which two were single-organization reports and seven were system-wide reviews. The seven system-wide reports contained 48 recommendations, of which 41 (85 per cent) were relevant to UNICEF. These included 13 addressed to the UNICEF Executive Board and 28 addressed to the executive head of UNICEF. The acceptance and implementation status of the 41 recommendations is presented in annex I, and can be summarized as follows, as of February 2020:

(a)   UNICEF accepted 34 recommendations, of which 17 have been implemented, and 17 are in progress;

(b)   Two recommendations are still under consideration for acceptance;

(c)   Four recommendations were not accepted;

(d)   One recommendation was relevant to UNICEF but outside its sole remit for implementation.

4.   Annex II details the status of implementation of recommendations made by the JIU prior to 2019 and the status as of February 2020. In summary:

(a)   The total number of these recommendations was 56, of which 30 were accepted and are in progress, 24 were implemented, 1 was outside the sole remit of UNICEF, and 1 was not accepted.

(b)   Of the 30 recommendations accepted and in progress, 9 were issued in 2014–2016, and 21 were issued in 2017–2018.

II.   Highlights of Joint Inspection Unit reports issued in 2019

5.   The seven reports with recommendations relevant to UNICEF are summarized below. The two reports with symbols indicating the year 2018 were issued in 2019. For additional comments on the relevant recommendations, see annex I.

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[1] The JIU issued nine reports during this period, of which seven were relevant to UNICEF. At the 2020 annual session of the Executive Board, UNICEF will comment on reports that were part of the JIU 2018 and roll-over 2019 programme of work issued after 31 December 2018.

A. Enhancing accessibility for persons with disabilities to conferences and meetings of the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2018/6)

6.   UNICEF welcomes the report, which provides an overview of accessibility and shares steps to address the gaps. The report highlights the fact that UNICEF is one of two United Nations organizations that has a policy on accessibility. The report also highlights as a best practice the three levels of accessibility standards that UNICEF has made applicable to all its offices globally. The report singles out the Greening and Accessibility Fund initiative as an example of good practice. UNICEF will collaborate with other United Nations agencies to exchange knowledge and jointly develop mandatory training, as recommended. UNICEF is committed to using the findings and recommendations of this report to further improve and institutionalize accessibility. (CEB comments available in A/74/217/Add.1.)

B. Strengthening policy research uptake in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (JIU/REP/2018/7)

7.   The report aims to raise awareness of the importance of the policy research function in supporting a transformative agenda for sustainable development. It acknowledges the role of policy research as a unique asset of the United Nations system and aims to elevate its visibility and find ways to make its production and uptake more efficient and transparent. The report highlights the need to strengthen the role of the United Nations system as a creator, catalyst and distributor of trusted, objective and reliable research. In identifying ways UNICEF is ahead of other United Nations entities in this area, the report reflects the strong institutional investment of UNICEF in its research function. UNICEF welcomes the report and will use the findings and 12 recommendations to further strengthen its research function to enhance evidence-informed policy, advocacy and programming investments. (CEB comments available in A/74/216/Add.1.)

C. Review of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (JIU/REP/2019/2)

8.   The report reviews the effectiveness, value added and impact of the System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP) during its first implementation phase, from 2012 to 2017. It aims to provide an assessment of the Action Plan as a system-wide performance monitoring and accountability framework to the United Nations General Assembly, which is invited to endorse the report's recommendations. The JIU inspectors concluded that the UN-SWAP is a useful framework and credible benchmark towards gender mainstreaming. There was near consensus among United Nations entities that UN-SWAP has been a catalyst for progress towards gender mainstreaming. UNICEF acknowledges that the UN-SWAP has complemented existing initiatives and has contributed to further institutionalization of gender equality and the empowerment of women. UNICEF notes that the report helps to identify remaining areas for improvement and that the organization has created additional internal support to address them. The report commended UNICEF for its efforts to meet the benchmarks of the UN-SWAP accountability framework.

9.   UNICEF welcomes the report, especially recommendation 1, which aims to ensure that agencies have the mechanisms in place to vet the quality of reporting against the UN-SWAP criteria. However, UNICEF does not accept recommendations 4 and 5, and cautions against making the UN-SWAP process so heavy that it would add to the burden of reporting. While it does not accept recommendation 5, UNICEF notes that it commissioned an independent evaluation of its Gender Action Plan in

2019, including the two successive Gender Action Plans covering the period 2014–2019. A management response to the independent evaluation will be presented to the UNICEF Executive Board at its annual session of 2020. (CEB comments available in A/74/306/Add.1.)

D. Review of the integration of disaster risk reduction in the work of the United Nations system in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (JIU/REP/2019/3)

10. Reviewing data for the period 2012–2017, the report shows that, overall, the United Nations system has integrated disaster risk reduction (DRR) action into its corporate priorities and plans and has adopted risk-informed sector programming strategies. Nevertheless, much more needs to be done at the country level. UNICEF deems the report urgent because the integration and scaling up of DRR and climate change adaptation/mitigation is a prerequisite to achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda. DRR is a pillar of UNICEF efforts to reduce the humanitarian consequences of climate change, and UNICEF and its partners need to actively increase investment in DRR to ensure effective programming. The report also notes that 'leaving no one behind' and taking an inclusive approach are necessary for the success of the United Nations system's DRR integration and for UNICEF to fulfil its core mandate of serving children. UNICEF accepts two of the report's three recommendations. (CEB comments not yet available).

E. Review of change management in United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2019/4)

11. The report focuses on the role and practice of change management in organizational reforms, including culture-focused reforms, across the United Nations system from 2010 to 2018. A total of 47 reform initiatives across 26 organizations were reviewed, including four reform initiatives of UNICEF (related to human resources, strategic repositioning and realignment exercise, office management plans, and the performance management system).

12. The report highlights the criticality of integrating change management approaches and methods into organizational reforms, while noting that the effectiveness of change efforts has been uneven across the United Nations system organizations, which understand and apply change management in different ways. The report highlights several critical factors for success in change management and emphasizes the importance of leading the process from the top, with support from a transformative human resources function.

13. UNICEF welcomes the report and has already implemented, or is in the process of implementing, its relevant recommendations. To this end, UNICEF established a Change Management Core Group to oversee and guide change efforts. (CEB comments available in A/74/669/Add.1.)

F. Managing cloud computing services in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2019/5)

14. The report covers wider aspects of cloud services and highlights critical matters to consider in cloud services management in the United Nations system. UNICEF actively contributed to preparation of the JIU report and agrees with its findings and recommendations. To continue to ensure efficient and effective delivery of its programmes, UNICEF may consider using cloud computing services hosted or leveraged on existing information and communication technology contracts with

other United Nations system organizations. (CEB comments available in A/74/691/Add.1.)

G. Review of audit and oversight committees in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2019/6)

15. UNICEF welcomes the report, which focuses on (a) determining whether existing audit and oversight committees were adequately established and serving their purpose as originally envisaged in their terms of reference or charters; (b) assessing the degree to which such committees currently deviated from generally accepted standards and principles; and (c) identifying good practices and lessons learned and recommending their selective adoption by audit and oversight committees across the United Nations system organizations. This would need to be in accordance with the specific needs and characteristics of the entities that those committees serve. UNICEF agrees with the authors of the report that there is no "one size fits all" model. UNICEF remains committed to having an effective Audit Advisory Committee and found the review particularly useful as the organization reviewed, revised and updated the Charter of the UNICEF Audit Advisory Committee for issue in 2020. (CEB comments available in A/74/670/Add.1.)

Annex I

Summary of the status of Joint Inspection Unit recommendations addressed to UNICEF, January–December 2019

Relevant recommendations	*Remarks*

Enhancing accessibility for persons with disabilities to conferences and meetings of the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2018/6)

1. Recommendations addressed to the legislative body/Executive Board

Recommendation 10

The legislative bodies of United Nations system organizations should include in their agendas the review of periodic reports submitted to them on the state of accessibility of conference and meeting facilities and services for persons with disabilities, including the state of progress of actions to address accessibility deficits.

Accepted and in progress

UNICEF is systematically receiving reporting on improvement of the accessibility of UNICEF premises through the Environmental Footprint and Accessibility Assessment software (EFAAT) that the organization procured, as well as through regular exchange with regional and country offices. The reporting is made available for senior management during midterm reviews, annual reporting and other processes.

2. Recommendations addressed to the executive head

Recommendation 1

The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should task the relevant offices with developing, by the end of 2020, a draft policy on the accessibility of conferences and meetings for persons with disabilities, as well as guidelines for policy implementation, and present them to their respective legislative bodies, should the endorsement of those bodies be required for the policy to take effect.

Accepted and in progress

The work of UNICEF to improve the accessibility of conferences and meetings for persons with disabilities includes several policies that are currently being developed or updated. UNICEF is developing an overarching policy on the implementation of the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS). Regarding accessible infrastructure, UNICEF is updating its procedure on "Eco-efficiency and inclusive access in UNICEF premises and operations" (DFAM/PROCEDURE/2018/001). UNICEF also launched the LinkUp Virtual Conferencing Project to ensure that information and communications technology equipment in conference rooms is to the highest technical standard and considers accessibility, among other criteria. The platform is meant to encourage country and regional offices to use equipment that is more accessible for all.

Recommendation 2

For all major conferences that are hosted off the premises of United Nations system organizations, the executive heads of these organizations should ensure that accessibility requirements are clearly

Accepted and in progress

UNICEF is currently developing the UNICEF Procedure on Disability-Inclusive Communications. The procedure, which will be aligned with indicator 15 of UNDIS, highlights the need to host all major

Relevant recommendations	Remarks

stipulated in individual agreements concluded with the hosting entity for specific conferences and meetings.

conferences and high-level events in accessible venues using inclusive approaches.

Recommendation 3

The executive heads of United Nations system organizations that have not yet done so should appoint, by December 2021, a focal point on accessibility within their organization under terms of reference that clearly define the focal point's role and responsibilities as regards enhancing the accessibility of conferences and meetings for persons with disabilities.

Accepted and implemented

UNICEF has a focal point in the accessibility unit under the Division of Financial and Administrative Management with clear terms of reference on roles and responsibilities related to enhancing the accessibility of conferences and meetings for persons with disabilities.

Recommendation 4

The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should instruct relevant offices that address accessibility-related matters to develop, by December 2021, standard operating procedures with regard to their operational responsibilities to improve the accessibility of conferences and meetings for persons with disabilities.

Accepted and in progress

UNICEF is developing an organization-wide policy on accessibility and inclusion. The current standard operating procedure "Eco-efficiency and inclusive access in UNICEF premises and operations" (DFAM/PROCEDURE/2018/001) is being updated. It will outline the existing standards on accessibility and operational and financial mechanisms to make premises more accessible.

Recommendation 5

The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should make it mandatory for organizers of meetings and conferences to ensure, by December 2021, that: (a) The participation of persons with disabilities is fully supported by registration processes that are accessible for persons with diverse disabilities; (b) Clauses are included in accessible registration forms to ask specifically about accessibility requirements; (c) Information on accessible facilities and services is disseminated to all potential participants through accessible websites and information notes; (d) Accessible post-conference and post-meeting satisfaction surveys consistently include questions to assess satisfaction with the accessibility of facilities and services.

Accepted and in progress

Based on best practices, UNICEF developed accessibility guidance for events and related documents and information. These materials are now incorporated into a new knowledge management tool on accessibility and inclusion. UNICEF has also completed an accessibility audit of seven platforms (Agora, Vision, SharePoint, e-Recruitment, unicef.org, service gateway, and Achieve) The next step is remediation. At the end of this process, UNICEF will have more accessible web platforms that will help to make user interfaces accessible and will provide a way to receive feedback from users on a number of accessibility-related topics, such as user-satisfaction surveys. UNICEF is working to build staff capacity on universal design and web accessibility.

Recommendation 6

The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should, by December 2021, provide the option for remote participation in all meetings and conferences that they organize, with no prejudice to the efforts to make attendance at meetings and conferences accessible to persons with disabilities.

Accepted and implemented

The Information and Communication Technology Division (ICTD) of UNICEF has implemented use of the cloud-based service Zoom, which can be utilized to conduct virtual meetings and conferences. Zoom integrates with third-party captioning services, enables automated transcripts, and is reader-accessible for keyboard and screen.

Recommendation 7

Accepted and implemented

Relevant recommendations	*Remarks*

The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should issue instructions to information and communications technology and facilities management offices to undertake periodic accessibility assessments of organizational facilities and services for conferences and meetings, and to ensure that organizations of persons with disabilities are adequately consulted at all stages of the process

UNICEF will continue to implement accessibility assessments of facilities and premises, both existing and new. To improve information and communications technology, in June 2019 the UNICEF ICTD updated the communication platform that provides new and improved virtual conferencing tools to help staff more easily communicate, share information and collaborate.

Recommendation 8

Accepted and in progress

The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should task procurement offices with drafting, by December 2021, provisions for incorporating accessibility checks and/or requirements into procurement policies and guidelines for consideration and adoption by the relevant decision-making authority.

UNICEF is currently redrafting its regulatory framework for the supply function to ensure that the new procedures address accessibility in the procurement process of relevant product/service categories. UNICEF continues to discuss disability issues and procurement as part of its joint work with other United Nations organizations linked to its membership in the Procurement Network of the High-Level Committee on Management.

Recommendation 9

Accepted and in progress

The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should develop and implement through relevant inter-agency mechanisms, by December 2021, a common system-wide mandatory specialized training module on disability inclusion and accessibility for personnel involved directly or indirectly in the servicing of conferences and meetings, including, but not limited to, staff in conference management, facilities and services management, human resources management, and procurement, legal, ICT, medical, public information and safety and security services.

UNICEF believes that a common system-wide training should be led and implemented by the United Nations Secretariat through UNDIS, of which UNICEF is a member. UNICEF can provide technical support on the development of such training, which needs to be targeted and customized to each division to achieve the expected results on disability inclusion.

Internally, UNICEF has focused its efforts on conducting regular, customized, short and interactive webinars, which aims to better engage staff and promote behaviour change to improve disability inclusion and accessibility. For IT staff, web accessibility courses are available in Agora. To support physical accessibility, UNICEF is promoting existing guidance and standards, including UNICEF Technical Cards on Accessibility of the Built Environment and EFAAT. UNICEF has also developed a new resource, the "UNICEF Accessibility Toolkit". Regarding awareness-raising on disability, UNICEF developed a Disability Orientation module in 2013, with whom UNICEF is co-developing a common United Nations position on safe returns and sustainable reintegration. In addition, outside of the formal working groups, a Rapid Evidence Assessment is being conducted in collaboration with the UNICEF Evaluation Office, IOM, UNHCR and the International Labour Organization to assess

Relevant recommendations	*Remarks*

evidence on effective strategies to promote family unity in the course of migration.

Strengthening policy research uptake in the context of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development (JIU/REP/2018/7)

Recommendation 12	**Accepted and in progress**
The Secretary-General of the United Nations, in consultation with all Executive Heads of the United Nations system organizations, should encourage long-term partnerships with academic communities at the global, regional and national levels, and establish basic guidelines for such partnerships.	As a next phase of the mapping of evidence entities (see recommendation 7), UNICEF is undertaking a social network analysis to identify existing or emerging centres of excellence in the area of evidence generation for child rights that are frequently cited by or connected to others. Once the analysis is completed, UNICEF will begin to explore establishment of long-term academic partnerships both for evidence generation and for potential national research capacity-building activities with selected regional entities. The Inter-Divisional Taskforce on Research will also explore the feasibility of developing basic guidelines for such partnerships.

Review of management and administration in the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) (JIU/REP/2019/1)

1.   No recommendations addressed to UNICEF.

Review of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (JIU/REP/2019/2)

1.   Recommendations addressed to the legislative body/Executive Board

Recommendation 4	**Not accepted**
The legislative and governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should review the UN-Women annual letter addressed to the executive management, accompanied by indications of strategies and measures envisioned by the executive heads to be undertaken to improve compliance with the indicators included in the System-wide Action Plan and their expected contribution to gender equality and the empowerment of women.	The United Nations System-wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) 2.0 includes a clear section on remedial plans. Additional strategies/indications would lead to duplication of the UN-SWAP reporting. UNICEF already submits to its Executive Board an annual report on the implementation of the UNICEF Gender Action Plan, 2018–2021. The additional requirement in recommendation 4 duplicate Gender Action Plan reporting.

Relevant recommendations	*Remarks*

2.	Recommendations addressed to the executive head

Recommendation 1

The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should critically assess on a regular basis the quality assurance mechanisms in place in their organization to ensure that ratings by indicator under the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women are accurate according to the technical notes issued by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and that such ratings are appropriately supported by evidence.

Accepted and implemented

UNICEF already has a systematic approach in place that fully satisfies the recommendation. It is a two-step process in which UNICEF organizational sections produce an evidence-based self-assessment on the UN-SWAP criteria concerning them. Subsequently, the Gender Section reviews and complements the response.

Recommendation 2

Before the end of 2020, the members of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination should coordinate within the Board's existing mechanisms to undertake a comprehensive review of the results achieved following the implementation of the first phase of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and provide a forum for endorsing the framework as revised in 2018.

Outside the sole remit of UNICEF

UNICEF understands that the review proposed in this recommendation will be undertaken as part of an inter-agency process group.

Recommendation 5

Before the completion of the System-wide Action Plan 2.0, the executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should ensure an independent assessment of effective progress towards gender mainstreaming to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women within their organization, using the Action Plan as a benchmark, as applicable.

Not accepted

In 2019, UNICEF commissioned an independent evaluation of its Gender Action Plan. The evaluation took place between February and October, gathering input from more than 32 countries. The team of consultants reviewed a full range of corporate processes and over 500 documents and conducted more than 360 interviews with staff at headquarters, regional office, and country office levels. The final evaluation report assesses the quality, implementation and results of the two successive Gender Action Plans during the period 2014–2019. UNICEF is currently drafting the management response. UNICEF believes that it is more cost-effective to rely on the assessment and recommendations of its recent evaluation than to undertake a separate independent assessment so shortly after this one is completed.

Review of the integration of disaster risk reduction in the work of the United Nations system in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (JIU/REP/2019/3)

1.   Recommendations addressed to the legislative body/Executive Board

Recommendation 1	**Accepted and in progress**
The governing bodies of the organizations of the United Nations system should request the secretariats of their organizations to present a map of interlinkages between the core mandate of their organizations and disaster risk reduction and report on the progress made on disaster risk reduction accordingly, using the specific guidance provided by the "Results Framework of the United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience – guidance for monitoring and reporting on the progress of the implementation of the United Nations Plan for Action on disaster risk reduction".	UNICEF refreshed its Programme Policy and Procedure Manual, updating both the content and structure (it is now web-based and designed to highlight the linkages between programming elements). The sections on disaster risk reduction (DRR) are interlinked with the core mandate and programme sectors of UNICEF. The content has been updated to draw explicit linkages between DRR and climate change. In 2019, the UNICEF procedure on linking humanitarian and development programming was adopted, with an explicit focus on making risk-informed programming mandatory. Activities in progress include deeper integration between DRR/risk-informed programming/climate change and programme delivery, particularly when it comes to linking humanitarian operations and development interventions. UNICEF also contributed to the first report on the United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience. Further, UNICEF has developed a system to track and monitor work on DRR, which includes annual reporting on the indicators of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, and to review and monitor new country programme documents and Programme Strategy Notes. UNICEF also developed minimum standards for inclusion in Situation Analyses used to report on the Strategic Plan and to contribute to the reporting on the United Nations plan of action on DRR.

2.   Recommendations addressed to the Executive head

Recommendation 2	**Not accepted**
The Secretary-General, in leading the reform of the United Nations development system, together with the executive heads of the organizations, should ensure that the new generation of United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks systematically include disaster risk reduction as part of the common strategic plans of the country teams, to enable risk-informed development and planning,	UNICEF does not accept this recommendation as it relates to 'detailed reporting on operational activities to governing bodies'. UNICEF reports on indicators associated with DRR and risk-informed programming as part of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021. UNICEF does not provide detailed reporting on operational activities to the Executive Board or any other programme, as this would be

Relevant recommendations	*Remarks*
with allocated resources for its implementation, and a common reporting system to measure progress against the priorities of the Sendai Framework and the United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience, with detailed reporting on operational activities to the governing bodies.	contrary to the Executive Board's requirements for results-level reporting. Preparation of detailed reporting on operations at the activity level, as required by the recommendation, would require that resources be diverted from programme implementation.

Recommendation 3

The executive heads of the organizations working in the field, in contributing to the ongoing reform of the reinvigorated resident coordinator system, should ensure that the United Nations country teams plan for dedicated capacity to implement risk informed development activities and that such activities in the field are reported to headquarters, including by monitoring their contribution to implementing the Sendai Framework, taking into account the reporting framework for Sustainable Development Goals.

Accepted and in progress

The Results Framework of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, (aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals) contains indicators that require country offices to report on inclusion of risk-informed programming. This is aggregated at regional and global levels and aligned with the Sendai Framework. Mandatory monitoring mechanisms at the country office level to track activities related to DRR and wider risk-informed programming include the following: annual reporting (Strategic Monitoring Questions) on the UNICEF Strategic Plan, indicators to review and monitor new country programme documents and Programme Strategy Notes, and minimum standards for inclusion in Situation Analyses. The processes are consultative with the United Nations country teams and are a key input into DRR activities at the national and subnational levels. Ongoing work includes the development of systemized collaboration with governmental climate change processes (such as National Adaptation Plan development) to drive greater coherence between the DRR and action agendas for climate change. UNICEF is working to establish more dedicated technical capabilities of staff at the country level. Organizational guidance on implementing risk-informed programming is in place, linked in content with climate change impacts, and a requirement of UNICEF procedure linking humanitarian and development programming. Support for implementation of risk-informed programming is provided both online and through trained personnel deployed to countries and humanitarian situations. Activities in progress include a greater inclusion of the results of risk-informed analysis in multisectoral Programme Strategy Notes and annual work plans as a standard process.

| *Relevant recommendations* | *Remarks* |

Review of change management in the United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2019/4)

1.   Recommendations addressed to the legislative body/Executive Board

Recommendation 1

Governing/legislative bodies are encouraged to ensure that executive heads embed change management approaches and methods in their organizational reforms and report on the results.

Accepted and in progress

A Change Management Core Group, chaired by the Deputy Executive Director for Management, has been established to oversee and guide change efforts in UNICEF. A Reference Group with field-based members has also been established as a sounding board and feedback mechanism on the implementation of change efforts at the field level and lessons that emerge. These are guided by newly established organization-wide principles and approaches for Change Management in UNICEF.

2.   Recommendations addressed to the executive head

Recommendation 2

Executive heads should embed structured and comprehensive change management approaches in their ongoing and future organizational reforms and report thereon to their governing/legislative bodies.

Accepted and in progress

See above response to recommendation 1.

Recommendation 3

Executive heads, through the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, should support the development and standardization of organizational staff surveys across the United Nations system.

Accepted and implemented

UNICEF implements a full Global Staff Survey every two years (and a Pulse Survey in the year when there is no global survey), the results of which are reported to the UNICEF Executive Board and shared with other entities. The Survey is administered by an external vendor. Survey questions, summary results, best practices and lessons learned from the experience of UNICEF in managing and implementing surveys are shared with other United Nations agencies upon request. UNICEF will continue to support common surveys implemented across various United Nations agencies, such as the "Safe Space: Survey on Sexual Harassment in our Workplace". The human resources network of the High-level Committee on Management (HLCM) is identifying common elements of staff surveys for comparison. As part of the HLCM efforts on the "Future of Work", the network is examining common ways to assess organizational culture and share best practice.

Relevant recommendations	*Remarks*
Recommendation 4 Executive heads should ensure that resources allocated to change management are clearly earmarked and the intended results are measured, tracked and evaluated.	**Accepted and in progress** UNICEF notes the importance of resourcing as a critical factor for the success of change management goals, and currently identifies resources for each change initiative (and phases within specific initiatives) before they are launched. UNICEF is establishing a Change Management monitoring framework as well as a system to track investments in change management. The framework will ensure that change initiatives are monitored throughout the various phases, that results are measured, tracked and evaluated, and that lessons learned are shared at the various stages.
Recommendation 5 Executive heads should give greater prominence to the role that their strategic human resources management functions play in organizational change management. This would include promoting changes in individual attitudes and behaviours, establishing mechanisms to reinforce these, and creating channels to communicate feedback across all personnel.	**Accepted and in progress** UNICEF is committed to culture change and has updated its staff competency framework with a renewed focus on establishing the behaviours expected of all staff members based on their roles and responsibilities. The framework will be integrated into key human resources processes such as job profiles, recruitment, performance management, recognition and reward, learning, and career and leadership development. This will ensure that mechanisms are in place to reinforce behaviour change, including 360-degree feedback tools and other assessment methods. UNICEF is also simultaneously developing and implementing its first-ever Global Internal Communication Strategy (GICS), to support organizational change and reform. A key element of GICS is to engage UNICEF personnel in shaping organizational change efforts. This includes interactive communication among UNICEF personnel across multiple organization-wide communication channels, including digital, interpersonal and environmental channels. GICS takes an evidence-based approach, assessing the impact of UNICEF internal communications on the knowledge, attitudes and behaviours/ practices of UNICEF staff.
Recommendation 6 Executive heads should include an item on the agenda of the next meeting of the High-level Committee on Management of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination to consider how to support the United Nations Laboratory for Organizational Change and	**Under consideration** UNICEF is working with other agencies to engage with the United Nations Laboratory for Organizational Change and Knowledge to strengthen its capabilities to support change. Further, UNICEF is aligned with the comments of the Secretary-General and the Chief Executives Board on this recommendation (A/74/669/Add1,

Relevant recommendations	*Remarks*
Knowledge to play a greater role in United Nations system reforms.	paragraph 21). While many United Nations entities face common challenges and would benefit from a common body of change management practice and expertise, a full cost-benefit analysis of this recommendation was not provided in the JIU review. Further experience and evidence of the impact of the United Nations Laboratory for Organizational Change and Knowledge model is needed prior to endorsing such a role.

Managing cloud computing services in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2019/5)

1.   Recommendations addressed to the legislative body/Executive Board

Recommendation 2	**Accepted and implemented**
The governing bodies of the United Nations organizations should request the heads of their respective organizations to include provisions in their financial strategies that facilitate the adaptation, responsiveness and efficient use of operational expenditures and capital investments related to new technologies.	UNICEF has included provisions in its financial strategies to facilitate the adaptation, responsiveness and efficient use of operational expenditures and capital investments related to new technologies.

2.   Recommendations addressed to the executive head

Recommendation 1	**Accepted and in progress**
The executive heads of the United Nations organizations should ensure that business continuity planning includes strategies and measures to mitigate the risk of failure by cloud service providers to deliver the contracted services.	UNICEF has completed an analysis of back-up options and is conducting a proof of concept with a current back-up service provider. If successful, the proof of concept will help to upgrade the current contract to protect data and workloads in the cloud in the event that the service becomes unavailable.

Recommendation 3	**Accepted and implemented**
The executive heads of the United Nations organizations should put in place periodic procedures to ensure that their corporate ICT strategies, including those for cloud computing services, are aligned with the organizations' business needs and priorities, and yield value for the investment.	UNICEF corporate Information and Communications Technology (ICT) strategies, including those for cloud computing services, will continue to align with the business needs and priorities of UNICEF, and yield value for the investment. Periodic monitoring and measuring of Enterprise Architecture and ICT governance processes, driven by mandatory strategic planning cycles, ensure adequate oversight, quality and control.

Relevant recommendations	*Remarks*

Recommendation 4

The executive heads of the United Nations organizations should ensure that a comprehensive risk analysis exercise is undertaken before contracting ICT services, including cloud-based services. The risk analysis exercise should consider both technical and financial risks and benefits, and relevant safeguards should be included in the service-level agreement.

Accepted and implemented

Conducting risk analysis before contracting ICT services is already practised at UNICEF as part of project management and contracting and procurement policy, supported by legal, procurement and ICT functional accountabilities.

Review of audit and oversight committees in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2019/6)

1.   Recommendations addressed to the legislative body/Executive Board

Recommendation 1

The legislative and/or governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations that have not already done so should ensure that the terms of reference or charter of their respective audit and oversight committees are revised and updated by the end of 2021 to include specific references to their independence and reporting line to their legislative and/or governing bodies.

Not accepted

The UNICEF Audit Advisory Committee (AAC), in line with its revised Charter (2020), is an independent advisory mechanism appointed by, and reporting to, the Executive Director. The audit and advisory committees of similar organizations, including the United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Population Fund and United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, act as advisory instruments for the heads of the organizations rather than for their Executive Board.

The Executive Board of UNICEF approved the Accountability Framework, which determines that the AAC is appointed by and reports to the Executive Director. Changing the reporting line to the Executive Board raises the risk that another body would be needed to advise the Executive Director on matters currently under the purview of the AAC.

The independent annual report of the AAC is made available to the UNICEF Executive Board at its annual session. The Executive Board may engage with the Committee at its discretion. The Chair of the AAC, or the Chair's representative, is present at the annual session. The AAC may also engage with the Executive Board at the informal briefing related to audit and investigations that is typically scheduled in advance of the annual session.

Recommendation 2

The legislative and/or governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations that have not already done so should ensure that the terms of

Accepted and implemented

The revised Charter of the UNICEF Audit Advisory Committee (2020) lists the internal functions, responsibilities and activities of the Committee.

Relevant recommendations	*Remarks*
reference or charter of the audit and oversight committees of their respective organizations are revised to reflect all the internal oversight functions that are part of the responsibilities and activities of the committee, where applicable, by the end of 2021.	The revised Charter notes that the primary responsibility of the Committee is advising the Executive Director to assist him/her fulfil the governance, risk management and oversight responsibilities of UNICEF. In fulfilling this responsibility, the Committee will advise the Executive Director on the adequacy and effectiveness of the following areas: governance and accountability; internal controls and risk management; ethics and integrity; financial management and reporting; internal oversight (the responsibility of two UNICEF offices: Office of Internal Audit and Investigations, which is responsible for internal audit and investigation services; and the Evaluation Office); and external oversight, which includes United Nations Board of Auditors and the JIU.
Recommendation 3	**Accepted and implemented**
The legislative and/or governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations that have not already done so should ensure that provisions regarding the internal control framework and risk management are included in the terms of reference or charter of their respective audit and oversight committees by the end of 2021 in order to ensure that due attention is paid to addressing internal control weaknesses and emerging risks.	The revised Charter of the UNICEF Audit Advisory Committee (2020) outlines the responsibilities of the Committee to advise on 'internal controls and risk management', including Enterprise Risk Management and the anti-fraud strategy and its prevention and detection mechanisms.
Recommendation 4	**Accepted and implemented**
The legislative and/or governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations that have not already done so should give due consideration to including the oversight of ethics and anti-fraud activities in the revised terms of reference or charter of their audit and oversight committees in order to strengthen the accountability frameworks of their respective organizations by the end of 2021, provided that these audit and oversight committees meet the independence criteria.	The revised Charter of the UNICEF Audit Advisory Committee (2020) includes oversight of ethics and anti-fraud activities. The AAC advises on the following: ethics activities, including the Code of Ethics and whistle-blower policy; systems for promoting international civil service rules and staff conduct, integrity standards, and managing conflicts of interest; and the quality assurance systems (including the internal and external assessments). The AAC also considers the implications of the reports of the Ethics Office and related management responses, and highlights issues that might require further attention, as appropriate, for the Executive Director. The AAC further advises the Executive Director on internal controls and risk management, which includes Enterprise Risk Management and the anti-fraud strategy and its prevention and detection mechanisms.

Relevant recommendations	*Remarks*
Recommendation 5	**Accepted and implemented**
In order to meet the needs of the organizations, the legislative and/or governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations that have not already done so should consider revising and updating the terms of reference or charter of their audit and oversight committees to contain provisions related to the relevant skills and professional expertise of members, including a balanced mix of public and private sector experience at the senior level. In addition, a strong understanding of the structure and functioning of the United Nations system and/or intergovernmental and international organizations is desirable.	The revised Charter of the UNICEF Audit Advisory Committee (2020) outlines ways that the Executive Director should ensure that the AAC members are professionals drawn from public or private sector organizations with senior leadership experience and familiarity with organizational management, finance, accounting, risk management, internal auditing and investigations, external auditing, evaluations, ethics, information technology and other relevant areas. The Charter further stipulates that the selection process will be based on merit, transparency, professionalism, integrity, competitiveness and equal opportunity for all. Gender balance is also considered.
Recommendation 6	**Accepted and implemented**
The legislative and/or governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations that have not already done so should request their audit and oversight committees to undertake a self-assessment every year and an independent performance evaluation every three years and report to them on the results.	The revised Charter of the UNICEF Audit Advisory Committee (2020) stipulates that the Committee conduct a self-assessment of its performance and effectiveness and solicit feedback from the Executive Director. The summary of the overall annual assessment is made available to the Executive Board in the Committee's annual report.
	UNICEF welcomes the system-wide comments on the recommendation regarding an independent performance evaluation. UNICEF and the AAC are discussing the possibility of a peer review to accomplish this objective.
Recommendation 7	**Accepted and implemented**
The legislative and/or governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations that have not already done so should ensure that the terms of reference or charter of their audit and oversight committees are periodically revised and updated with a view to including emerging priorities of, and new challenges to, their respective organizations.	The revised Charter of the UNICEF Audit Advisory Committee (2020) stipulates periodic reviews or proposals of amendments, as needed, of the Charter. The Executive Board will be informed of such changes at its annual sessions (through the Committee's annual report).

2.   No recommendations addressed to the executive head

Review of the management and administration of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) (JIU/REP/2019/7)

1.   No recommendations addressed to UNICEF.

Annex II

Summary of the status of all open Joint Inspection Unit recommendations addressed to UNICEF prior to 2019

JIU report symbol	Recommendation (number) and summary text	Addressee	Current status
JIU/REP/2011/1 Review of the medical service in the United Nations system	(2) Adopt appropriate standards with regard to Occupational Safety and Health issues.	Legislative body	Accepted and implemented
JIU/REP/2012/2 The management of sick leave in the United Nations system	(4) Design and implement an absence management module.	Executive head	Accepted and implemented
JIU/REP/2013/2 Records and archives management in the United Nations	(1) Ensure strict compliance with those principles, procedures and rules for any materials identified as records of the organization or entity.	Executive head	Accepted and implemented
	(2) Ensure that all departments, offices and other entities under their responsibility have developed the basic components of records management programmes for all records for which they have managerial responsibility.	Executive head	Accepted and implemented
	(3) Ensure that appropriate time and resources are allocated to institutionalizing tailored RAM training programmes.	Executive head	Accepted and implemented
	(4) Ensure that information systems that capture, create or manage e-records meet international standards for record-keeping and the preservation of digital records and archives.	Executive head	Accepted and implemented
JIU/NOTE/2014/1 Use of retirees and staff retained beyond the mandatory age of separation at United Nations organizations	(2) Set up effective mechanisms to capitalize on the knowledge and experience of staff due to retire and of retirees.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress

JIU report symbol	Recommendation (number) and summary text	Addressee	Current status
JIU/REP/2014/1 An analysis of the resource mobilization function within the United Nations system	(5) Organize dialogues with their respective donors to agree upon common reporting requirements.	Executive head	Accepted and implemented
JIU/REP/2014/9 Contract management and administration in the United Nations system	(2) Incorporate in the annual statements of internal controls certifications that the execution of contracts has been in full compliance with the organization's policies, procedures and rules.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress
JIU/REP/2016/2 Succession planning in the United Nations system organizations	(3) Adopt benchmarks ensuring organizations have a sound succession planning process, and report on the progress made.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress
JIU/REP/2016/4 Fraud prevention, detection and response in United Nations system organizations	(5) Conduct a comprehensive corporate fraud risk assessment.	Executive head	Accepted and implemented
	(8) Ensure that statements of internal controls address the adequacy of organization-wide anti-fraud controls.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress
JIU/REP/2016/6 Meta-evaluation and synthesis of United Nations development framework evaluations	(4) Coordinate evaluation activities at the country level.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress
JIU/REP/2016/7 Comprehensive review of United Nations system support for small island developing States: final findings	(4) Coordinate the planning and implementation of capacity-building activities in close consultation with the small island developing States (SIDS) and all partners for development.	Legislative body	Accepted and implemented
	(7) Ensure, the specificity of SIDS is explicitly considered in defining the elements of monitoring and accountability frameworks.	Legislative body	Accepted and implemented
	(8) Coordinate efforts in designing monitoring and accountability frameworks and tools adapted to the capacity of SIDS to monitor and report on the implementation of the Samoa Pathway.	Legislative body	Accepted and implemented

JIU report symbol	Recommendation (number) and summary text	Addressee	Current status
JIU/REP/2016/8 State of the internal audit function in the United Nations system	(9) Ensure that the conditions for effective, independent, expert oversight committees are in place.	Legislative body	Accepted and implemented
	(2) Involve the oversight committees and consult with the governing bodies in the hiring and terminating of the heads of internal audit/oversight.	Executive head	Not accepted
	(6) Allocate adequate financial and human resources to the internal audit services to ensure sufficient coverage of high-risk areas during risk-based audit planning.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress
JIU/REP/2016/10 Knowledge management in the United Nations system	(1) Develop knowledge management strategies and policies aligned with the mandate, goals and objectives of the organization.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress
	(3) Take incremental measures aimed at embedding knowledge management skills and knowledge-sharing abilities in their respective staff performance appraisal systems, annual workplans, job descriptions and organizational core competences.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress
	(4) Establish norms and procedures for the retention and transfer of knowledge from retiring, moving or departing staff.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress
JIU/NOTE/2017/1 Results-based management in the United Nations system: high-impact model for results-based management – benchmarking framework, stages of development and outcomes	(1) Endorse the high-impact model and use it taking into account the progress already achieved and organizational specificities.	Executive head	Outside the sole remit
JIU/REP/2017/2 Donor-led assessments of the United Nations system organizations	(4) Engage with donors to determine the key elements in their assessments and consider taking these elements into account in risk assessments and workplans.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress

JIU report symbol	Recommendation (number) and summary text	Addressee	Current status
JIU/REP/2017/3 Review of air travel policies in the United Nations system: achieving efficiency gains and cost savings and enhancing harmonization	(6) Encourage the use of online booking tools for air travel, update travel policies with guidelines for optimal use of such tools and consider integrating them with their existing systems by 2020.	Executive head	Accepted and implemented
JIU/REP/2017/6 Results-based management in the United Nations development system, analysis of progress and policy effectiveness	(6) Enhance the focus on managing for results with greater focus on what works, what does not work and why, and do so with due regard to context.	Legislative body	Accepted and implemented
	(2) Establish a backbone support function to ensure that innovations introduced in results-based management across the United Nations system are captured, supported, assessed for value and shared for adoption system-wide.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress
JIU/REP/2017/7 Review of donor reporting requirements across the United Nations system	(5) Work systematically with donors to include in donor agreements the costs associated with preparing donor reports.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress
	(6) Develop and adopt a common report template accommodating the information needs and requirements of donors and the regulatory frameworks and capacities of the organizations, as a basis for negotiations with donors.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress
JIU/REP/2017/8 The United Nations system: private sector partnerships arrangements in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development	(3) Coordinate and streamline a unique, system-wide package of information about the opportunities for partnerships offered to the private sector by the Sustainable Development Goals, for the benefit of interested organizations.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress
	(5) Enhance the role and responsibilities of the private sector focal points network with regard to sharing knowledge, promoting good practices and finding innovative solutions to problems related to partnerships with the private sector, including by entrusting them with specific tasks and agenda items on which to report.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress

JIU report symbol	Recommendation (number) and summary text	Addressee	Current status
	(6) Create a common database on the profiles and performance of the businesses that are involved, or potentially interested, in partnerships with the United Nations.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress
	(7) Identify and agree on a minimum set of common standard procedures and safeguards for an efficient and flexible due diligence process, to be applied system-wide in a transparent way by the United Nations operational staff engaged in the initiation and implementation of partnerships with the private sector.	Executive head	Accepted and implemented
	(10) Encourage a multi-stakeholder mechanism of consultations and solution-seeking at the country level, steered by the Resident Coordinator, in which the businesses are involved from the beginning in the design of partnerships in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Where such mechanisms initiated by Governments exist, the United Nations country teams should encourage multi-stakeholder participation.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress
	(11) Empower the United Nations Innovation Network or other existing United Nations joint innovation initiatives to identify and discuss issues that are relevant for the coordination of the existing innovation initiatives, funds, labs, accelerators and incubators, and their interface with the private sector, with a view to facilitating and stimulating innovation in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.	Executive head	Accepted and implemented
JIU/REP/2017/9 Review of mechanisms and policies addressing conflict of interest in the United Nations system	(3) Prepare a detailed report on existing financial disclosure programmes and propose any changes to the rationale and scope of those programmes that are needed to increase their effectiveness.	Legislative body	Accepted and implemented
	(6) Regularly monitor conflict of interest issues, including updates to relevant policies, administrative instruments and mechanisms.	Legislative body	Accepted and in progress

JIU report symbol	Recommendation (number) and summary text	Addressee	Current status
	(1) Map the most common occurrences and register the risks of situations exposing their respective organizations to organizational conflicts of interest, no later than December 2019.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress
	(2) Introduce a mandatory conflict of interest disclosure form that should be signed by staff members, along with their declaration of office, by all staff members and other types of personnel joining an organization, whether in a short- or long-term capacity.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress
	(4) Introduce adequate legal clauses in contractual agreements with their staff and non-staff, as appropriate, binding them to the period of restriction set for their function that prohibits them from engaging in clearly defined post-employment activities for the duration of that period of time.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress
	(5) (a) ensure that all staff members, irrespective of their level and grade, successfully complete the initial and periodic mandatory ethics training course and obtain the respective certification; (b) link certification of the required ethics training course to the annual staff performance appraisal cycle; (c) include ethics training in the induction training of non-staff, including refresher courses after service intervals, as appropriate.	Executive head	(a) Accepted and in progress; (b) and (c) accepted and implemented
JIU/REP/2018/1 Review of internship programmes in the United Nations system	(6) Consider approving the establishment of ad hoc multi-donor trust funds to pledge voluntary contributions to support internship schemes and present proposals for other suitable innovative mechanisms to receive voluntary contributions, with no strings attached regarding selection criteria.	Legislative body	Accepted and in progress
	(2) Establish coherent internship programmes for the United Nations system, taking into account the benchmarking framework for good practices in internship programmes.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress

JIU report symbol	Recommendation (number) and summary text	Addressee	Current status
	(3) Update internship policies, taking into account the proposed JIU benchmarking framework for good practices in internship programmes and streamline these in policies.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress
	(5) Put in place a mechanism to systematically track information related to internships, including on gender, country of origin, university from which the highest diploma was received, duration of the internship for each intern engaged and related costs (direct and indirect) generated by the internship programme. A report should be presented for information to the governing and/or legislative bodies of the organizations at their next sessions.	Executive head	Accepted and implemented
	(7) Establish a collaboration mechanism between the public information services of the organizations and the permanent representatives of Member States to facilitate outreach to their capitals on a worldwide basis so as to attract young candidates for internships from diverse educational backgrounds.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress
JIU/REP/2018/4 Review of whistle-blower policies and practices in United Nations system organizations	(3) Update relevant whistle-blower policies by 2020 to address shortcomings and gaps identified in the JIU best-practices ratings.	Executive head	Accepted and implemented
	(5) Develop comprehensive communications tools for all personnel on what, how, where and to whom to report misconduct/wrongdoing, including harassment and retaliation, in all the working languages of the organization.	Executive head	Accepted and implemented
	(7) Develop standard operating procedures for handling retaliation cases, with specific checklists and protocols for investigation, support services and communication.	Executive head	Accepted and implemented
	(8) Ensure that anonymous channels to report misconduct/wrongdoing are: (a) developed and operational; (b) available in all the working languages	Executive head	Accepted and implemented

JIU report symbol	Recommendation (number) and summary text	Addressee	Current status
	of the organization; (c) accessible to all personnel, vendors and beneficiaries; (d) reflected in their relevant policies; and (e) widely communicated.		
	(10) Ensure that all supervisors and managers are required to complete specific training on whistle-blowing policies and on how to appropriately respond to and handle misconduct/wrongdoing and retaliation reports.	Executive head	Accepted and implemented
JIU/REP/2018/5 Opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness in administrative support services by enhancing inter-agency cooperation	(2) Develop performance indicators and targets to drive improvements in the delivery of administrative support services, and to post performance publicly.	Legislative body	Accepted and implemented
	(4) Initiate testing of a model under which a single agency provides hosting services for the others.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress
	(5) Formulate a proposal for consolidated country-level administrative support arrangements, in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 72/279.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress
	(6) All country teams to put forward a business case on common premises and establish joint long-term agreements and service contracts.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress
	(10) Constitute a shared services board to develop the business case for and operational design of global shared services.	Executive head	Accepted and in progress

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