

1. **Entity/ Intergovernmental body or forum:** UNICEF
2. **Contact person:** Valentina Buj, Senior Adviser, Public Sector Engagement Hub, PPD
3. **Contact details (Email and Phone number):** [vbuj@unicef.org](mailto:vbuj@unicef.org) +1 917-213-8394
4. **Your assessment of the impacts of the multiple and interconnected crises on the implementation of SDGs 3, 5, 8, 14 and 17. Please enter at most 2000 characters.**

While children are the least responsible for the crises facing the world today, they are particularly vulnerable to their effects. In Bangladesh, prolonged droughts and heat waves have been causally linked to an increase in child marriage. The deadline to eliminate child labour is 2025 and yet a record number of conflicts worldwide has increased the number of child soldiers, compromising their childhoods by threatening their access to education, healthcare, and social protection. At the same time, increased budgets for national defence, at the expense of investing in multilateralism, ODA, and sustainable development compromises the resources available to children and threatens the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. Achieving the SDGs will require more than addressing the cross sectoral and immediate issues faced by children and their communities. Governments must design and implement policies that account for deeply entrenched and sensitive determinants such as cultural and social norms, power structures, markets dynamics, gender roles, socialization processes, and societal divides. As the international aid landscape is changing in dramatic and unprecedented ways, diverse, innovative, and thoughtful partnerships will be crucial to achieving the SDGs.

5. **Three key areas where sustainable, inclusive, science- and evidence-based solutions for achieving the SDGs and leaving no one behind are being effectively delivered, especially related to the cluster of SDGs under review in 2025, also bearing in mind the three dimensions of sustainable development and the interlinkages across the Goals and targets. Please enter at most 2000 characters.**

Data gaps pose a serious challenge to achieving the SDGs for children. Comprehensive, disaggregated, and up-to-date data are crucial for addressing community issues. Among the 47 SDG indicators related to child health, wellbeing, and rights, only 17 have sufficient data for reliable monitoring. In over 190 countries, about 50% of these indicators lack data. UNICEF is working to close these gaps, increasing data availability to monitor SDG progress. For example, the UN Statistical Commission approved a UNICEF-led classification of violence against children, a key step in addressing this issue globally.

Effective policy implementation includes scaling up community engagement, accelerating digital improvements, integrating new policies within existing systems, and building workforce capacity. UNICEF's identified proven solutions include:

- 1) Investing in early childhood development: Providing good nutrition, responsive care, early learning, health, and a safe environment is essential for young children's growth and development. Despite progress, many children still face undernutrition and lack of stimulation.

Comprehensive food systems, adequate public expenditure, and supportive policies are needed to address these issues.

- 2) Scaling up child benefits: Over 300 million children live in extreme poverty, and nearly 1 billion face multidimensional poverty. Child benefits, providing regular cash payments to families, can help meet immediate needs and invest in children's futures. Despite their benefits, significant coverage gaps remain.
- 3) Expanding immunization funding: Immunization has saved 150 million children's lives and significantly reduced infant mortality. Continued investment in pandemic preparedness, new vaccines, and expanded coverage is essential. Achieving the SDG 2030 target of 90% immunization coverage could save 1.4 million lives annually and protect households from poverty due to vaccine-preventable diseases.
- 4) Ensuring quality secondary education for girls: 119 million girls are out of school, and many face risks of dropping out due to violence, harmful norms, and insufficient services. Investing in girls' education can boost their future prospects and contribute to economic growth. Addressing these challenges requires targeted interventions and supportive policies.

**6. Three examples of measures to accelerate progress towards SDGs through well-coordinated actions in key transitions to bring progress to scale (food security, energy access and affordability, digital connectivity, education, jobs and social protection, climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution), building on interlinkages between SDGs to ensure cohesive progress. Please enter at most 2000 characters.**

1. Lessons learned from past disasters and recovery processes provide evidence of the importance of enhancing the preparedness and resilience of communities, systems, and services. Investing in resilience helps prevent and curtail economic, environmental and human losses in the event of a crisis, thereby reducing human suffering and protecting development gains. The integration of a risk-informed approach into routine programming strengthens national systems and builds resilience to shocks and stresses by identifying and addressing root causes and drivers of risk. It is paramount to invest in both social and productive resilient infrastructure and services including schools, health systems, and WASH services.
2. Investing in early childhood is one of the most cost-effective ways to protect child rights and achieve sustainable development. Funding for social sectors, however, including early childhood development, nutrition, health and social protection, continues to be insufficient and is at high risk of cuts during fiscal crises. To curtail inter-generational cycles of inequity and poverty, social services for children should be a priority area for government investments and last in line for cuts.
3. Member states and partners must continue to collaborate to bridge the data gaps that currently hinder understanding of children's wellbeing and capacity to effectively monitor progress toward the SDGs. Comprehensive, up-to-date, and disaggregate data can equip governments and partners with the information needed to adjust strategies, scale up successful interventions, and understand where there are gaps in progress.

**7. Follow-up actions and measures being undertaken by your intergovernmental body or forum to support implementation of the 2023 SDG Summit Political Declaration and the outcomes of the 2024 Summit of the Future, to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Please enter at most 2000 characters.**

UNICEF has consistently aligned its programmatic work with the SDGs since their adoption. UNICEF's current strategic plan is the second to fully integrate the SDGs and SDG indicators into its corporate results framework. UNICEF closely follows 35 SDG indicators to ensure that all of programmes for children are supporting country-level progress towards achieving the SDGs in alignment with the SDG Summit Political Declaration and Pact for the Future. UNICEF continues to encourage a paradigm shift towards investing in child-centric institutions and infrastructure and transitioning away from project-based grants to large-scale, predictable financing. The importance of this integrated approach can be observed, for example, in the eighty-six countries using the Integrated National Finance Framework approach to address gaps between planning and financing systems and strengthen the sustainable finance architecture at the national level.

UNICEF is an active member, at principal level, of the Pact implementation Steering Committee. UNICEF's active support of member state championing children's rights affirms the agency's steadfast support for the importance of mainstreaming children's rights into intergovernmental processes.

**8. Recommendations and key messages to be considered for inclusion in the Ministerial Declaration of the 2025 HLPF. Please enter at most 2000 characters.**

The SDGs must be achieved for and with children. The children of today will determine the planet of tomorrow: putting child rights at the centre of the 2030 Agenda will accelerate and sustain equitable results for all societies. Improving children's well-being is not only an ethical and legal imperative as outlined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, but also critically important to building the human capital needed for equitable and just societies. We reaffirm our commitment to matching our ambitions with bold actions. We will do so by:

- Reaffirming the important role children play as agents of change (in line with their evolving capacities) to achieve sustainable development by ensuring they have opportunities to meaningfully participate where decisions that impact them are being made.
- Dramatically increasing investments in the adaptation and resilience of social and health services that children depend on for their physical and mental well-being.
- Addressing the unique barriers faced by girls to fulfilling their rights by eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls, ending harmful practices such as early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation, and restoring women's and girls' control over their own bodies through universal access to sexual and reproductive healthcare. We also aim to correct socioeconomic imbalances by addressing unpaid care and domestic work, borne predominantly by women and girls, through public services and social protection policies.
- Accelerating the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by ending the burning of fossil fuels and transitioning to clean, secure energy and scaling up child-sensitive climate

finance for adaptation, emergency preparedness, and disaster risk reduction. We also commit to integrating climate change adaptation into local planning and budgeting systems fosters climate resilience.

- Taking urgent action to eliminate all forms of child labour and invest in opportunities for productive, meaningful employment for young people.
- Investing in partnerships with diverse to initiate direct, positive impacts on children's issues at a grassroots level, serving as a powerful instrument of change and engraving a nation's commitment to children's rights within the social fabric

At the current rate, most SDGs for children will not be met by the 2030 deadline. The reasons include not only fiscal constraints, but also inadequate prioritization of policies that have high impacts on multiple SDGs. Because hundreds of millions of children are falling behind, acceleration to scale is vital including focusing on the most impactful policy and programmatic interventions, particularly those with multiplier effects. Governments should commit to these policies in the coming years and put their sights on setting ambitious targets to help them reach the SDGs.