Statement by Finland

Mr. President,

I am pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of Denmark, Norway and my own country, Finland.

We appreciate this opportunity to have a substantive discussion in the Executive Board on the findings and recommendations as well as management responses of three recent global thematic evaluations: on Early Childhood Development (ECD), Life Skills Education and Human Rights Based Approach to Programming (HRBAP). In our view evaluation is a key to both accountability and identifying lessons learned for more strategic programming.

Mr. President,

UNICEF is one of the UN agencies with the longest experience on HRBAP. The HRBAP evaluation is therefore very timely and necessary and its recommendations are fundamental and need to be addressed in the preparation of the MTSP. They highlight inter alia the need to clarify linkages between HRBAP and equity both in terms of content and terminology, sustain global leadership and engagement, develop capacity and demonstrate progress in advancing HRBAP.

One of the critical areas to address is the notion that accountability concerning HRBAP within UNICEF is weak, despite the fact that it is seen to be one of the main pillars of UNICEF’s work. HRBAP must be integrated in the MTSP results framework through related targets and indicators as regards both development and management results.

Mr. President,

The three evaluations cover different topics but they share some common conclusions. We have noted that all three evaluations point to a need to further strengthen monitoring and evaluation systems, and that there is still difficulty to reach disadvantaged groups for instance due to lack of data and strategies for increasing access.
In general, we see some room for improvement in how the evaluations have taken into account a human rights perspective. We find systematic use of UNEG guidance on gender and human rights responsive evaluation an excellent resource in this regard.

These are all issues to be addressed in the preparations for the MTSP and the results framework. The updated evaluation policy, to be discussed in the Annual session in June, is another aspect of results-based management, and offers a basis for evidence-based decision-making.

The management responses to all three evaluations show that the recommendations have been taken to heart/given due consideration. Effective implementation of evaluation recommendations within the timeframe specified in the management responses ensures that the investment made in these evaluation is money well spent and that UNICEF is indeed a learning organization. We look forward to further open and frank discussions in the Executive Board on both evaluation practices and evaluation findings.

Thank you Mr. President.