Statement of Switzerland

Executive Board of UNICEF, Second regular session – Agenda Item 4
FINANCING THE UNICEF STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2017
9 September 2014

Mr. President

Switzerland would like to thank all UNICEF staff for their full commitment and hard work during this year that was marked by a significant increase of L3 emergencies. While this response is deemed necessary it also challenges to a certain extent the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2014-2017. For Switzerland, the critical issue is, securing sufficient resources that are of high quality. Allow me to share with you our comments with this regard:

Switzerland commends UNICEF for its efforts to engage actively and successfully with other Funds & Programs, which led to the definition of common principles of critical mass of core resources. We also thank UNICEF for the updated financial estimates for the year 2014-17. We appreciate that this issue will be discussed later on in the week. However, taking into account that both UNICEF and the Member States need a better understanding to what extent the outcomes are financed, Switzerland would appreciate in the future to have such information in line with the Integrated Results and Resource Framework. Only this will allow the Board to take appropriate and timely measures. Switzerland therefore considers the ongoing discussion on financing the Strategic Plan as one of many steps to follow.

Today Switzerland is alarmed by the low and shrinking portion of Regular Resources to the Integrated budget. To us the key questions to be
answered by this dialogue must be the following: How to increase the volume and how to improve the quality of funding from existing and future donors both public and private. This would entail shifting the funding structure towards more flexibility and predictability ultimately culminating in a resource mobilization strategy with clear targets and concrete measures as it was done for the Private Fundraising Partnership. We expect UNICEF to present this strategy as part of the structured dialogue.

Allow me to go through a number of incentives and mechanisms that can increase the availability of regular and flexible resources:

We encourage UNICEF to continue improving the quality of reporting, tracking results, linked to financial resources and expenditures, including increased visibility for contributors of core funding. Monitoring for results is a priority for Switzerland therefore we welcome the launch of the InSight platform that should greatly contribute to improve accountability, transparency and oversight.

While building on the National Development Plans, UNICEF and its decentralized Country Offices should ensure that all resources received are aligned with the Strategic Plan. Acknowledging that this is not an easy task, we are convinced that it is the best and only solution to guarantee effective and result orientated work in the long run. We encourage UNICEF to hold to this principle in the future.

Thirdly, we welcome the efforts undertaken by UNICEF to broaden its donor base in a cost effective way and to explore new innovative fund raising mechanisms reaching out non-state actors. We urge UNICEF to tap into the potential of the business sector and to include it in the discussions to adjust funding modalities.

Finally, timely announcements and adherence to multi-year pledges and payment plans of member states to regular and flexible resources are
another prerequisite to allow UNICEF to plan ahead and to ultimately deliver. Switzerland is therefore pleased to announce today that we will pledge to a multiyear unearmarked core funding covering the period 2014-2016 thus further enhancing predictability and flexibility of funds. As of our current and future portfolio of earmarked contributions to UNICEF, we aim at further improving the quality of funding. We encourage other donors to undergo a similar exercise.

To end, the launch of this Structured Dialogue on financing results has provided initial valuable elements for the Members states to better understand these critical and complex issues. However Switzerland wishes these discussions to be continued next year with careful consideration of Members States perspectives and donor’s constraints. We therefore suggest UNICEF to add it as a standing item at the Second Regular Session of the Executive Board. This will need to be accompanied by informal consultations. I assure you Switzerland will engage proactively in all the discussions to come.

Thank you for your attention.