Madame President, distinguished delegates, I am pleased to present the proposed country programmes for the Kingdom of Swaziland, and Zambia.

These two programmes of cooperation, which cover the period 2016–2020, are fully aligned with the National Development Plans and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks of the respective countries. They also contribute to the results of the UNICEF Strategic Plan.

I will start with the presentation of the country programme of cooperation for the Kingdom of Swaziland, 2016–2020.

Swaziland is a lower middle-income country which has made notable progress in immunization, maternal care and eliminating new HIV infections in children. The country is on track to achieving the Millennium Development Goal for promoting gender equality and empowerment of women, and has seen important gains in access to primary education.

HIV continues to be the most pressing challenge facing the country. With over a quarter of adults living with HIV, Swaziland has the highest prevalence in the world. While the fact that HIV incidence has fallen by half since 2010 is a sign of commendable progress, rates of vertical transmission and tuberculosis linked to HIV remain high, dramatically increasing the risk of mortality for children.
Furthermore, a sizeable proportion of children live without appropriate family care having lost one or both parents.

At the same time, further progress is required in a number of other key areas. Under-five mortality is high at 67 deaths per 1,000 live births, as is maternal mortality at 593 deaths per 100,000 live births. Violence against children and chronic undernutrition remain key concerns, and only a quarter of children enrol in secondary school.

**SLIDE: Swaziland Country Programme 2016–2020**

The proposed country programme for the period 2016–2020 aims to support national efforts to improve results for children, with a focus on HIV and reducing inequality. The country programme includes three components:

First, the **young child survival and development** component will focus on healthy growth and development of the child, especially during the first 1,000 days, by supporting a set of essential HIV-sensitive maternal, newborn and child health and nutrition interventions; scale-up of water and sanitation facilities; and improved coverage of early childhood development services.

Second, the **adolescent protection, learning and development** component will support protection from violence; access to quality health services for adolescents including HIV prevention, care and treatment; and secondary education for girls and boys.

The third component will focus on **programme effectiveness**, supporting all aspects of programme delivery and managing for results.

**SLIDE: Swaziland – Strategies**

The country programme will employ a mix of strategies, including:
• Evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy for child-focused legislative frameworks and actions, and to leverage resources for children;

• Capacity development to enhance the coverage, quality and sustainability of services for children, together with communication for development to promote positive behaviours and strengthen demand for services and social accountability; and

• Innovation and South-South cooperation to promote learning and accelerate progress.

SLIDE: Zambia

We now turn to the Zambia country programme of cooperation for 2016–2020.

SLIDE: Zambia – Programme rationale

Zambia is a lower middle-income country with a young population. The country has made progress in reducing child and maternal mortality rates, addressing stunting, and achieving gender equality in primary school enrolment. Good levels of social sector budgeting and a supportive framework of national laws and policies contribute to a conducive environment for development.

Despite these gains, significant challenges remain. Zambia is characterized by a development paradox: strong economic performance and political stability on the one hand, and persistent poverty and widening income inequality on the other.

The child mortality rate is still high at 75 per 1,000 live births, as is the maternal mortality rate at 398 per 100,000 live births. Undernutrition and declining immunization coverage contribute to the challenge, together with a continued high HIV prevalence. Education performance remains an area of concern and requires increased investment, particularly in the transition from primary to secondary school.
With high rates of child marriage and pregnancy, and lower secondary school enrolment among adolescent girls, gender inequality is another important area to be addressed.


The proposed country programme for the period 2016–2020 will focus on strengthening national and subnational systems to efficiently deliver results for children and mothers at scale. The country programme is structured around the seven outcome areas of the UNICEF Strategic Plan:

The **health programme** will contribute to improved and equitable access to high-impact maternal, neonatal, child and adolescent health interventions.

The **nutrition programme** will focus on services and practices that have the potential to significantly reduce stunting.

The **HIV and AIDS programme** will support the expansion of proven HIV prevention and treatment interventions for children, adolescents, and pregnant women.

The **water, sanitation and hygiene programme** will contribute to improved access to, and use of, safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene practices.

The **education programme** will support inclusive, quality education for all children, with a focus on improving learning outcomes from early childhood to secondary school.

The **child protection programme** will focus on strengthening the child protection system to effectively prevent and respond to violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect of children.

The **social inclusion programme** will seek to strengthen national systems to address persistent poverty and inequality.
And finally, the **programme effectiveness component** will support the delivery of results across all outcome areas.

**SLIDE: Zambia – Strategies**

A number of strategies will be utilised in support of the country programme:

- Emphasis will be placed on capacity development to deliver quality services.

- Evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy will support a child-focused legal and policy environment, and improved monitoring and evaluation will strengthen targeting of interventions.

- Innovation and cross-sectoral coordination will be key strategies to accelerate progress, together with collaboration with other middle-income countries in the region and beyond to strengthen horizontal learning.

**SLIDE: Common themes across the two countries**

Madame President, before concluding, it is important to review three key approaches that are common to the two country programmes of cooperation.

First, regular reviews with partners will focus on assessing programme quality, efficiency and effectiveness, as well as validation of risks and related mitigation measures. UNICEF will continue its strong partnerships within the United Nations family, with civil society organizations and the development partner community in this regard.

Second, emphasis will be placed on strengthening national and sub-national capacity to collect and analyse data, and to use evidence to improve development outcomes.
Finally, UNICEF will actively engage in strategic approaches and public and private partnerships to mobilize and leverage resources for children, including through domestic financing.

**SLIDE: Concluding remarks**

Madame President, the country programmes of cooperation for Swaziland and Zambia confirm the commitment of UNICEF to support national efforts to respond to the Sustainable Development Goals and achieve tangible, equitable and sustainable results for children and their families in Eastern and Southern Africa.

**SLIDE: Thank you**

Thank you, Madame President and distinguished delegates, for your attention. I look forward to your comments, questions and guidance.