

Children, youth and ageing persons

In 2007, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) continued its efforts to ensure that every child received the best possible start in life; was fully immunized and protected from disease, including HIV/AIDS, and disability; had access to a quality primary school education; and was protected from violence, abuse, exploitation and discrimination.

UNICEF continued to focus on the five priority areas of: young child survival and development; basic education and gender equality; HIV/AIDS and children; child protection from violence, exploitation and abuse; and policy advocacy and partnerships for children's rights. The Fund cooperated with 155 countries, areas and territories in 2007 and also responded to emergencies in more than 68 countries.

In December, the General Assembly held the commemorative high-level plenary meeting devoted to the follow-up to the outcome of the special session on children in order to evaluate progress made in the implementation of the Declaration and the Plan of Action adopted at the Assembly's twenty-seventh special session on children in 2002. The high-level meeting culminated in the adoption of a declaration in which Member States reaffirmed their commitment to the implementation of the special session's outcome document, "A world fit for children", and confirmed their determination to pursue the agreed global targets and actions for mobilizing resources for children, in accordance with that document.

Efforts continued during the year to implement the 1995 World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond. In December, the Assembly, on the recommendation of the Economic and Social Council, adopted the Supplement to the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, which contained proposals for action on behalf of youth in the areas of globalization, information and communications technology, HIV/AIDS, armed conflict and intergenerational issues.

The United Nations also continued its efforts to implement the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, adopted in 2002 by the Second World Assembly on Ageing. At its February session, the Commission for Social Development held a panel discussion to launch the first review and appraisal of the Plan of Action, which would be completed in 2008. In December, the Assembly encouraged Governments to pay greater attention to building capacity to eradi-

cate poverty among older persons by including ageing issues in poverty eradication strategies and national development plans.

Children

Follow-up to the 2002 General Assembly special session on children

The year 2007 marked the mid-decade point of the General Assembly's twenty-seventh (2002) special session on children [YUN 2002, p. 1168]. In 2006, in resolution 61/146 [YUN 2006, p. 777], the Assembly decided that, at its 2007 commemorative plenary meeting to be devoted to the outcome of the special session, it would pay particular attention to the protection of the rights of children living in poverty. In June, the Assembly discussed the organization of the session and fixed the dates.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 29 June [meeting 104], the General Assembly adopted **resolution 61/272** [draft: A/61/L.63] without vote [agenda item 63 (*b*)].

Commemorative high-level plenary meeting devoted to the follow-up to the outcome of the special session on children

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the Declaration and the Plan of Action contained in the final document of the special session of the General Assembly on children, entitled "A world fit for children", and recognizing that their implementation is a major contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and to protecting the rights and promoting the well-being of children,

Recalling the provisions of the 2005 World Summit Outcome, which reflect the commitment of Member States to protect the rights and interests of children,

Acknowledging that the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the most universally embraced human rights treaty in history, and the Optional Protocols thereto, contain a comprehensive set of international legal standards for the protection and well-being of children,

Recalling its resolution 58/282 of 9 February 2004 devoted to the follow-up to the outcome of the special session on children,

Recalling also its resolution 57/270 B of 23 June 2003 on the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields,

Bearing in mind that, by 2007, several of the time-bound and quantified commitments set out in the Declaration and the Plan of Action should have been met and that other targets are to be met by 2010 and 2015,

1. *Decides* to convene a commemorative high-level plenary meeting to evaluate progress made in the implementation of the Declaration and the Plan of Action contained in the document entitled "A world fit for children" on 11 and 12 December 2007;

2. *Encourages* all Member States and observers to be represented and to address the commemorative high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly at the highest possible level;

3. *Decides* that the commemorative high-level plenary meeting will comprise plenary meetings and two thematic interactive round tables;

4. *Also decides* that the President of the General Assembly, the President of the Economic and Social Council, the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund will address the commemorative high-level plenary meeting at its opening plenary meeting;

5. *Invites* intergovernmental organizations and entities that have observer status in the General Assembly, relevant entities of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, as well as those accredited to or in a collaborative relationship or partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund, to participate in the commemorative high-level plenary meeting;

6. *Decides* that a girl and a boy, selected through a process led by the President of the General Assembly and organized by the United Nations Children's Fund, and a representative of a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council will address the commemorative high-level plenary meeting at its closing plenary meeting;

7. *Requests* the President of the General Assembly, following consultations to be held with all Member States no later than 30 September 2007, with due regard to gender balance and equitable geographical representation, to draw up and circulate a list of three speakers for the closing plenary meeting in accordance with paragraph 6 above and a list of twenty children and twenty representatives of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, as well as those accredited to or in a collaborative relationship or partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund, who will participate in the two round tables on the understanding that ten children and ten representatives of non-governmental organizations will participate in each of the round tables and that non-governmental organizations in a collaborative relationship or partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund will be considered on a no-objection basis for a final decision by the General Assembly;

8. *Also requests* the President of the General Assembly, following consultations with all Member States and with support from the United Nations Children's Fund, to finalize organizational arrangements for the commemorative high-level plenary meeting, including the assignment

of participants and the identification of themes and chairpersons for the two interactive round tables;

9. *Encourages* Member States and observers to include children and young people in their delegations participating in the commemorative high-level plenary meeting;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive analytical report on progress achieved and challenges remaining in implementing the commitments set out in the Declaration and the Plan of Action at least six weeks prior to its consideration by the General Assembly at its sixty-second session;

11. *Decides* that the chairpersons of the interactive round tables will present summaries of the discussions at the closing plenary meeting;

12. *Requests* the President of the General Assembly to hold open consultations with Member States, the Observer State and observers in order to prepare, as an outcome document to be adopted at the commemorative high-level plenary meeting, a brief declaration reaffirming the commitments to the full implementation of the Declaration and the Plan of Action contained in the document entitled "A world fit for children";

13. *Decides* that the arrangements for the commemorative high-level plenary meeting will in no way create a precedent for other similar events of the General Assembly.

By **decision 62/508** of 31 October, the General Assembly invited 20 children and 20 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to participate in the two round tables of the commemorative meeting.

Report of Secretary-General. In response to General Assembly resolutions 58/282 [YUN 2004, p. 1175] and 61/272 (above), the Secretary-General submitted his fifth report [A/62/259] on the follow-up to the Assembly's twenty-seventh special session on children. The report provided an update on progress achieved in realizing the commitments relating to children and youth set out in the Declaration and Plan of Action contained in the session's final document, entitled "A world fit for children", adopted in resolution S-27/2 [YUN 2002, p. 1169]. Those commitments established targets and benchmarks to be achieved during the course of the decade (2000-2010), particularly in the areas of: health; education; protection from abuse; exploitation and violence; and combating HIV/AIDS.

By the end of 2006, the number of countries that had prepared national plans of action for children as a follow-up to the special session had risen to about 50. Approximately 100 countries had incorporated goals for children within their overall national plans or, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, in their poverty reduction strategies. Many had also developed new sectoral plans for such priority areas as violence against children, sexual exploitation, child labour, AIDS, malaria, and orphans and other vulnerable children (OVC). Yet some of the cross-sectoral challenges, such as child protection, early childhood development and nutrition, often remained only weakly reflected in national development plans or poverty reduction strategies. A number of

countries had also prepared plans and established goals for children at lower levels of government. China, for example, had formulated child development plans in all its provinces, prefectures and counties; Croatia had rated its cities or municipalities on their fulfilment of children's rights; several municipalities in Brazil had made progress in promoting child-friendly cities; and South Africa had established provincial and municipal plans that were supportive of the special session's goals. Progress in planning to address the goals for children had not been matched by the required investment for children; for many countries, there was a need to strengthen the link between plan preparation and budgeting processes. Developing countries as a whole were still a long way from fulfilling the commitment made at the 1995 World Summit for Social Development [YUN 1995, p. 1113], when Governments agreed to a "20/20" compact that called for the allocation of 20 per cent of developing country budgets and of official development assistance (ODA) to basic social services.

Despite significant advances, aid flows still fell far short of what would be needed to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) [YUN 2000, p. 51] and, in particular, to finance essential investment in children as anticipated in the outcome of the special session. To fill the financing gap (the difference between what developing countries needed to invest to achieve the goals and what they could mobilize from their own resources), total ODA volumes would need to rise to an estimated 0.54 per cent of the gross national product (GNP) of wealthy countries by 2015. Thus, many Governments and the international community would need to step up their levels of investment to fulfil the rights of children and give them the best possible start in life. On a smaller scale, but rising, aid from non-governmental sources, estimated at around \$15 billion in 2005, tended to be targeted effectively to supporting children.

With regard to legislation, some countries had specifically included children's rights in their constitutions and others had incorporated those rights into laws and regulations, or had ombudsperson functions specifically for children. By the end of 2005, 91 countries had reviewed their legal standards to better protect children from violence, compared to 61 countries in 2002. However, a considerable gap remained between legislation and enforcement. There was a need to establish institutions, where absent, and to strengthen those that existed so that they would adequately enforce the laws that protected children and provide recourse to them. The Committee on the Rights of the Child (see p. 681) continued to monitor and encourage efforts by States parties to ensure the compatibility of legislation with the provisions of "A world fit for children" and the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the Assembly in resolution 44/25 [YUN 1989, p. 560].

The Secretary-General observed that there had been notable successes since the 2002 special session, including a significant reduction in deaths among children from measles, a sharp decline in the number of polio cases and a remarkable increase in primary school enrolment. Nevertheless, challenges remained, including ensuring that many more children survived, were well nourished and were properly protected from violence, exploitation and abuse. Many countries faced constraints in the capacity of delivery systems to ensure the basic services that were critical for child survival, development and protection. Although there were examples of greater participation of children and young people in decisions that affected their lives, such participation was rarely built into local practices and national systems.

Many challenges to the achievement of the goals contained in "A world fit for children" were rooted in inequity or discrimination. The differences between the circumstances of rich and poor, majority and minority, boy and girl, were as great as ever, and in some parts of the world were increasing, even as countries' average per capita incomes were growing and progress was made towards attaining the MDGs.

The Secretary-General noted that failure to achieve the goals of the Assembly's 2002 special session on children would significantly undermine efforts towards realizing the aspirations of the 2000 United Nations Millennium Declaration, adopted in Assembly resolution 55/2 [YUN 2000, p. 49], and the MDGs by 2015 and beyond. He called for a scaled-up response by Governments to the maximum extent of their capacities, increased commitments from the international community and stronger partnerships to achieve the goals of the special session on children.

The General Assembly took note of the Secretary-General's report on 18 December (**decision 62/528**).

Commemorative high-level meeting

In accordance with resolution 61/272 (see p. 1201), the General Assembly held the commemorative high-level plenary meeting devoted to the follow-up to the outcome of the special session on children from 11 to 13 December [A/62/PV.66-73]. The aim of the meeting, also known as "A world fit for children, plus 5", was to evaluate progress made in implementing the Declaration and Plan of Action contained in the final document of the 2002 special session on children, entitled "A world fit for children". During the meeting, two round tables were held on: promoting healthy lives and combating HIV/AIDS; and providing universal quality education as key to achieving the MDGs and as the first line of protection against abuse, exploitation and violence against children. The meeting was addressed by representatives of States and international and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and by youth delegates.

On 24 July (**decision 2007/238**), the Economic and Social Council decided to transmit to the high-level plenary meeting the agreed conclusions on the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child, adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women [E/2007/27] (see p. 1173).

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 13 December [meeting 73], the General Assembly adopted **resolution 62/88** [draft: A/62/L.31] without vote [agenda item 66].

Declaration of the commemorative high-level plenary meeting devoted to the follow-up to the outcome of the special session on children

The General Assembly

Adopts the following Declaration:

Declaration of the commemorative high-level plenary meeting devoted to the follow-up to the outcome of the special session on children

1. We, the representatives of States gathered at the commemorative high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly, are encouraged by the progress achieved since 2002 in creating a world fit for children. Fewer children under five are dying each year. More children are in school than ever before. More educational opportunities are being equally extended to girls and boys. More medicines are available for children, including those infected by HIV/AIDS. More laws, policies and plans are in place to protect children from violence, abuse and exploitation. Our present and future actions should build upon those important gains.

2. Yet many challenges persist. Eradicating poverty is the greatest global challenge, as poverty poses difficulties to meeting the needs, protecting and promoting the rights of all children in the world. Despite encouraging achievements, the number of children dying before their fifth birthday remains unacceptably high. Malnutrition, pandemics, including HIV/AIDS, as well as malaria, tuberculosis and other preventable diseases continue to be a hindrance to a healthy life for millions of children. Lack of access to education remains a significant obstacle to their development. A large number of children are still subject to violence, exploitation and abuse, as well as to inequity and discrimination, in particular against the girl child. We will work to break the cycle of poverty, achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, create an environment that is conducive to the well-being of children and realize all the rights of the child.

3. We reaffirm our commitment to the full implementation of the Declaration and Plan of Action contained in the outcome document of the twenty-seventh special session of the General Assembly on children, entitled "A world fit for children", recognizing that their implementation and the fulfilment of obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Optional Protocols thereto and other relevant international instruments are mutually reinforcing in protecting the rights and promoting the well-being of all children. In all our actions, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.

4. A scaled-up, cross-sectoral response by Governments, increased international cooperation and broader and more focused partnerships, including with the mass media and the private sector, and global, regional and national initiatives are critical to the achievement of the goals of the special session on children. We reaffirm our determination to pursue the agreed global targets and actions for mobilizing resources for children, in accordance with "A world fit for children".

5. As we welcome the voices and the views of children, including adolescents, heard at the commemorative plenary meeting, we strive to strengthen their participation in the decisions that affect them, in accordance with their age and maturity.

6. We renew our political will to intensify our efforts towards building a world fit for children. We are confident that our collective aspirations will be realized if all relevant actors, including civil society, are united for children. All our policies and programmes should promote the shared responsibility of parents, families, legal guardians and other caregivers and society as a whole in this regard, bearing in mind that a child should grow up in a safe and supportive family environment. By giving high priority to the rights of children, to their survival and to their protection and development, we serve the best interest of all humanity. In solidarity, we will pursue our common vision of ensuring the well-being of all children in all societies, with a collective sense of urgency.

In other action, the Assembly, in **resolution 62/89** (see p. 1119), encouraged efforts and activities to promote the objectives of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010 [YUN 2001, p. 609]. In **resolution 62/141** (see p. 681), the Assembly called for full respect for the rights of the child.

By **resolution 2007/23** (see p. 1144), the Economic and Social Council urged Member States to pay particular attention to the issue of child justice and to take into consideration applicable UN standards and norms for the treatment of children in conflict with the law.

United Nations Children's Fund

During 2007, UNICEF continued its efforts towards achieving the MDGs [YUN 2000, p. 51], and the goals contained in the outcome document "A world fit for children", adopted by the General Assembly in resolution S-27/2 [YUN 2002, p. 1169] at its twenty-seventh (2002) special session on children (see above). UNICEF's work was also guided by the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the Assembly in resolution 44/25 [YUN 1989, p. 560] and its Optional Protocols (see pp. 680-681). Its mission was to defend children's rights, help meet their basic needs, ensure their survival and increase their opportunities to flourish. It was also mandated to rally political will and resources to invest in children's well-being; respond to emergencies to protect children and work with partners to provide a rapid response for those in need; and ensure

special protection for the most disadvantaged children, such as victims of war, disasters, extreme poverty and all forms of violence and exploitation, and those with disabilities. The Fund further aimed to promote equal rights for women and girls and encourage their full participation in developing their communities, and work towards the human development goals adopted by the world community and the realization of the vision of peace, justice and social progress enshrined in the United Nations Charter. In line with its 2006-2009 medium-term strategic plan (MTSP) [YUN 2005, p. 1284], UNICEF continued to focus its efforts in 2007 on its five organizational priorities: young child survival and development; basic education and gender equality; HIV/AIDS and children; child protection from violence, exploitation and abuse; and policy advocacy and partnerships for children's rights.

UNICEF's annual flagship publication, *The State of the World's Children 2007*, focused on gender issues, observing that gender equality and the well-being of children went hand in hand. Gender equality would not only empower women to overcome poverty, but also their children, families, communities and countries. Thus, it was central to realizing the MDGs and pivotal to human progress and sustainable development. Examining the inequities faced by women in the household, in employment and in politics and government, the report outlined what needed to be done to eliminate gender discrimination and reap the double dividend of gender equality—bettering the lives of both women and children. Its aim was to provide a road map to accelerate progress towards empowering women through education, financing, legislation, legislative quotas, engaging men and boys, women empowering women, and improved research and data. Findings of the report addressed the gender gap in earnings in societies; the lack of equal engagement of women in household decisions; and the positive impact of the increased involvement of women in the political sphere.

In 2007, UNICEF cooperated with 155 countries, areas and territories: 44 in sub-Saharan Africa; 35 in Latin America and the Caribbean; 35 in Asia; 20 in the Middle East and North Africa; and 21 in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

Expenditures totalled \$2,782 million in 2007, a 19 per cent increase from \$2,344 million in 2006. Expenditure on programme assistance rose by \$398 million to \$2,517 million, an increase of 19 per cent. Combined expenditure on programme support at \$156 million and management/administration at \$94 million—including centrally shared security costs of \$10 million—increased by 15 per cent to \$250 million. UNICEF operations in 2007 were described in the UNICEF Annual Report 2007, UNICEF's annual report to the Economic and Social Council [E/2008/6] and the

annual report of the UNICEF Executive Director to the Executive Board on progress and achievements against the Fund's 2006-2009 MTSP [E/ICEF/2008/10].

In 2007, the UNICEF Executive Board held its first regular session (16-19 and 22 January); its annual session (4-7 June); and its second regular session (5-7 September), all in New York [E/2007/34/Rev.1], during which it adopted 18 decisions.

By **decision 2007/221** of 12 July, the Council took note of the Board's report on the work of its first, second and annual sessions of 2006 [E/2006/34/Rev.1]; the Board's report on the work of its first regular session of 2007 [E/2007/34/Rev.1]; and the annual report of UNICEF to the Council covering the year 2006 [E/2007/6].

On 7 September, the Executive Board adopted the programme of work and dates for its 2008 sessions [E/2007/34/Rev.1 (dec. 2007/18)].

Programme policies

In her annual report to the Economic and Social Council, covering 2007 [E/2008/6], the Executive Director described action taken by UNICEF to promote child rights and ensure that sustainable results for children were achieved in closer partnership with other members of the UN system, as well as with Governments, NGOs and others concerned about the well-being of children. The report also provided information on: funding for operational activities for development of the UN system; UNICEF's strategic partnerships with the World Bank and other multilateral development institutions, and with private business and civil society; capacity development; South-South cooperation; gender mainstreaming; coordination and evaluation of operational activities for development; and follow-up to international conferences.

During 2007, UNICEF expanded its collaboration with multilateral development institutions to leverage resources for children, which led to contributions of \$27 million from those institutions, almost four times the 2006 level. UNICEF and the World Bank jointly organized two global events in New York: "Eyes on the Budget as a Human Rights Instrument", which gathered delegates from more than 60 Missions to the United Nations and presented country-level examples from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Ecuador to discuss the use of public policies and national budgets as vehicles to investing in children and realizing their rights; and "Eyes on the South as a Knowledge Hub", which highlighted how developing countries were a dynamic source of ideas and new knowledge that could benefit developing and developed countries.

The impetus for cooperation and collaboration was shown in the "Delivering as One" approach that increasingly characterized UN country team efforts.

That approach was put forward in the report issued in 2006 by the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence [YUN 2006, p. 1584], which contained recommendations to overcome the fragmentation of the United Nations so that the system could deliver as one, in partnership with and serving the needs of all countries in their efforts to achieve the MDGs and other internationally agreed development goals. Among the 2007 achievements was the collaborative development of a common fund mechanism to mobilize resources for the programme in the eight pilot "Delivering as One" countries (Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Viet Nam).

The Executive Director stated that a review of key business processes, completed in 2007, led to a series of recommendations to increase the operational efficiency and effectiveness of UNICEF. Steps were under way to improve processes in budgeting, recruiting, travel, procurement and logistics, which included: automating and decentralizing various budget management activities; establishing an accounting web portal; and facilitating and simplifying travel procedures, including through collaboration with sister agencies. The Executive Director concluded that the journey to 2010 and onward to 2015, the years in which most MDG targets for children converged, would be demanding; an unprecedented effort was required from Governments and the international community to achieve the goals and targets of the MDGs, the Millennium Declaration [YUN 2000, p. 49], "A world fit for children" and other commitments to children.

Medium-term strategic plan (2006-2009)

The Executive Director, in a report on the progress and achievements against the medium-term strategic plan (MTSP) (2006-2009) [E/ICEF/2008/10] during its second year, focused on action taken to meet the MDGs and other related commitments. The report described the key results registered in 2007 in the five organizational priorities of the MTSP (see p. 1205).

Some important milestones in child survival were reached in the first two years (2006-2007) of the MTSP. For the first time in recent history, estimated annual under-five deaths fell below 10 million. The goal to cut measles deaths in Africa by 90 per cent by 2010 was met four years early, with those deaths falling from an estimated 396,000 in 2000 to 36,000 in 2006. UNICEF became an active participant in a network of global health leaders that included the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the World Bank, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) and the Gates Foundation.

It also launched a new collaboration with Special Olympics International at the 2007 Special Olympics World Summer Games (Shanghai, China) to advance the rights of children with intellectual disabilities.

In 2007, a number of new advocacy campaigns were beginning to show results, including advocacy for increased access for children to treatment for HIV. Substantial price decreases for antiretroviral treatment packs enabled UNICEF to increase the number of such packs delivered to those in need to over 5 million. UNICEF provided support to water, sanitation and hygiene programmes in 96 countries during the year, more than ever before, and the community-led "total sanitation" approach, where entire communities were motivated to find solutions, had emerged as a promising way of expanding coverage. UNICEF continued to support Governments in the reform of national legislation. It also published an innovative study, "Protecting the world's children: Impact of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in diverse legal systems", in which it detailed the challenges and opportunities for legislative review and reform in four different legal traditions.

The results achieved in the first two years of the MTSP demonstrated that impressive progress for children was possible. However, since 9.7 million children around the world did not reach their fifth birthday in 2006, there was no room for complacency.

On 7 June [dec. 2007/6], the Executive Board took note of the Executive Director's report on progress and achievements against the MTSP, covering 2006 [YUN 2006, p. 1365]. It encouraged UNICEF to further institutionalize strengthening of data gathering to track progress against all MTSP results and indicators and requested UNICEF to include in the next annual report key programmatic, organizational and financial challenges under each of the five focus areas. The report should include a section on specific results and resources related to major global partnerships, and an annually updated data companion.

Medium-term financial plan (2007-2010)

In September, the Executive Board considered the planned financial estimates for 2007-2010 [E/ICEF/2007/AB/L.4]. The UNICEF secretariat recommended that the Executive Board approve the preparation of programme expenditure submissions of up to \$1,652 million from regular resources in 2008, subject to the availability of resources and the continued validity of the planned financial estimates.

On 7 September [dec. 2007/16], the Board approved those recommendations and also approved an exceptional increase of \$30 million in the annual transfer to the reserve for after-service health insurance in 2007. It requested UNICEF, in cooperation with other UN bodies, to undertake an actuarial study of the after-service

health insurance liability, to be presented to the Board in 2008, in conjunction with the planned financial estimates for 2008-2011.

MTSP support strategies

At its June session, the Board had before it the UNICEF education strategy [E/ICEF/2007/10] for endorsement as the official strategy document for programmes of support of education and for implementing the MTSP and achieving the MDGs by 2015.

The strategy built on past experiences and contributions and placed emphasis on programmes that were in national education frameworks. Education programming and implementation would focus on three priority themes—equal access and universal primary education, empowerment through girls' education and gender mainstreaming, and emergencies and post-crisis education cluster interventions—and two cross-cutting support areas—early child development and school readiness, and enhancing quality in primary and secondary education.

On 7 June [dec. 2007/8], the Board welcomed the UNICEF education strategy. It requested the Executive Director to: ensure that UNICEF increased its efforts to further develop national capacities to improve outcomes as outlined in the strategy; apply the education strategy in the priority countries defined according to the strategy; and ensure that comments on the education strategy by members of the Executive Board were taken into consideration when implementing education support programmes. The Board also took note of the indicators established in the education strategy, and requested the Executive Director to ensure consistency and clear links between them and those approved in the MTSP for the education focus area, and also ensure that future reports fully tracked all indicators.

Emergency assistance

During 2007, UNICEF responded to emergencies in more than 68 countries. Assistance was provided to countries affected by floods, cyclones, landslides and tropical storms in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean, and areas and countries affected by armed conflict, including Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Darfur region of the Sudan, Iraq, the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Somalia. Guided by the Core Commitments for Children in emergencies (CCCs) [YUN 2003, p. 1205], UNICEF supported health, nutrition and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)-related life-saving interventions in 60 of the affected countries. It provided: some 18.2 million insecticide-treated mosquito nets in 39 countries; emergency kits with essential drugs and supplies for 14.8 million affected people in 28 countries; nearly 200 million doses of measles vaccines in 41 countries;

over 2 million doses of vaccines in response to meningitis outbreaks in parts of Africa; water trucking, treatment, collection and storage; and the construction and rehabilitation of water and sanitation installations for the longer term.

In 2007, UNICEF received approximately \$88 million through the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), a complement to the UNICEF Emergency Programme Fund (EPF), a sum that was critical to enabling an effective response. Some \$44 million was released from the EPF to 38 countries. Following a 2006 Executive Board decision [YUN 2006, p. 1375] to increase the EPF to \$75 million per biennium, nearly \$90 million was provided in support of 70 emergency situations in 2006-2007, more than double the amount of the previous biennium. UNICEF worked closely with partners to develop a common approach to supporting Governments and communities in responding to the twin threats of avian and human influenza; its role in such a crisis would focus primarily on communication, pre-positioning of supplies and community-based initiatives.

In Africa, Somalia experienced severe flooding followed by a major diarrhoea outbreak. Despite limited humanitarian access and attacks on humanitarian workers, a measles vaccination campaign reached 84 per cent of children under 15 in 2006-2007. In Darfur, providing humanitarian assistance continued to be difficult due to widespread insecurity. In Chad, some 102,000 displaced persons and another 60,000 host populations benefited from emergency water interventions with UNICEF support. At least 400,000 displaced people in the DRC received assistance and protection through the rapid response mechanism, managed by UNICEF and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and implemented by NGO partners.

In response to the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war in North Kivu, DRC, V-Day (a global movement to end violence against women and girls) and UNICEF launched a global campaign, "Stop Raping our Greatest Resource", on behalf of United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict. Despite a volatile security situation throughout the northern regions of the Central African Republic, UNICEF expanded its support in remote rural areas, including through community-based schooling programmes.

In the Middle East, the Fund increased its humanitarian assistance in Iraq and helped to strengthen WASH facilities in schools, health facilities and underserved communities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

In Asia, the response to intensified conflict in Sri Lanka included innovative measures such as reusable, prefabricated latrines. While Pakistan continued reconstruction work following the October 2005 earthquake [YUN 2005, p. 1034], UNICEF supported the

national response to severe flooding in two provinces. Bangladesh experienced two major floods and the worst cyclone since 1991; strong preparedness measures and pre-positioning of emergency supplies enabled an effective response. The deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan hampered programme implementation. Advocacy by UNICEF, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), WHO and others for the International Day of Peace (21 September) facilitated the delivery of humanitarian assistance. UNICEF helped to ensure supplies of safe water and essential medicines to families affected by floods in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

In 2007, UNICEF strengthened its responsiveness to the challenges of restoring education in emergencies and post-crisis transition. It continued to promote and support back-to-school campaigns in such situations by procuring supplies, supporting preparedness planning and improving response coordination.

There was a marked increase in emergency preparedness and disaster risk reduction efforts in several countries in 2007. In the Philippines, more systematic efforts were made to develop the education components through training for supervisors and with NGOs. In Sri Lanka, the Government developed local and central emergency preparedness and response plans in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami, with support from UNICEF and others. In Iran, there was a major strengthening of emergency preparedness in the education sector, including psychosocial support and prefabricated school designs. The Maldives used emergency response to improve education approaches by "building back better" the schools damaged by the tsunami, by creating child-friendly environments and by building capacity among education staff.

During the year, UNICEF supplied kits and other emergency education supplies, reaching some 11.5 million children, including 4.5 million in the DRC and 1.3 million in the Sudan.

Ending Child Hunger and Undernutrition Initiative

At its January session, the Executive Board had before it a summary note on the Global Framework for Action for the Ending Child Hunger and Undernutrition Initiative (ECHUI) [E/ICEF/2007/4]. The Global Framework was developed by UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP), in consultation with UN agencies, NGOs, civil society organizations, foundations and potential private sector partners. The note pointed out that undernutrition was associated with over half of the more than 10 million deaths of children under five years of age that occurred annually. Six years after the adoption of the MDGs, goal 1 of which was to halve the proportion of the world's poor and hungry by 2015, hunger and undernutrition remained

among the most urgent challenges facing the international community.

The note stated that ECHUI would promote global action to support national, regional and global efforts, based on four major pillars: increased awareness of hunger and undernutrition and increased understanding of potential solutions among the public in industrialized and developing countries and among development and funding decision-makers; strengthened national policies and accelerated programmes affecting hunger and nutrition; increased capacities for action in communities facing child hunger and undernutrition; and increased efficiency and accountability among all partners in their efforts to reduce child hunger and undernutrition.

On 18 January [dec. 2007/1], the Board requested UNICEF to ensure that the MTSP was the guiding framework for the Fund's involvement in ECHUI. It requested UNICEF to submit, no later than the 2008 annual session, a report on partnerships, including an overview of existing partnerships. The Executive Director was asked to submit to the Board's June 2007 session a report on: the exact role, functions and responsibilities of UNICEF in implementing the Initiative and the division of labour among partners; the implications and consequences of the Initiative on UNICEF's capacity to achieve the targets under each of the five MTSP focus areas; the implications and consequences of the Initiative on the allocation of UNICEF core resources; the implications of the Initiative for the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and poverty reduction strategy processes and subsequent programming activities of UN funds and programmes at the country level; and ways to ensure effective links between the Initiative and national plans regarding child hunger and undernutrition developed by States.

In response to those requests, the UNICEF secretariat submitted to the Executive Board, in June, a report on ECHUI [E/ICEF/2007/11]. The report stated that the WFP Executive Board had approved WFP's role in the 2007-2008 work plan for ECHUI, with a first year budget of \$1.31 million, contingent upon approval by the UNICEF Executive Board. The report supplied information on the areas addressed by the Board in its January decision and outlined the proposed targets and strategies to be promoted by ECHUI.

On 7 June [dec. 2007/9], the Executive Board approved UNICEF's participation in ECHUI and the allocation of up to \$1 million to fund its secretariat from core resources. It requested the Executive Director to submit in 2008 a report on the Initiative's implementation, including a description of: its implications for the allocation by UNICEF of financial and human resources; the involvement and ownership of Governments in its implementation; an overview of resources mobilized; the linkages between the Initiative and the Common Country Assessment, UNDAF and poverty reduction

strategy processes; and the results of the Initiative, including the work of the secretariat.

UNICEF programmes by region

In 2007 [E/ICEF/2008/10], UNICEF regional programme expenditure totalled \$2,517 million, of which \$1,317.8 million (52.4 per cent) went to sub-Saharan Africa (including programme assistance for Djibouti and the Sudan); \$759.9 million (30.2 per cent) to Asia; \$128.6 million (5.1 per cent) to the Middle East and North Africa; \$124.7 million (5 per cent) to the Americas and the Caribbean; \$92.9 million (3.7 per cent) to Central and Eastern Europe and CIS; and \$93.2 million (3.7 per cent) to interregional programmes. Programme support costs amounted to an additional \$156 million.

Programme expenditures were highest in countries with low income and high, or very high, under-five mortality rates. The 56 lowest-income countries—defined as those with a per capita gross national income of \$905 or less—which had a total child population in 2006 of 1.07 billion, or constituting 54 per cent of all children worldwide, received 66 per cent of total programme expenditures.

In September [E/2007/34/Rev.1], the Executive Board had before it the summaries of the mid-term reviews and major evaluations for Eastern and Southern Africa [E/ICEF/2007/P/L.29]; West and Central Africa [E/ICEF/2007/P/L.30]; the Americas and the Caribbean [E/ICEF/2007/P/L.31]; East Asia and the Pacific [E/ICEF/2007/P/L.32]; South Asia [E/ICEF/2007/P/L.33]; Central and Eastern Europe and CIS [E/ICEF/2007/P/L.34]; and the Middle East and North Africa [E/ICEF/2007/P/L.35]. The reports reviewed and assessed progress made, resources used and constraints faced in country programmes.

Field visits

During a joint visit to Liberia (25 February–5 March) [DP/FPA/2007/CRP.1], 19 members of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP examined existing and potential cooperation between the United Nations, international financial institutions, civil society and the private sector, the coordination between various multilateral and bilateral donors, and the challenges and opportunities of integrated missions, including the question of sustainability. In a 27 February meeting, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf underlined the challenges facing the new Government in peace and security and governance reform, including the judicial system. She emphasized the importance of the regional dimension and recommended that the United Nations consider assigning regional objectives to the United Nations Country Team (UNCT).

More than 800,000 people had been displaced within and outside the country during the conflict in Liberia. Over 320,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) were back in their villages and more than 84,000 refugees had been repatriated from neighbouring countries with the help of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Children were back in school and immunization programmes were reaching most parts of the country.

However, Liberia still faced formidable reconstruction and development challenges, including high maternal and child mortality rates, high illiteracy and unemployment rates, extreme poverty, weak governance systems, food insecurity, lack of access to basic social services and a debilitated infrastructure, compounded by the lack of reliable and updated data in the national statistical system. It was recommended that consideration be given to an increased budget that would allow UNICEF to simultaneously provide service delivery and enhance the capacities of the Liberian people during the crucial transition from recovery to development. UNICEF could take the initiative in addressing the special needs of children in transition from refugee and IDP status to “regular/resident” status and consider initiating a special focus on adolescent development and protection in a post-conflict situation. UNICEF should continue its activities as part of the UNCT, while supporting national ownership of those programmes.

On a visit to Peru and Panama (25–31 March) [E/ICEF/2007/CRP.13], members of the Executive Board sought to obtain a first-hand view of UNICEF operations in a middle-income country where social exclusion was a major problem.

During the one-day visit to Panama, the delegation met with Government officials and the team of UN regional directors. They also went to the future site of the joint regional “hub” in the “City of knowledge” (*Ciudad del Saber*) complex. Efforts by the regional directors to improve collaboration were seen as examples for other regions, including the plan to set up common premises in the “City of knowledge”.

During the four-day visit to Peru, the delegation travelled to areas with communities of socially excluded indigenous groups. In Lima, the delegation divided into two groups: one visited the HIV/AIDS programme, focusing on prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, and the other visited child and adolescent defence centres. The delegation observed that safe childbirth was a high priority. Child mortality had fallen by 30 per cent since 2000. However, 24.1 per cent of children under five were malnourished. There were no major gender disparities in education, but girls still had difficulty in completing their education, mainly because of cultural factors. Major challenges persisted regarding sexual violence

as many rape victims hesitated to take legal action for fear of being re-victimized. Given the high percentage of adolescents and youth in Peruvian society (34 per cent between the ages of 10 and 24), HIV/AIDS prevention was a priority. The delegation found that the major constraints hindering the fulfilment of children's rights in Peru were related to the high level of centralization of decision-making and of control of resources in the capital.

The delegation concluded that it should not be UNICEF's role to provide socially excluded communities with basic social services in the long run and that the Government should be prepared to expand its reach and take over that role. A more systematic approach was needed to tackle issues regarding gender equality and women's empowerment; UNICEF should work with partners on the sexual behaviour of men and boys and the norms of masculinity in society. Efforts were also needed to reinforce the legal system.

During a visit to Kyrgyzstan (22-28 April) [E/ICEF/2007/CRP.14], members of the Bureau of UNICEF's Executive Board observed that the key priority for UNICEF in Kyrgyzstan was to place child poverty and related problems on the national agenda and to fully include children in policies, in practice and in legal reform. The Fund's strategies included: influencing the development and implementation of national and government priorities through evidence-based advocacy; developing and strengthening national capacities; empowering disadvantaged children and families, including the excluded; fostering partnerships and forging alliances; supporting the development of sectoral reform; and triggering enhanced systems through testing and development of pilot programmes.

The members of the Bureau recognized the critical role UNICEF continued to play in supporting the Government to achieve the MDGs and for the protection and fulfilment of the rights of children in Kyrgyzstan. However, the conditions of the youth in the Voznesenovka juvenile detention centre, especially in the pre-trial areas, were of concern to them. They called for urgent action to reform the juvenile justice system and to identify alternatives to detention and for swift and radical improvements to the physical conditions and circumstances at the detention centre.

UNICEF programmes by sector

In 2007, UNICEF programme expenditures, which were linked to the five organizational priorities established in 2005 under the 2006-2009 MTSP [YUN 2005, p. 1284], totalled \$2,517 million [E/ICEF/2008/10], a 19 per cent increase over 2006. The largest share of total expenditure, \$1,318 million (52.4 per cent), went to young child survival and development; \$511.9 million (20.3 per cent) to basic education and gender equality; \$264.3 million (10.5 per cent) to child protection from

violence, exploitation and abuse; \$233.6 million (9.3 per cent) to policy advocacy and partnerships for children's rights; and \$161 million (6.4 per cent) to HIV/AIDS and children. Some \$28.3 million (1.1 per cent) was expended in other areas. Programme support costs amounted to an additional \$156 million.

The estimated shares of the focus areas in total programme assistance in 2007 remained very close to the MTSP projected levels for young child survival and development (52.4 per cent in 2007 compared to 52 per cent in 2006) and child protection (10 per cent compared to 9 per cent). The overall share of basic education and gender equality (20.3 per cent compared to 18 per cent) and of policy advocacy and partnerships for children's rights (9.3 per cent compared to 6 per cent) were above the projected levels. The share of HIV/AIDS and children (6.4 per cent compared to 14 per cent) was well below the projected level. The relatively low assistance share for that area was believed to be due to substantial integration of some activities related to HIV/AIDS under other focus areas, including school-based HIV prevention, life-skills education, care of OVC, treatments delivered through health services and policy analysis. Further factors included a relative shift to areas that were less financially intensive, particularly the promotion of policies for OVC, and very limited funding for HIV/AIDS emergency interventions.

Young child survival and development

In 2007, UNICEF continued to support national immunization systems and activities in 157 countries and territories classified as developing countries or economies in transition. Support was provided for policy and guidelines development, logistics, social mobilization and supply procurement, and for a wide variety of capacity-building measures, such as training on safe immunization practices, vaccine management and surveillance. Notable increases in immunization rates were seen from 2005 to 2006 in countries that included the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Nepal, Niue, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste and Vanuatu. The number of countries reaching at least 90 per cent diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT3) coverage rose from 114 in 2005 to 115 in 2006. The greatest improvements occurred in sub-Saharan Africa (from 52 per cent in 2005 to 72 per cent in 2006).

Measles-related deaths continued to fall, with the largest percentage reduction occurring in sub-Saharan Africa, where the number of deaths from measles declined from an estimated 396,000 in 2000 to 36,000 in 2006. The region achieved, before the target date of 2010, the UN goal of cutting measles deaths by 90 per cent. Progress was also made in maternal and neonatal tetanus (MNT) elimination. In 2007, Egypt and

Zambia were validated as MNT-free countries. Coverage rates increased in a number of countries through routine immunization systems and campaigns.

Wild polio virus cases declined from 1,997 in 2006 to 1,307 in 2007, due mostly to reduced cases in Nigeria. Polio transmission was restricted to geographically limited areas in the four remaining polio-endemic countries (Afghanistan, India, Nigeria, Pakistan). More than 400 million children under age five in 27 countries were vaccinated multiple times against polio in those countries; in countries with outbreaks in 2007; and in high-risk areas elsewhere. Cases were cut by 45 per cent in Afghanistan, where more than 100,000 previously unreached children were vaccinated under a special peace agreement.

The number of countries achieving and sustaining high vitamin A coverage levels continued to increase. UNICEF supplied over 500 million capsules of vitamin A in 70 countries in 2007, while nine countries covered part or all of the cost of capsules from national budgets.

With regard to malaria, UNICEF continued its support to countries for the distribution of insecticide-treated mosquito nets (ITNs) through integrated maternal and child health services. The use of ITNs in sub-Saharan Africa had significantly increased: 16 of 20 countries with trend data had reported at least a threefold increase in coverage since 2000. However, the world was still falling short of agreed international targets. In 2007, UNICEF prioritized giving support to countries in their development of malaria-related proposals to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria to help ensure that resources were sustained. It also procured some \$17 million worth of anti-malarial medicines, representing more than 30 million treatments. The procurement was for the more effective anti-malaria treatment of artemisinin-based combination therapies. Nearly all countries in sub-Saharan Africa had changed their treatment policies to those highly effective medicines.

With diarrhoeal diseases continuing to account for some 1.8 million deaths a year among children under five, most developing countries had adopted the new recommended policy on the use of zinc in the management of acute diarrhoea. That approach was scaled up in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, the United Republic of Tanzania and elsewhere. UNICEF and WHO conducted six regional advocacy meetings on the new treatment guidelines. Cholera and acute watery diarrhoea morbidity and mortality were significantly reduced in Angola, eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone, the Sudan and elsewhere.

A Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Pneumonia was developed by UNICEF, WHO and other partners, in the context of a comprehensive child survival strategy that aimed to scale up inte-

grated interventions. UNICEF and WHO also reviewed the community case management of pneumonia in 54 countries with high rates of child mortality.

By 2007, some 52 programme countries had included quantified targets for scaling up high-impact health and nutrition interventions in their national budget or expenditure frameworks, compared to 42 in 2005. However, the latest maternal mortality data released in tandem with the "Women Deliver" Conference (London, October) showed that MDG 5 (improved maternal health) was far from being reached. Preventing maternal deaths and improving maternal health would require greater attention to strengthening the health delivery system. In September, UNICEF joined the United Kingdom, other global health agencies, donors and developing countries, to launch the International Health Partnership as part of a renewed global push to accelerate progress on the health-related MDGs.

An estimated 143 million children under five in developing countries continued to suffer from undernutrition. The annual average rate of reduction in underweight prevalence stood at 1.5 per cent, indicating that many developing countries would not meet the MDG 1 target on hunger unless programmes in key countries were scaled up rapidly and family practices improved. New data indicated that 12 additional countries were "on track" to reach the target, bringing the total to 58.

Promising improvements in exclusive breastfeeding rates were seen in sub-Saharan Africa and in Central and Eastern Europe and CIS, for which the latest estimates were 30 per cent and 19 per cent, respectively. In many of the latter countries, however, rates still remained very low and the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes was often not fully implemented. Building the capacity of UNICEF, government and NGO staff in implementing the Code was a focus of some 30 countries during 2007. UNICEF also provided policy and planning support to regions and countries on infant and young child feeding, seeking greater integration with child survival initiatives. In 2007, 10 countries introduced or continued initiatives to scale up paediatric multiple micronutrient powders ("Sprinkles") for children, particularly to address anaemia. Sprinkles were distributed either through monthly health service contacts or door to door by community health workers. In Peru, Sprinkles were distributed as part of the August earthquake response, and UNICEF helped to pave the way for their adoption as a national public health intervention against chronic malnutrition.

The number of programme countries in which national development plans included targets for improving family and community care practices rose from 40 in 2005 to 63 in 2007. There was also an increase in the

number of countries that had national programmes to promote good parenting, with specific strategies for reaching marginalized families and children—some 58 in 2007, up from 36 in 2005. Such programmes achieved over 80 per cent coverage in most Caribbean countries and in Belarus and Thailand. Despite that progress, the scaling up of successful community and family care practices remained a major challenge. The coverage of parenting—or equivalent family and community care—initiatives remained low overall, at roughly 29 per cent across programme countries, mainly due to lack of intersectoral coordination and limited delivery capacity at local levels. More effective communication for behavioural and social change was a pressing need for improved care for children.

UNICEF provided support to WASH programmes in 96 countries in 2007, the most ever. Activities were carried out in 56 of the 60 WASH priority countries with low water and sanitation coverage and high under-five mortality rates. In Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria and elsewhere in Africa, UNICEF increased its support for large-scale WASH programmes, helping countries to accelerate progress towards MDG 7 (ensuring environmental sustainability) targets and communities to gain access to clean water. Afghanistan, Eritrea, Madagascar, Mozambique and Pakistan received UNICEF assistance in the finalization of new WASH policies or legislation, and support continued for the development and refinement of WASH sector-wide approaches, including in Madagascar, Malawi, Sri Lanka and Zambia. Countries where UNICEF was supporting large-scale national hygiene education programmes included the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Indonesia, Nepal, Nigeria, the Sudan, Uganda and Zambia. The community-led “total sanitation” approach, where entire communities were motivated to find sanitation solutions, emerged as a promising way of expanding coverage. UNICEF support for demonstrating that approach extended from Asia to African regional training institutions and countries such as Eritrea, Nigeria and Zambia. UNICEF-assisted programmes were also addressing the MDG target (goal 7) on water through the promotion of home water treatment. UNICEF provided support to arsenic mitigation in 12 countries through a range of activities in planning, testing, mapping and technology development. During 2007, UNICEF and the African Development Bank agreed to collaborate more closely on WASH in schools, on sanitation and on household water management. The Fund also worked with the Child Epidemiology Reference Group to strengthen the evidence base for water, sanitation and hygiene, through a partnership with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

In 2007, UNICEF assisted at least 68 emergency-affected countries, in 60 of which, it supported health, nutrition and WASH-related life-saving interventions.

To support nutrition in emergency and post-conflict situations, UNICEF used a two-pronged strategy: implementation of the Core Commitments for Children in emergencies (CCCs) in crisis situations; and support to the management of severe acute malnutrition in countries with acute malnutrition rates above 10 per cent. Community-based management of severe acute malnutrition was an innovative approach with the potential to treat the majority of affected children in conjunction with in-patient facilities, in emergencies and beyond. Based on new guidelines and with UNICEF support, some 25 countries were preparing or had introduced programming initiatives for addressing severe acute malnutrition. The Fund also assisted those efforts through the provision of ready-to-use therapeutic foods (RUTFs) to 46 countries in 2007 and took a leadership role in convening government, NGO and private-sector partners for the scaling-up of RUTF supply, balancing global and local production.

In other emergency responses, UNICEF supported a rapid nutrition assessment in cyclone-affected areas of Bangladesh, helped to distribute protein biscuits to the affected population, and worked with national partners to disseminate a policy on infant feeding in emergencies.

Basic education and gender equality

Despite good progress by countries towards achieving the education- and gender-related MDGs—largely through sound national policies, increased public investments in education and sustained external support from partners—many challenges remained. An emerging one in several regions was the exclusion suffered by children from disadvantaged groups and backgrounds, who often required additional and targeted measures to ensure inclusion, some beyond the field of education. While non-formal and alternative education strategies could provide learning opportunities for many children, they were often inadequately resourced. Gender discrimination underlay many forms of exclusion and created additional disadvantages for girls and young women. Even where child mortality rates had dropped, a majority of countries were not taking fully adequate measures to promote care and early education for children below age three; the percentage of households reached by parenting or equivalent family/community care programmes remained low.

During 2007, UNICEF support to Early Childhood Development (ECD) and school readiness continued to expand in all regions, with a focus on three main areas: standard-setting and policy development; programme interventions; and the piloting of innovative approaches. An estimated 53 programme countries had national standards for monitoring school or developmental readiness, compared to 37 in 2005.

UNICEF supported national ECD reviews during 2007 in Chile, China, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and other countries in support of national policy and legislative reform. New policies and plans were developed by Cameroon, Guatemala and Kenya, and legislation was drafted by Mongolia, Romania and Uzbekistan.

In partnership with the Child to Child Trust (United Kingdom), UNICEF launched a global initiative, "Getting Ready for School: A Child-to-Child Approach", aimed at providing cost-effective school readiness interventions; the initiative was piloted in six countries. With regard to marginalized children, UNICEF supported research in Georgia and Turkey on the access of marginalized children to pre-school institutions; assisted the implementation by the Russian Federation of a communication and advocacy strategy to promote the inclusion of HIV-positive children in kindergarten; and helped to develop alternative approaches to pre-schooling for the children of herders in Mongolia.

To reduce gender and other disparities in relation to access, participation and completion of quality basic education, UNICEF emphasized "upstream" policy work, support to sector coordination, partnership-building and capacity development. In 2007, some 73 programme countries had national education sector plans that included specific measures to reduce gender disparities, up from 59 in 2005. Sector plans in some 84 programme countries included specific measures to reduce other disparities, such as poverty, ethnicity and disability, up from 76 in 2005. Some 37 countries had a formally recognized United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) partnership, up from 34 in 2005. In Uganda, the partnership undertook a gender audit and revision of the national gender policy. The Nigeria Girls' Education Initiative contributed to the national policy on gender in basic education. At the global level, UNGEI focused on the inclusion of gender in national education plans. Countries were increasingly using sector-wide approaches (swaps) to improve effectiveness in education. An estimated 26 countries were pursuing education swaps in 2007, compared to 20 in 2005.

Special legal or administrative measures were in place to reduce the costs of primary schooling for impoverished families and children in some 88 programme countries in 2007, compared to 73 in 2005. The School Fee Abolition Initiative, in which UNICEF collaborated with the World Bank and the Association for the Development of Education in Africa, and the Essential Learning Package Initiative were helping countries mobilize partners around accelerated national strategies for attaining MDG 2 (achieving universal primary education).

UNICEF continued to work on quality education, mainly through the comprehensive Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) approach, which was adapted to ensure relevance to local conditions and the needs of disadvantaged groups through local planning, monitoring, capacity development and research. Some countries were extending the approach to lower-secondary levels. By the end of 2007, an estimated 62 programme countries had developed national standards for quality education, up from 43 in 2005. In Eastern and Southern Africa, the "Learning Plus" initiative was a version of CFS that encouraged schools and communities to address the challenges of HIV/AIDS through the integration of support services for children. WASH activities in schools helped to improve the quality of education, especially for girls. In 2007, UNICEF supported such activities in 86 countries, compared with 47 in 2005.

During 2007, UNICEF strengthened its responsiveness to the challenges of education in emergencies and post-crisis transition, with support from the Netherlands and other partners. It continued to promote and support major back-to-school campaigns in emergency and transitional countries, including procurement of supplies, support to preparedness planning and improved coordination of response.

HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS continued to be a major threat to the rights, lives and well-being of children and adolescents in 2007. However, the increased interventions of stakeholders at global, regional and country levels led to improvements in indicators for all key result areas. The *Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS* campaign [YUN 2005, p. 1290] continued to provide an important mechanism for stronger collaboration and networking on children and AIDS at all levels. The global Inter-Agency Task Team (IATT) on young people and HIV continued to be the key partnership for promotion of prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) and paediatric treatment; it hosted the second High-level Global Partners Forum (Johannesburg, South Africa, 26-27 November) on scaling up PMTCT.

The Fund provided support to PMTCT activities in 97 countries in 2007, including technical assistance in policy and planning, communication, training and the procurement of drugs and other supplies. Its support for antiretroviral therapy provision for children and women also expanded. UNICEF assisted in the development or revision of national PMTCT policies and plans in Bangladesh, Honduras, Peru and South Africa and of a regional policy and national action plans in the Pacific. Substantial increases in access to and use of PMTCT services were reported in several Southern African countries, including Lesotho and Swaziland, as well as in other countries, notably the

Central African Republic, Nicaragua, the Philippines and the Russian Federation.

The value of antiretrovirals procured by UNICEF almost doubled, from \$37 million in 2006 to nearly \$66 million in 2007. The value of HIV test kits procured by UNICEF increased to \$11 million in 2007. A similar growth took place in HIV/AIDS-related diagnostic equipment, reagents and consumables, which reached over \$5 million. Despite such progress, access to HIV diagnosis, antiretroviral treatment and cotrimoxazole among young children and infants was still very low due to a variety of constraints including: lack of testing facilities for young children; perceptions of stigma and discrimination among parents and caregivers; a lack of specific knowledge of paediatric AIDS among health workers; weak delivery capacity and communication; and national programmes that continued to give inadequate emphasis to the needs of children.

Some 34 countries had developed specific national plans of action for ovc, an increase from 16 in 2004. In addition, national plans of action for ovc were finalized and/or approved in several countries during 2007, including Burundi, Namibia, Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania. With UNICEF support, national ovc registration systems or databases were strengthened in Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, Sierra Leone, Swaziland and other countries. In Zimbabwe, an estimated 400,000 ovc would be reached with vital services through a six-donor \$85 million pooled fund under the management of UNICEF.

The 2007 AIDS Epidemic Update indicated that HIV prevalence among young pregnant women aged 15-24 had declined in 11 of the 15 most affected countries. However, by 2007, in only nine low- and middle-income countries did 50 per cent or more of young people have comprehensive knowledge levels of HIV. There was a rapid increase in mandatory life skills-based education with an HIV component in national school curricula. However, more needed to be done to address stigma and discrimination related to HIV, with strategies on rights-based communication for social and behavioural change. In 2007, HIV/AIDS education was integrated into the national curriculum at secondary level in an estimated 65 programme countries, compared to 56 in 2005. UNICEF continued to contribute to the expansion of youth-friendly health service networks, notably in Central and Eastern Europe and CIS. The Fund supported HIV/AIDS awareness-raising campaigns targeted to young people in all regions, with sports activities being a medium of choice.

UNAIDS programme coordination

At its first regular session in January, the Executive Board had before it a report on the *Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS* initiative [E/ICEF/2007/5]. The initiative, launched in 2005 [YUN 2005, p. 1290], sought to

scale up national responses for HIV- and AIDS-affected children in four priority areas: PMTCT; paediatric treatment; prevention of infection among adolescents and young people; and protection and support for affected children. The report stated that while some progress had been achieved in the first year of the campaign, more was required to overcome some of the technical barriers related to paediatric treatment and PMTCT services, and to put plans and policies into practice for HIV prevention among adolescents and the protection of ovc.

Child protection from violence, exploitation and abuse

In 2007, an estimated 22 per cent of countries used at least some key child protection indicators in their national development plans, compared to 11 per cent in 2005. The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, Demographic and Health Survey and other national surveys provided data on child labour, child marriage and birth registration for some 100 countries; 29 countries had collected data on child discipline, and 27 on female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/c), by the end of 2007. Child injury databases in hospitals enabled initial data collection on violence against children in Cambodia, Jordan, Malaysia and Mongolia. Specialized databases were established in 2007 in countries in Africa in the areas of justice for children, birth registration and ovc. A preliminary study on child trafficking was carried out in Central Asia with support from the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre (Florence, Italy). The Fund continued to provide support to the development of national mechanisms to monitor child rights violations in compliance with Security Council resolution 1612(2005) [YUN 2005, p. 863] on the protection of children in armed conflict.

UNICEF supported programmes to strengthen institutional capacities for gender-appropriate prevention of and responses to abuse, exploitation and violence against children in two thirds of countries in East Asia and the Pacific. A coordinated approach for the abandonment of FGM/c in one generation was finalized in 2007, outlining a human rights-based perspective and introducing an innovative social convention approach for the achievement of lasting change. UNICEF supported efforts in 22 countries in 2007 to end FGM/c, including through public awareness-raising, training of health workers and traditional leaders and data-gathering.

Significant new legislation on trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation was adopted by Cambodia, Indonesia, Madagascar, Malaysia and Mexico. UNICEF supported Ghana, India, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Philippines and Yemen in developing comprehensive action plans on child trafficking. It also helped to strengthen cross-border mon-

itoring and prevention mechanisms, notably in West Africa and the Mekong subregion; supported national child labour surveys in Armenia, Ghana, Madagascar, Mexico, Rwanda and Turkmenistan; and contributed to the development of national action plans for child labour eradication in Argentina, Bolivia, Malawi and the Philippines. In addition, the Fund continued to support the training of peacekeepers in child rights and protection, including in the Central African Republic, Somalia and the Sudan, where UNICEF and NGO partners trained African Union troops.

Considerable progress was seen in all regions in the establishment of specialized courts and police units for children. Child-sensitive courts were created in Kenya, Malawi and Mozambique. Special police units, with trained staff and child-sensitive procedures, were established in several countries. Capacity-building for justice professionals was increasingly being integrated into national education systems. Courses or modules in child rights/juvenile justice/protection were introduced into a law school in Uzbekistan and into police training in Iran and Pakistan. In 2007, UNICEF and other agencies developed a UN common approach to justice for children, which was an important contribution to enhanced system-wide coherence. A key challenge in some regions was the need for comprehensive reform strategies for juvenile justice and a clear allocation of responsibilities among the judiciary, police and social services.

The estimated number of programme countries with policies on the provision of alternative care for children in line with international standards increased to 55 in 2007 from 36 in 2005. A key achievement for the Latin America region was Guatemala's ratification of the Hague Convention in respect of Inter-Country Adoption (Hague Adoption Convention). Many developing countries had achieved almost universal coverage in birth registration, but several still had rates of 10 per cent or below. Some countries, including Bangladesh, Cambodia, the Gambia and Viet Nam, made significant progress in that area. In the Americas, UNICEF continued its efforts to extend registration to indigenous populations. Through the Innocenti Research Centre, the Fund supported strengthening the evidence base for birth registration at the country level.

Policy advocacy and partnerships for children's rights

UNICEF continued to work with partners to strengthen capacities to design and implement social and economic policies, child-focused legislative measures and budgetary allocations that enabled countries to meet their obligations under the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 44/25 [YUN 1989, p. 560], and the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, adopted by the As-

sembly in resolution 34/180 [YUN 1979, p. 895]. The Fund identified priority areas of support to "upstream" policy work: child poverty and disparities; social budgeting; decentralization; social security and social protection; holistic legislative reform for the two Conventions; and the impact of migration on children. With thematic funding from Norway and Spain, more than 100 UNICEF country offices were cooperating with national partners in 2007 in one or more of those areas, with encouraging results in all regions.

With regard to collecting and analysing strategic information on the situation of children and women, the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) provided data for 21 of the 53 MDG indicators. The findings of the third round of MICS (MICS-3), carried out in 56 countries during 2005-2007, were widely used for national and subnational planning. The new data collected revealed significant new information on disparities and on new issues, such as attitudes towards domestic violence. UNICEF offices in 69 countries in 2007, compared to 56 in 2006, reported contributing data to the national poverty reduction strategy process.

For three years, some 70 UNICEF country offices had supported a national Situation Analysis of the rights of children and women and, in 2007, the Fund supported new or substantial updates of the Situation Analysis in 28 countries. Some 80 offices supported thematic studies in 2007, of which some 69 per cent explicitly used a human rights and gender analysis framework. The Innocenti Research Centre continued to publish studies that analysed issues related to children's rights, including poverty, migration and budgeting. A child poverty and disparities study was initiated and would be carried out in 40 countries in 2008 by teams of national experts from statistical, academic and government institutions. In 2007, UNICEF collaborated closely with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in joint research on trends in fiscal decentralization and their impact on child well-being.

Social budgeting, as an instrument through which Governments ensured and tracked the allocation of essential resources for children, became one of the most active areas of UNICEF policy advocacy work. In Paraguay, UNICEF participated in a joint project with UNDP and UNFPA to assist the Government on social budgeting, and worked together with UNDP on support to budget analysis in the Dominican Republic.

In 2007, 86 per cent of UNICEF country offices indicated that they had provided significant support to recent national reporting to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (see p. 681), and 32 per cent had supported recent processes of national reporting to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (see p. 1189). The Fund supported poverty reduction strategy development processes, including advocating for children's rights and providing

data and/or direct support to Governments for the preparation of drafts, in 88 countries in 2007, compared to 76 in 2005.

In the rapidly growing area of social protection, UNICEF established an inter-sectoral task force to identify ways to support field efforts through programme cooperation, as well as a knowledge-sharing network. Social protection initiatives were being supported in some 33 countries and a peer-reviewed strategy was being developed for UNICEF cooperation in Eastern and Southern Africa. In Kenya, a UNICEF-supported pilot cash transfer programme for OVC reached approximately 6,000 households and was planned to be extended to 22,500 households by the end of 2009.

Advances in technology created new possibilities to bridge the digital divide, expand connectivity and increase opportunities for young people to access information and participate in national development. In 2007, the Fund collaborated with Google, One Laptop per Child (an NGO), and National Public Radio (United States) to launch the *Our Story Project*, which aimed to collect and share millions of stories of young people from different parts of the world on issues that affected their daily lives. UNICEF helped to build the capacity of young people to guide their peers and to become agents of change in their communities through expanded support to a variety of youth-led communication programmes. Examples included Radio Mozambique's child-to-child radio programme, involving more than 500 young reporters; a community-based child journalist network programme in Honduras; and Albania's weekly youth-led television programme, *Troc* ("straight talk").

The estimated proportion of programme countries having institutionalized mechanisms such as national youth councils and youth parliaments for the involvement of young people in national policy development increased from 14 per cent in 2005 to 23 per cent in 2007. An estimated 15 per cent of countries had such mechanisms at the local level in 2007, the most widespread example being municipal youth councils in the Americas. Some 27 per cent of programme countries featured the participation of adolescents in national reporting to the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Operational and administrative matters

UNICEF finances

In 2007, UNICEF's income totalled \$3,013 million, an increase of \$232 million (8 per cent) over 2006, and exceeded the financial plan for 2007 by \$13 million. Income to regular resources increased by 5 per cent to \$1,106 million, and exceeded the plan by \$53 million (5 per cent). Some 36 per cent of the increase in regular resources from Governments was due to the

appreciation in currencies of payment. Contributions to other resources increased by 11 per cent to \$1,907 million but still fell behind the plan by \$40 million (2 per cent). UNICEF derived its income primarily from Governments, which contributed \$1,735 million (57.6 per cent), and \$868 million (28.9 per cent) from private-sector sources. The balance came from inter-organizational arrangements, with contributions of \$234 million (7.7 per cent), and other sources, with contributions of \$176 million (5.8 per cent).

Budget appropriations

On 18 January [dec. 2007/2], the Executive Board approved \$70,597,708 in additional regular resources to fund the approved country programmes of 34 countries [E/ICEF/2007/P/L.1] for 2007, whose regular resources planning levels, based on the modified allocation system and estimated global levels of programmable regular resources, were higher than the balance of approved funds for those countries.

The Board also considered the revised supplementary support budget proposal to ensure operations preparedness and business continuity in a protracted crisis, such as a human influenza pandemic, during the 2006-2007 biennium [E/ICEF/2007/AB/L.1] and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) [E/ICEF/2007/AB/L.2]. On 18 January [dec. 2007/4], the Board approved the supplementary budget in gross and net appropriations for the management and administration of \$9.6 million to cover the additional costs in the 2006-2007 biennial support budget associated with the need to strengthen capacities for crisis management, business and operations continuity in the event of a protracted crisis such as a human influenza pandemic, and to protect staff health and safety, contingent upon receiving evidence of further progress with regard to the coordination and sharing of resources with other UN entities, including identification of a suitable data-centre site and a related analysis of relevant costs not yet ascertained. It requested the Executive Director to report on the implementation of the decision at the second regular session of 2007.

In response to the above decision, the Executive Director submitted, in September, a report on crisis management and business continuity capacity [E/ICEF/2007/AB/L.11]. The report stated that the overall objective was for UNICEF to have business continuity institutionalized as a core functional plan of all offices globally, with all UNICEF locations having such a plan by the end of 2008. A dedicated Business Continuity Unit (BCU) had been established and staffed. An accelerated BCU work plan would focus on: completion of the business continuity management plan for New York and other headquarters offices (end 2007); establishment of an alternate disaster recovery centre

outside New York to store UNICEF information technology mission-critical systems and information (end 2009); completion of a business continuity training package (September 2007) and training for all regional and country offices (end 2008); and establishment of coordination arrangements for all inter-agency partnerships on business continuity (ongoing).

On 7 June [dec. 2007/10], the Executive Board approved the aggregate indicative budgets for 7 country programmes for 2008, 1 for 2008-2009, 3 for 2008-2010, 2 for 2008-2011, and 12 for 2008-2012, amounting to the following totals for regular and other resources, respectively, by region: Africa, \$194,590,000 and \$342,859,000; Latin America and the Caribbean, \$22,430,000 and \$92,000,000; East Asia and the Pacific, \$9,775,000 and \$59,500,000; South Asia, \$173,932,000 and \$403,000,000; and the Middle East and North Africa, \$23,550,000 and \$114,900,000. Based on the recommendations contained in an April report [E/ICEF/2007/P/L.28], the Board also approved the other resources ceilings for the approved country programmes for 36 countries and some intercountry programmes, amounting to a total of \$405,571,078, for the remaining periods of those programmes [dec. 2007/11].

On 7 September [dec. 2007/12], the Board approved the aggregate indicative budgets for 2 country programmes for 2008, 2 for 2008-2009, 1 for 2008-2010, 1 for 2008-2011, and 12 for 2008-2012, amounting to the following totals for regular and other resources, respectively, by region: Africa, \$326,497,000 and \$517,108,000; the Americas and the Caribbean, \$18,374,000 and \$136,435,000; East Asia and the Pacific, \$27,500,000 and \$33,000,000; and South Asia, \$20,214,000 and \$48,000,000.

In an August report [E/ICEF/2007/P/L.53], the UNICEF secretariat provided an analysis of expenditures in excess of commitments, totalling \$7,137,112. It noted that allocation by the Board of that amount would allow UNICEF to finalize the accounting for other resources for the period to 31 December 2003. Of the total \$7.1 million, \$2.8 million related to supplementary-funded programmes and \$4.3 million to emergency relief and rehabilitation operations; \$4.4 million was attributable to contributions that had been reduced, cancelled or deemed non-collectible or that had decreased in value between pledge and payment dates; and \$2.7 million was attributable to price increases out of UNICEF's control and to other issues. On 7 September [dec. 2007/13], the Board approved the regular resource funding to cover expenditures in excess of commitments, totalling \$7,137,112. It encouraged UNICEF to continue to strengthen its financial mechanisms in order to avoid expending in excess of commitments.

Additionally, the Board, on the same date [dec. 2007/14], and on the basis of a UNICEF report [E/ICEF/2007/P/L.54], approved \$53,844,551 in regular resources to fund, for 2008, the approved programmes of 12 countries whose regular resources planning levels were higher than the balance of approved funds.

Audits

On 18 January [dec. 2007/3], the Executive Board took note of the UNICEF financial report of the Board of Auditors and the audited financial statements for the biennium ended 31 December 2005 [A/61/5/Add.2], the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors [A/61/214/Add.1] and the report of ACABQ on the financial report and audited financial statements [A/61/350]. It welcomed the unqualified opinion of the Board of Auditors on the UNICEF financial statements and took note of the progress made by UNICEF in implementing the Board of Auditors' recommendations, particularly the efforts to improve transparency and promote managerial accountability. The Executive Director was asked to build on that progress and to provide the Board, at its second regular session of 2007, with a report giving an overview of the strategic implications of the recommendations for the management and strategy of UNICEF.

In the annual report to the Executive Board on internal audit activities in 2006 [E/ICEF/2007/AB/L.8], the Director of the Office of Internal Audit (OIA) stated that OIA had completed 42 audits in 2006, including 31 country office audits, 10 headquarters audits and a summary audit report on the UNICEF response to the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. The report noted that UNICEF issued a new Anti-Fraud Policy in September 2006, which consolidated guidance on the prevention of fraud and on the reporting and investigation of suspected fraud. UNICEF in May 2007 established a policy on "Protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct or for cooperating with duly authorized audits, investigations and other oversight activities". In addition, a revised Audit Committee Charter was promulgated in early 2006. The Committee's enhanced responsibilities included the review of: the functioning of the UNICEF oversight system; the quality and integrity of its accounting and reporting practices and systems of control; compliance with applicable regulations, rules and ethical standards, and Executive Board decisions; and the effectiveness of the internal and external audit process. It was also responsible for monitoring compliance by management with corrective action plans.

In response to a 2006 Executive Board decision [YUN 2006, p. 1376], the format of the OIA Director's 2006 report was modified, providing an assessment of the resources required for the internal audit function and a table of observations that had remained

unresolved for more than 18 months. Also in response to the Board's 2006 decision [ibid.], the internal audit services of UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), UNDP and UNHCR achieved a common understanding of the audit ratings used, which would allow the comparison of audit reports.

In 2006, OIA issued 561 risk observations and 164 positive practice observations. Of 66 high-risk observations, 40 per cent were found in the area of financial controls; the remainder mainly related to programme management (15 per cent), supply assistance (14 per cent), office administration (11 per cent) and the implementation of prior audit recommendations (9 per cent). In 2006, 25 field office audits resulted in 10 high-risk observations. The audits focused on the major risks that threatened the achievement of planned programme results. Weak practices were found in 16 offices in the preparation and review of Annual Work Plans (AWPs), which were meant to describe the expected results and the specific activities of implementing partners. AWPs of 15 offices did not clearly describe the expected results, and AWPs in 10 offices were incomplete.

The Board also considered a report [E/ICEF/2007/AB/L.9] that provided an overview of the response of management to the summary of key and recurrent findings of the OIA annual report (above). In addition, as requested [dec. 2007/3] (see p. 1217), the Board had before it a report describing progress achieved by UNICEF towards implementing the recommendations of the Board of Auditors [E/ICEF/2007/AB/L.7].

On 7 September [dec. 2007/17], the Executive Board welcomed the increased attention of the internal audit report to key and recurrent management issues; it urged UNICEF to ensure that recurring audit issues were explicitly addressed in ongoing efforts to strengthen risk management practices, control and governance processes. It also welcomed the follow-up by UNICEF management that would diminish risks for the organization and urged UNICEF to: execute the proposed measures; provide sufficient funding for their execution; and report on the results of those measures in the management response to the annual report on internal audit in 2008. The Board took note of the OIA analysis regarding the necessity of additional resources to assure its sufficient audit capacity.

Resource mobilization

UNICEF continued to collaborate with Governments to mobilize both regular and other resources. At the annual pledging event in January, 49 Governments committed \$260.3 million, including pledges made before the event. By year's end, 102 Governments had contributed \$538 million in regular resources and \$1,432 million in other resources, includ-

ing for emergencies. Despite a 16 per cent increase in contributions to regular resources by Governments and an overall growth in regular resources of 5 per cent, the proportion of regular resources to total resources, at 37 per cent, fell slightly from 2006 levels (38 per cent). That was due to the faster growth of other resources (11 per cent) in 2007, and in particular non-emergency contributions (23 per cent). The United States remained the largest donor to regular and other resources (\$277 million), followed by Norway (\$198 million), the United Kingdom (\$195 million), the Netherlands (\$171 million) and Sweden (\$169 million).

In 2007, thematic funding for UNICEF's five MTSP focus areas increased by 29 per cent, to \$209 million from \$162 million in 2006, with the largest increase in policy advocacy and partnerships for children's rights, which rose from \$7 million in 2006 to \$18 million. A total of 17 Governments and 28 national committees provided thematic funding for the five focus areas and the humanitarian thematic pool. The public sector contributed 76 per cent of the overall thematic funds in 2007. The top 10 donors (a mix of Governments and national committees) to MTSP thematic funds contributed \$189,806,000. While thematic funding from Government donors showed a slow but steady increase in absolute terms, private sector thematic funding began to show a decline in 2007. UNICEF responded to 64 appeals and requests for humanitarian assistance including 17 Consolidated Appeal Processes (CAPS), 15 flash appeals and 32 other crises. Overall, the Fund requested \$920 million in 2007 for humanitarian interventions to ensure the protection of vulnerable women and children. The CAPS were relatively well funded, receiving 64 per cent of their financial needs, while flash appeals attracted the greatest donor attention, receiving 65 per cent of requirements.

International Public Sector Accounting Standards

On 18 January [dec. 2007/3], the Executive Board noted the steps taken by the Executive Director to work with UNDP, UNFPA and other agencies to standardize their financial management in the context of the transition to International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS)-based accounting. It requested to be informed on the progress of the transition.

In September, the Board had before it a report [E/ICEF/2007/AB/L.12] describing how UNICEF intended to adopt IPSAS, as called for in General Assembly resolution 60/283 [YUN 2006, p. 1580], by 2010. The report proposed that UNICEF report periodically to the Executive Board on progress towards IPSAS adoption.

Private Sector Division

Net income from UNICEF Private Sector Division (PSD) activities for the year ended 31 December 2007 totalled \$391 million for regular resources, \$1.5 million (0.4 per cent) lower than the \$392.5 million raised in 2006 [E/ICEF/2008/AB/L.6]. That total included \$343.3 million from private fund-raising activities, \$63.4 million from the sale of UNICEF cards and gifts, and a positive exchange rate adjustment of \$3.5 million, less investment fund expenditures of \$19.2 million. An additional \$322.9 million of earmarked funds were raised for other resources from private fund-raising activities. The net consolidated income for 2007, including both regular and other resources, amounted to \$713.9 million, a decrease of \$21 million (2.9 per cent) compared with the 2006 net consolidated income of \$734.9 million.

On 18 January [dec. 2007/5], the Executive Board approved budgeted expenditures of \$110.5 million for the 2007 PSD work plan [E/ICEF/2007/AB/L.3]. It authorized UNICEF to redeploy resources between the various budget lines up to a maximum of 10 per cent of the amounts approved, and to spend an additional amount between Executive Board sessions, when necessary, up to the amount caused by currency fluctuations, to implement the 2007 work plan. The Executive Board renewed investment funds with \$21.4 million established for 2007; authorized UNICEF to incur expenditures in the 2007 fiscal period related to the cost of goods delivered (production/purchase of raw materials, cards and other products) for the 2008 fiscal year, up to \$32.5 million; and approved the PSD projected medium-term plan for 2008 to 2011.

In September, the Board took note of the PSD financial reports and statements for the year ended 31 December 2006 [E/ICEF/2007/AB/L.10].

Joint programming

The joint meeting of the Executive Boards of UNICEF, UNDP/UNFPA and WFP (New York, 19 and 22 January) discussed: natural disaster preparedness; MDG 1: interlinked approaches to poverty alleviation; United Nations reform; and the gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS. On behalf of the four participating organizations, the UNICEF Executive Director highlighted the importance of community resilience, national ownership and leadership and joint action, and recommended five measures: linking early warning to early action, especially by communities; reducing disaster risks for communities and increasing their response capacity; making emergency systems more dependable; improving the capacity to mobilize and manage emergency response; and enhancing the focus on reducing risks, as recommended in the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015, adopted by the 2005 World Conference on Disaster Reduction [YUN 2005, p. 1015].

On MDG 1: interlinked approaches to poverty alleviation, the WFP representative noted that the four agencies jointly identified a number of principles to guide enhanced integration, including: common understanding of objectives, strategies and policy instruments; pooling of resources and capacities in design and implementation of programmes; integration with, and support for, national priorities; and rigorous procedures for monitoring and evaluating progress towards key targets, with clearly defined intermediate targets.

On United Nations reform, the Chair of the United Nations Development Group reiterated that reform would create greater accountability to national partners by managing and sharing technical expertise, add effectiveness through the 180-degree mutual performance appraisal system and strengthen the resident coordinator system.

As to the gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS, the UNFPA Executive Director provided examples of joint actions in the UN system and highlighted the challenges.

JIU reports

In January, the Executive Board considered a secretariat note [E/ICEF/2007/6] on the activities of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) of specific relevance to UNICEF. The note contained information on reports finalized by JIU between October 2005 and October 2006, comments regarding conclusions and recommendations contained therein and a summary of action taken thereon by UNICEF. During the period covered, JIU had issued three reports of interest to UNICEF: policies of UN system organizations towards the use of open source software for development (Part II) [JIU/REP/2005/7]; further measures to strengthen UN system support to the New Partnership for Africa's Development [JIU/REP/2005/8]; and oversight lacunae in the UN system [JIU/REP/2006/2]. Discussions and review were under way for 12 other reports.

Organizational review

On 7 June [dec. 2007/7], the Executive Board, noting the UNICEF initiative in undertaking an organizational review to continue to improve the Fund's strategic impact [YUN 2006, p. 1378], requested the Executive Director to submit to it, in September, a report on the changes proposed. The report should include: details of the proposed organizational review; the rationale for each of the proposed changes; a clear explanation of the implications for the 2008-2009 biennial support budget; and a summary of areas where proposed reforms were still being considered.

In response to that request, the UNICEF secretariat submitted, in September, an update on the organizational review [E/ICEF/2007/CRP.16], which sum-

marized the views of the secretariat and the status of implementation. As requested by the Board, it also addressed the impact on the UNICEF presence in the field, the rationale for proposed changes, time frames for implementation and implications for the 2008-2009 biennial support budget. Most of the review's recommendations validated ongoing efforts to further sharpen the Fund's focus on results, particularly progress towards the Millennium Declaration [YUN 2000, p. 49] and the MDGs [ibid., p. 51], improve operational efficiency and streamline business processes. Other key recommendations, when implemented, would further enhance UNICEF's capacity to deliver. They would also strategically position the Fund as a centre of knowledge and excellence on children and strengthen its ability to be a more effective partner.

On 7 September [dec. 2007/15], the Board reaffirmed the 2006-2009 MTSP as the guiding framework for UNICEF and recognized that the aim of the organizational review was to help further enhance the Fund's capacity to deliver, in line with the MTSP. It noted that some elements of the organizational review might have implications for the 2008-2009 biennial support budget, which the Executive Board would consider at its first regular session in January 2008.

Gender balance of UNICEF staff

In June, the Executive Board had before it an update on progress towards achieving gender balance at UNICEF [E/ICEF/2007/12]. An earlier report on the subject was presented to the Board in 2004 [YUN 2004, p. 1190], when UNICEF was encouraged to continue its efforts to improve the gender balance of staff, especially at senior levels. Specific steps had been taken to realize the UN goal of achieving 50/50 gender balance for all levels of posts; within the UN system, UNICEF was among the three agencies having the highest levels of gender parity, with international Professional female staff members making up 47 per cent of the workforce. However, resilient pockets of imbalance persisted and the attainment of full parity at senior levels (P5/L5 and above) had proven to be a considerable challenge. Following the issuance in 2006 of the *Report on Gender Parity in Senior Management in UNICEF*, the Executive Director had appointed a Special Adviser on Gender and Diversity to support and monitor the recommendations contained in the report. That and other action taken on the report's recommendations had already produced promising results. As at 1 January 2007, the percentage of women at the D2 level had risen from 19 per cent to 35 per cent, and at the D1/L6 level from 33 per cent to 38 per cent.

Youth

World Programme of Action for Youth

United Nations policies and programmes on youth in 2007 continued to focus on implementation of the 1995 World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 50/81 [YUN 1995, p. 1211]. The Programme of Action addressed problems faced by youth worldwide and outlined ways to enhance youth participation in national and international policy- and decision-making. The Programme of Action identified 10 priority issues for youth: education; employment; hunger and poverty; health; environment; drug abuse; juvenile delinquency; leisure-time activities; girls and young women; and participation in society and decision-making. In resolution 60/2 [YUN 2005, p. 1296], the General Assembly added five additional issues of concern to young people: globalization; the increased use of information and communication technology; HIV/AIDS; the increased participation of young people in armed conflict, both as victims and perpetrators; and the growing importance of intergenerational relations in an ageing global society.

Commission for Social Development action. At its forty-fifth session (New York, 7-16 February [E/2007/26] (see also p. 1110), the Commission for Social Development had as its priority theme "Promoting full employment and decent work for all" and addressed "Youth employment: impact, challenges and opportunities for social development" under its emerging issues item (see p. 1230).

In response to General Assembly resolution 60/2 [YUN 2005, p. 1296], the Commission had before it the report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the 1995 World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond [A/62/61-E/2007/7], which addressed progress achieved and constraints faced by young people in relation to their participation in the global economy. The Assembly had requested that the report be submitted to it through the Commission. The report noted that the 15 priority areas of youth development identified in the World Programme of Action [YUN 1995, p. 1211] and its follow-up in Assembly resolution 60/2 were grouped into three areas: youth in the global economy; youth in civil society; and youth and their well-being. The report focused on the first cluster, which included employment (see p. 1229), but also globalization, poverty and hunger, and education. Also in response to Assembly resolution 60/2, the report identified possible indicators to be used in addressing the goals of the World Programme of Action for Youth.

By a 16 February resolution [E/2007/26 (res. 45/2)], the Commission requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with members of the UN system, to identify goals and targets regarding the cluster “youth and the global economy” and to submit an addendum to the Secretary-General’s report on follow-up to the World Programme of Action to the Assembly’s sixty-second (2007) session. It requested the Statistical Commission (see p. 1313) to develop and propose a broad set of indicators related to youth and to report thereon to the Commission for Social Development in 2009.

Report of Secretary-General. In response to the Commission’s request, the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly a July report on goals and targets for monitoring the progress of youth in the global economy [A/62/61/Add.1-E/2007/7/Add.1]. The report was based on the findings of an inter-agency expert group meeting on the subject (New York, 30–31 May), which brought together experts from the UN system and academia and representatives from youth organizations. The report identified goals and targets in the areas of: globalization; poverty and hunger; education; and employment. It observed that a determined push at the national and international levels was needed to ensure that youth were making progress in the global economy.

The Secretary-General suggested that the Assembly might wish to consider, among other things: encouraging Governments to design national youth policies in order to achieve the proposed goals and targets by analysing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that might be present at the national level; encouraging Governments to work together with youth-led organizations and other stakeholders, such as the private sector, to achieve the goals and targets; calling on Governments and the international community to collect youth-specific data in the priority areas of the World Programme of Action; and urging Governments and the international community to develop institutional capacity and devise mechanisms for promoting the achievement of the goals and targets.

Supplement to World Programme of Action

Commission for Social Development action. The Commission for Social Development [E/2007/26], on 16 February, approved a draft resolution on the Supplement to the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond and recommended it to the General Assembly for adoption, through the Economic and Social Council. The Assembly had requested the Commission to make recommendations on such a supplement by resolution 60/2 [YUN 2005, p. 1296].

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION

On 26 July [meeting 46], the Economic and Social Council, on the recommendation of the Commission

for Social Development [E/2007/26], adopted **resolution 2007/27** by roll-call vote (49-1) [agenda item 14 (b)].

Supplement to the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond

The Economic and Social Council

Recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

“The General Assembly,

“Recalling its resolution 60/2 of 6 October 2005 entitled ‘Policies and programmes involving youth’, in which it requested the Commission for Social Development at its forty-fifth session to elaborate the five additional priority areas for the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, as established in that resolution, and to make recommendations on a supplement to the World Programme of Action to the General Assembly, to be adopted at its sixty-second session, taking into consideration other emerging issues of particular relevance to youth,

“Decides to adopt the Supplement to the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, annexed to the present resolution.”

[For text of annex, see General Assembly resolution 62/126 below.]

ROLL-CALL VOTE ON RESOLUTION 2007/27:

In favour: Albania, Algeria, Austria, Barbados, Belarus, Benin, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Cape Verde, China, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, El Salvador, France, Germany, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mauritania, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, Paraguay, Philippines, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand, United Kingdom.

Against: United States.

Speaking in explanation of vote, the United States said that negotiations on the resolution started late, were rushed and produced a text that was not of a high enough standard. The issue should be revisited at the General Assembly.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 18 December [meeting 76], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) Committee [A/62/432], adopted **resolution 62/126** without vote [agenda item 62 (b)].

Policies and programmes involving youth: youth in the global economy—promoting youth participation in social and economic development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 50/81 of 14 December 1995, by which it adopted the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond,

Recalling also its resolution 60/2 of 6 October 2005, in which it took note of the three clusters presented in the “World Youth Report 2005”, namely, youth in the global economy, youth in civil society, and youth and their well-

being, and requested the Secretary-General to provide the General Assembly at its sixty-second session, through the Commission for Social Development at its forty-fifth session, with a comprehensive report on the implementation of the World Programme of Action, including the definition of goals and targets, in one of the three clusters of the World Programme of Action,

Recalling further Economic and Social Council resolution 2007/27 of 26 July 2007, by which the Council recommended to the General Assembly the adoption of the Supplement to the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond,

Recalling Commission for Social Development resolution 45/2 of 16 February 2007, in which the Commission requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with organizations, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, to identify goals and targets regarding the cluster on youth in the global economy and to submit an addendum to the report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the World Programme of Action to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session,

Recognizing that the implementation of the World Programme of Action and the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, require the full and effective participation of young people and youth-led organizations and other civil society organizations at the local, national, regional and international levels,

Recognizing also the positive impact that youth participation in the global economy and in social and economic development can have on the eradication of poverty and hunger,

Recognizing further Economic and Social Council resolution 2007/32 of 27 July 2007 on the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), and the decisions of the Programme Coordinating Board of UNAIDS at its twentieth meeting, held at Geneva from 25 to 27 June 2007, in particular the reference to the need to scale up HIV prevention among injecting drug users, consistent with relevant international drug control treaties,

1. *Reaffirms* the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond;

2. *Decides* to adopt the Supplement to the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, annexed to the present resolution;

3. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the World Programme of Action and the addendum thereto entitled "Goals and targets for monitoring the progress of youth in the global economy";

4. *Emphasizes* the importance of a fair globalization, and recalls the resolve, expressed at the 2005 World Summit, to make the goals of full and productive employment and decent work for all, including for women and young people, a central objective of relevant national and international policies as well as national development strategies, including poverty reduction strategies, as part of efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals;

5. *Reiterates* that the eradication of poverty, hunger and malnutrition, particularly as they affect children and youth, is crucial for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, recalls the commitment to eradicate

poverty and promote sustained economic growth, sustainable development and global prosperity for all, and the need for urgent action on all sides, including more ambitious national development strategies and efforts backed by increased international support, and calls for the increased participation of youth and youth-led organizations in the development of such national development strategies;

6. *Reiterates also* the critical role of both formal and non-formal education in the achievement of poverty eradication and other development goals, as envisaged in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in particular basic education and training for eradicating illiteracy, and stresses the commitments to strive for expanded secondary and higher education, especially for girls and young women, and for the creation of human resources and infrastructure capabilities and the empowerment of those living in poverty;

7. *Reiterates further* the need to intensify efforts to implement effectively the International Plan of Action for the United Nations Literacy Decade and to integrate substantially those efforts in the Education for All process and other activities of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, as well as other literacy initiatives within the framework of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

8. *Recognizes* that while youth today are better placed than ever before to participate in and benefit from global development, many young people remain marginalized, disconnected or excluded from the opportunities that globalization offers, and in this regard calls upon Member States, with the support of the international community, as appropriate:

(a) To integrate and protect youth in the global economy, including those who live in poverty, through the provision of policies that give them everywhere a real opportunity to find full and productive employment and decent work, including policies that promote the transition to work on the basis of equality and non-discrimination;

(b) To ensure that youth development, especially access of young people to food, water, health, shelter, education and employment, is specifically addressed in national policies and programmes, including poverty reduction strategy papers where they exist, and in other policy documents that aim to foster the participation of countries in the global economy;

(c) To ensure adequate funding for formal and non-formal education, including programmes geared at fostering the acquisition of requisite skills by youth;

(d) To improve the ability of young people, including those who live in poverty, to make a better transition into the world of work and enhance their access to the changing labour market through the promotion of policies that expand opportunities for youth to get quality education and training, the provision of skills development combined with other programmes that are targeted at the specific labour market needs of youth and that focus on the multiple needs of those most at risk of joblessness, and the incorporation of skills training into education planning at all stages;

(e) To reinforce links between policies on education, training, social integration and mobility so as to improve the situation of young people in the labour market and to

reduce significantly youth unemployment while also supporting policies that promote reconciliation of family life and working life, equal opportunities, solidarity between the generations, health and lifelong learning;

(f) To encourage young people's entrepreneurship, including by promoting formal and non-formal education on entrepreneurship for young people, increasing their access to microfinancing and facilitating their participation in co-operatives and other forms of social, economic or financial enterprises;

(g) To develop national strategies to overcome the digital divide in each country and ensure that young people are equipped with knowledge and skills to use information and communications technology appropriately, including the capacity to analyse and treat information in creative and innovative ways and to share their expertise, thus enabling them to overcome the barriers of distance and socio-economic disadvantage, while also promoting involvement of young people in creating, repairing, managing and maintaining information and communications technology and providing them access to information on a range of issues that directly affect them, including health, education and employment;

(h) To ensure young women's equal access to education and vocational training at all levels in order to provide them with an equal opportunity to participate in the global economy;

(i) To recognize the rights of young persons with disabilities to education without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity, including by ensuring an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning, and to work, on an equal basis with others;

(j) To consider expanding avenues for regular labour migration, taking into account labour market needs and demographic trends, recognizing the important nexus between migration and development and bearing in mind that young people account for a large number of those migrating;

(k) To take all necessary measures to ensure the rights of young people to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and their access to sustainable health systems and social services, without discrimination, paying special attention to and raising awareness of nutrition, including eating disorders and obesity, and the effects of communicable diseases, and to sexual and reproductive health, including measures to prevent sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS;

(l) To ensure that national policies and programmes on youth development address the particular needs of young people who are in distressed circumstances or otherwise socially excluded or marginalized, including indigenous, migrant, refugee and displaced youth, young persons living in situations of armed conflict, terrorism, hostage-taking, aggression, foreign occupation, civil war or post-conflict settings, young people subjected to racism or xenophobia, street children, poor youth in urban or rural areas and youth affected by natural or man-made disasters;

9. *Calls upon* the international community to continue to support the efforts of Governments, together with civil society, including youth-led organizations, the private sector and other parts of society, to anticipate and offset the negative social and economic consequences of globalization and to maximize its benefits for young people;

10. *Urges* Member States to combat all forms of discrimination against young people, including that based on race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, and to promote equal opportunities for all;

11. *Underlines* the strategic importance of initiatives such as the Opportunities Fund for Urban Youth-led Development initiative of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, which will provide resources to mobilize young people to strengthen youth-related policy formulation and to pilot and demonstrate new and innovative approaches to employment, good governance, water and sanitation, adequate shelter and secure tenure, and invites Member States to contribute to the Fund;

12. *Urges* Member States to involve young people and youth-led organizations in the development of national policies that affect them, where appropriate, including poverty reduction strategy papers where they exist, bearing in mind that girls, boys, young women and young men have the same rights;

13. *Calls upon* Member States to consider using the proposed goals and targets, as contained in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Goals and targets for monitoring the progress of youth in the global economy", at the national level as a means of facilitating the monitoring of the progress of youth in the global economy and the implementation of the World Programme of Action;

14. *Also calls upon* Member States to ensure the full participation of young people and youth-led organizations in the development of policies designed to meet national youth goals and targets, taking into account the proposed goals and targets contained in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Goals and targets for monitoring the progress of youth in the global economy", and to collaborate with the United Nations system, young people, youth-led organizations, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders in all efforts to achieve such goals and targets;

15. *Encourages* Member States to collect, on a continuous basis, youth-specific data disaggregated by age and sex, whenever possible, in order to create comprehensive databases within youth ministries or similar offices to assist in measuring progress in implementing the priority areas of the World Programme of Action, and requests the Secretary-General to devise means to disseminate such data widely so as to ensure that the global interest in youth development is informed by sound and adequate data;

16. *Takes note* of the process of collaboration and consultation between Member States, the organizations, programmes, regional commissions and specialized agencies of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations in identifying the proposed goals and targets for measuring youth and the global economy, and recommends continued collaboration, including in the form of high-level training cooperation, between those actors in the implementation of the World Programme of Action and the monitoring of the progress of such implementation;

17. *Stresses* that progress in achieving the internationally agreed target of full and productive employment and decent work for young people should be a central objective of national and international efforts to achieve the Millen-

nium Development Goals, and requests the United Nations agencies, and invites the international community and civil society as well as the private sector, to promote the broader youth development agenda and to strengthen international cooperation in order to support Member States in their efforts to achieve such progress, taking into account that the primary responsibility for ensuring youth development lies with States;

18. *Stresses also* the importance of ensuring that young people are recognized as active agents in decision-making processes and for positive change and development in society, urges Member States, in this regard, to consider including youth representatives in their delegations to all relevant discussions in the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions, bearing in mind the principles of gender balance and non-discrimination, and emphasizes that such youth representatives should be selected through a transparent process which ensures that they have a suitable mandate to represent young people in their countries;

19. *Recognizes* the positive contribution that youth representatives make to the General Assembly and other United Nations bodies and their role as an important channel of communication between young people and the United Nations, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to support adequately the United Nations Programme on Youth of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat so that it can continue to facilitate their effective participation in meetings;

20. *Recognizes also* the need for a greater geographical balance of youth representation, and encourages Member States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to contribute to the United Nations Youth Fund in order to facilitate the participation of youth representatives from developing countries;

21. *Recognizes further* that national youth councils or their equivalent bodies are effective channels of cooperation and information exchange between young people, their national Governments and other decision makers and that strong youth councils can provide opportunities for more young people to become active in decision-making and in shaping their societies, welcomes in this regard the political and financial support provided by Member States to their creation and sustained development, and invites all States to continue and to increase such support, where appropriate;

22. *Requests* the Commission for Social Development, at its forty-sixth session, to include youth employment in the discussions on its priority theme "Promoting full employment and decent work for all", taking into account, *inter alia*, the recommendations on youth employment contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the World Programme of Action, and invites young people and youth-led organizations to contribute to those discussions;

23. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session, through the Commission for Social Development at its forty-seventh session, on the implementation of the World Programme of Action in the clusters on youth in civil society and youth and their well-being and to include in that report a comprehensive set of goals and targets for those clusters based

on consultations with Member States as well as the organizations, programmes, regional commissions and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, young people, youth-led organizations and other non-governmental organizations.

ANNEX

Supplement to the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond

I. Globalization

1. Globalization has opened new opportunities for sustained economic growth and the development of the world economy. Globalization has also permitted countries to share experiences and to learn from one another's achievements and difficulties and has promoted a cross-fertilization of ideas, cultural values and aspirations. Globalization has thus helped to connect youth not only to the rest of the world, but also with each other.

2. At the same time, the rapid processes of change and adjustment of globalization have been accompanied by intensified poverty, unemployment and social disintegration. Threats to human well-being, such as environmental risks, have also been globalized. Some countries have successfully adapted to the changes and benefited from globalization, but many others, especially least developed countries, have remained marginalized in the globalized world economy. The benefits are very unevenly shared, while the costs are unevenly distributed. Globalization should be fully inclusive and equitable. There is a strong need for appropriate policies and measures at the national and international levels to help countries to respond effectively to the challenges of globalization and the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

3. Many young people, especially in developing countries, remain marginalized from the global economy and lack the capabilities to access the opportunities that globalization offers. Many are restricted by inadequate education, limited skills, unemployment and poverty or are outside the reach of basic information and communication and the goods and services that have become available with globalization.

Proposals for action

Managing the effects of globalization on youth

4. The international community should continue to support the efforts of Governments, together with civil society, including youth-led organizations, the private sector and other parts of society, to anticipate and offset the negative social and economic consequences of globalization and to maximize its benefits for young people.

5. Governments should ensure that access of youth to technical, secondary and higher education is improved and that curricula are adapted to meet the needs of a rapidly changing labour market associated with globalization. The transition from learning to work should also be facilitated.

6. Governments should foster the conditions that provide opportunities, jobs and social services for youth in their home countries. Efforts should be made to guarantee that

young migrants enjoy full respect for their human rights, including fair and equal treatment with others and the protection of law against, inter alia, violence, exploitation and discrimination such as racism, ethnocentrism, xenophobia and cultural intolerance, and access to economic opportunities and social services, as appropriate.

Promoting youth employment and skills development in the context of globalization

7. In order to overcome the mismatch between the skills that youth possess and the specialized demands of labour markets shaped by globalization, Governments, with appropriate support from the international community, should provide funding and opportunities in both formal and non-formal education for youth to acquire requisite skills, including through skills development programmes.

8. At the same time, Governments should promote access to work through integrated policies that enable the creation of new and quality jobs for young people and that facilitate access to those jobs.

Establishing ways of monitoring systems to track the effects of globalization on youth

9. Governments should assess the extent to which the benefits of globalization are accessible to youth and should design and implement programmes to enable youth to better harness the benefits of globalization.

II. Information and communications technology

10. Information and communications technology (ICT) and infrastructures are growing in importance as a part of everyday business and interaction. This process can be enhanced by removing barriers to universal, ubiquitous, equitable and affordable access to information, which hinder the bridging of the digital divide, particularly those that impede the full achievement of the economic, social and cultural development of countries and the welfare of their people, especially youth, in particular in developing countries. ICT has enormous potential to expand access to quality education, to boost literacy and universal primary education and to facilitate the learning process itself, thus laying the groundwork for the establishment of a fully inclusive and development-oriented information society and knowledge economy that respects cultural and linguistic diversity.

11. Youth have a particular interest and ability with regard to modern technology. ICT can empower youth by providing them with the opportunity to overcome the barriers of distance and socio-economic disadvantage. Through the Internet, for example, young people can have access to information on a range of issues that directly affect them, including health, education and employment. This information can be used to improve the quality of life of youth and their communities. This process can be facilitated if Governments, civil society, the private sector, families, youth-led organizations and other groups work together to open up avenues for a cultural and social exchange among young people. Governments can also capitalize on the interest of the young in ICT to alleviate poverty. For example, youth can become engaged not only in the use of ICT, but also in the development and engineering of locally relevant software design and hardware.

12. ICT offers new ways to address the needs of youth with disabilities who cannot access traditional sources of information and employment. Vulnerable groups of the population can capitalize on ICT to make a better connection with society and advance their education and employment opportunities.

Proposals for action

Making information and communications technology available to all youth

13. Governments, supported by the international community, as appropriate, should facilitate access to ICT for all youth, including those in difficult-to-reach areas, such as rural areas, and in indigenous communities. Governments should evaluate inequalities in access that exist between urban and rural youth and between young women and men and should develop national strategies to overcome the digital divide in each country, thus decreasing the proportion of youth who have no access to ICT.

14. Governments should develop domestic policies to ensure that ICT is fully and appropriately integrated into education and training at all levels, including in the development of curricula, teacher training and institutional administration and management, as well as in support of the concept of lifelong learning.

15. Governments, with the support of the international community, should promote and encourage local knowledge systems and locally produced content in media and communications, support the development of a wide range of ICT-based programmes in local languages, as appropriate, with content relevant to different groups of young persons, especially young women, and build the capacity of girls and women to develop ICT.

Providing training to facilitate use of information and communications technology

16. Governments, in collaboration with relevant actors in the information society, should ensure that young people are equipped with knowledge and skills to use ICT appropriately, including the capacity to analyse and treat information in creative and innovative ways, to share their expertise and to participate fully in the information society. Efforts should be made to provide special training courses for in-school and out-of-school youth to enable them to become conversant with ICT and to facilitate their use of such technologies.

Protecting youth from the harmful aspects of information and communications technology

17. Governments should strengthen action to protect youth from abuse and to defend their rights in the context of the use of ICT. In that context, the best interests of youth are a primary consideration. Governments should promote responsible behaviour and raise awareness of possible risks for young people arising from the harmful aspects of ICT in order that they may protect themselves from possible exploitation and injury.

18. Governments, in cooperation with relevant actors in the information society, should strengthen action to protect children and youth from abuse and the harmful impact of ICT, in particular through cybercrimes, including child pornography.

Promoting the use of information and communications technology by persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups

19. Governments should facilitate the development of ICT capacity for youth, including indigenous youth, youth with disabilities and youth in remote and rural communities.

20. Governments should initiate the development and use of special technical and legal arrangements to make ICT accessible to all youth, including indigenous youth, youth with disabilities and youth in remote and rural communities.

Empowering young people as key contributors to building an inclusive information society

21. Governments should actively engage youth in innovative ICT-based development programmes and should widen opportunities for youth involvement in e-strategy processes in a manner that encourages youth to assume leadership roles. The role of youth in creating, repairing, managing and maintaining ICT should also be recognized and encouraged.

22. Bearing in mind that literacy and numeracy are preconditions for access to and effective use of ICT, Governments should promote opportunities through formal and non-formal channels for young persons to acquire the appropriate knowledge.

23. ICT should also be used to enhance education, employment and youth participation in the decision-making process. ICT should be used to improve the quality of education and to better prepare youth for the demands of the information society.

III. HIV/AIDS

24. The HIV/AIDS epidemic is increasingly a problem of youth, especially in parts of the developing world. Governments have noted with grave concern the fact that new HIV infections are heavily concentrated among youth and that there is a lack of information available to help youth to understand their sexuality, including their sexual and reproductive health, in order to increase their ability to protect themselves from HIV infection and sexually transmitted diseases and to prevent unwanted pregnancies.

25. Young people, especially young women in Africa, face especially high risks of HIV infection. Young people and women are particularly vulnerable to infection owing to their lack of economic and social power and their lack of the capability to decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality in order to increase their ability to protect themselves from HIV infections. They often lack the tools and information required to avoid infection and cope with AIDS. In 2006, women and girls made up 57 per cent of all people infected with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa, where a striking 76 per cent of young people (aged 15 to 24) living with HIV are female.

26. Although many children orphaned by AIDS have not yet entered the youth age groups, they are at great risk of becoming youth with severe vulnerabilities. They are subject to malnutrition, illness, abuse, child labour and sexual exploitation, and these factors increase their vulnerability to HIV infection. They also suffer the stigma and discrimination often associated with HIV/AIDS and may be

denied education, work, housing and other basic needs as a result.

27. It is imperative that young people continue to have access to evidence- and skills-based youth-specific HIV education to enable them to avoid high-risk behaviour. In some regions youth, especially girls, play a key role in caring for HIV/AIDS patients or their orphans. To ensure that young caregivers stay in school, build their skills and have the chance to generate an income, Governments should provide economic and social support to families that rely on young caregivers as well as support for improving home- and community-based care.

28. Because youth often lack decision-making power and financial resources, they may be the last to receive treatment if they become infected. Programmes should scale up the provision of treatment as part of the promotion of the highest attainable standards of health.

29. It is essential for Governments to implement fully the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth special session on 27 June 2001, and to achieve the internationally agreed development goals and objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals, in particular the goal to halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015. In addition, Governments should implement the commitments dealing with HIV/AIDS reached at all major United Nations conferences and summits, including the 2005 World Summit and the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS held on 2 June 2006, at which Member States committed themselves to scaling up responses directed towards achieving the goal of universal access to comprehensive prevention programmes, treatment, care and support by 2010 and towards achieving the goal of universal access to reproductive health by 2015, as set out at the International Conference on Population and Development.

Proposals for action

Raising awareness about HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment for youth

30. Governments should ensure that prevention of HIV infection is the mainstay of national, regional and international responses to the pandemic and should therefore commit themselves to intensifying efforts to ensure that a wide range of prevention programmes which take into account local circumstances, ethics and cultural values are available in all countries, in particular the most affected countries, including: information, education and communications, in languages most understood within communities and with respect for their cultures, aimed at reducing risk-taking behaviours and encouraging responsible sexual behaviour, including abstinence and fidelity; expanded access to essential commodities, including male and female condoms and sterile injecting equipment; harm-reduction efforts related to drug use; expanded access to voluntary and confidential counselling and testing; safe blood supplies; and early and effective treatment of sexually transmitted infections.

31. Governments should commit themselves to addressing the rising rates of HIV infection among young people in order to ensure that future generations may be free of HIV infection through the implementation of comprehensive evidence-based prevention strategies, responsi-

ble sexual behaviour, including the use of condoms, evidence- and skills-based youth-specific HIV education, mass media interventions and the provision of youth-friendly health services.

32. Governments should provide access to the highest attainable standards of affordable and youth-friendly health care in order to increase the capacities of young people to protect themselves from the risk of HIV infection, principally through the provision of health care and health services, including for sexual and reproductive health, in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, that integrate HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care and include confidential voluntary counselling and testing and involve young people in the planning, implementation and evaluation of those efforts.

33. Governments should promote initiatives aimed at reducing the prices of antiretroviral drugs, especially second-line drugs, available to young people, including initiatives undertaken on a voluntary basis by groups of Member States based on innovative financing mechanisms that contribute to the mobilization of resources for social development, including those that aim to provide further drug access at affordable prices to developing countries on a sustainable and predictable basis.

34. In recognition of the fact that HIV/AIDS is increasingly affecting youth in both developed and developing countries, all efforts should be made, in full partnership with young persons, parents, families, educators and health-care providers, to ensure that youth have access to accurate information, education, including peer education and youth-specific HIV education, and services necessary to develop the life skills required to reduce their vulnerability to HIV infection.

35. Governments should involve young people, including youth living with HIV/AIDS, inter alia, through their respective youth organizations and, as appropriate, with the support of their families, in the decision-making, planning, implementation and evaluation of HIV/AIDS prevention and care programmes.

36. Governments should ensure that prevention programmes include counselling for those who are infected with HIV in order to ensure that they take appropriate precautions to prevent the spread of the virus and to help them to cope with the effects of living with HIV/AIDS.

Supporting universal HIV/AIDS education, taking gender inequalities into account

37. Trafficking in women and girls for prostitution and sexual slavery increases the vulnerability of young women to HIV/AIDS infection and is linked to the widespread feminization of poverty, sex tourism, sweatshops and other detrimental consequences of globalization. Governments should devise, enforce and strengthen effective youth-sensitive measures to combat, eliminate and prosecute all forms of trafficking in women and girls, including for sexual and economic exploitation, as part of a comprehensive anti-trafficking strategy within wider efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls.

38. Governments should include appropriate information in school curricula and non-formal training programmes on the effects of high-risk behaviour, including

intravenous drug use, on the transmission of HIV infection.

39. Governments should give special attention, in all programmes aimed at providing information about and preventing HIV/AIDS among youth, to aspects of gender and to the disproportionate vulnerability of girls and young women.

Legislation and legal instruments to protect vulnerable youth

40. Governments should ensure non-discrimination and full and equal enjoyment of all human rights through the promotion of an active and visible policy of destigmatization of children orphaned and made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS.

41. Governments should strengthen legal, policy, administrative and other measures for the promotion and protection of the full enjoyment of all human rights by youth, the protection of their dignity and the reduction of their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS through the elimination of all forms of discrimination and all types of sexual exploitation of young girls and boys, including for commercial reasons, as well as all forms of violence against women and girls, including harmful traditional and customary practices, abuse, rape and other forms of sexual violence, battering and trafficking in women and girls.

42. Governments should intensify efforts to enact, strengthen or enforce, as appropriate, legislation, regulations and other measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination and to ensure the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by youth living with HIV, including policies to secure their access to education, inheritance, employment, health care, social and health services, prevention, support and treatment, information and legal protection, while respecting their privacy and confidentiality and developing strategies to combat the stigma and social exclusion connected with the epidemic.

IV. Armed conflict

43. Development, peace and security and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. The scale of the violence perpetrated against civilians, including youth, in the past couple of decades is extremely worrisome. Armed conflicts have resulted in killings, the massive displacement of people, including youth, and the destruction of communities, which has impacted negatively on their development.

44. Youth are often among the main victims of armed conflict. Children and youth are killed or maimed, made orphans, abducted, taken hostage, forcibly displaced, deprived of education and health care and left with deep emotional scars and trauma. Children illegally recruited as child soldiers are often forced to commit serious abuses. Armed conflict destroys the safe environment provided by a house, a family, adequate nutrition, education and employment. During conflict, health risks increase among youth, especially young women. Young women and girls face additional risks, in particular those of sexual violence and exploitation.

45. During conflict, young men and women who are forced to take on "adult" roles miss out on opportunities for personal or professional development. When conflict ends,

many of the young people who must make the transition to adulthood while dealing with the traumas of war are at the same time required to adapt quickly to their new roles, often as parents and caretakers of the victims of war. Without services to help them to deal with their situation, youth and young adults may fail to integrate into society.

Proposals for action

Protecting youth under age 18 from direct involvement in armed conflict

46. Governments should ensure that children benefit from an early age from education about values, attitudes, modes of behaviour and ways of life in order to enable them to resolve any dispute peacefully and in a spirit of respect for human dignity, with tolerance and non-discrimination. Governments should promote a culture of peace, tolerance and dialogue, including in both formal and non-formal education.

47. Governments should consider, as a matter of priority, the ratification and effective implementation of the Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999 (Convention No. 182) of the International Labour Organization.

48. Governments should take all feasible measures to ensure that members of their armed forces who have not attained the age of 18 years do not take direct part in hostilities and that those who have not attained the age of 18 years are not compulsorily recruited into their armed forces.

49. Governments should take all necessary measures, in accordance with international humanitarian law and human rights law, as a matter of priority, to prevent the recruitment and use of children by armed groups, as distinct from the armed forces of a State, including the adoption of policies that do not tolerate the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict, and the legal measures necessary to prohibit and criminalize such practices.

50. Governments should protect young persons in situations of armed conflict, post-conflict settings and settings involving refugees and internally displaced persons, where youth are at risk of violence and where their ability to seek and receive redress is often restricted, bearing in mind that peace is inextricably linked with equality between young women and young men and development, that armed and other types of conflicts and terrorism and hostage-taking still persist in many parts of the world, and that aggression, foreign occupation and ethnic and other types of conflicts are an ongoing reality affecting young persons in nearly every region, from which they need to be protected.

Providing for the reintegration of youth ex-combatants and protection of non-combatants

51. Governments should provide opportunities for all youth who have been engaged in active combat, whether voluntarily or by force, to demobilize and contribute to society's development if they seek to do so. In this regard, Governments should establish programmes to provide opportunities for youth ex-combatants to retool and retrain so as to facilitate their employment in economic activity and their reintegration into society, including family reunification.

52. Governments should take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of children and young victims of armed conflicts, in particular by restoring access of those children and youth to health care and education, including through Education for All programmes, as well as to put in place effective youth employment strategies to help provide a decent living for young people and to facilitate their reintegration into society.

Promoting active involvement of youth in maintaining peace and security

53. Governments should encourage the involvement of young people, where appropriate, in activities concerning the protection of children and youth affected by armed conflict, including programmes for reconciliation, peace consolidation and peacebuilding.

V. Intergenerational issues

54. Many aspects of the demographic transition, global economic development and globalization have influenced opportunities for the intergenerational exchange of knowledge, ideas and resources. The increase in lifespan implies that many adults may be able to share knowledge and resources with younger generations over a longer period of time. In recent times, greater longevity has resulted in situations where many older people live for longer periods in some form of dependency on younger generations. On the other hand, trends in globalization and development have resulted in situations where many young people are cut off from their families. In many developing countries and countries with economies in transition, it is the ageing population that is dominant in rural areas owing to the exodus of young adults. Older persons may be left behind without the traditional support of families and even without adequate financial resources. While older persons lose opportunities to receive support from younger members of families, younger persons also lose opportunities to benefit from the knowledge and guidance of older members of their families.

55. At the family and community levels, intergenerational ties can be valuable for everyone. Individual and family choices, geographical mobility and the pressures of contemporary life can keep people apart, yet the great majority of people in all cultures maintain close relations with their families throughout their lives. These relationships work in both directions, with older persons often providing significant contributions financially, emotionally and in respect of the education and care of grandchildren and other kin, thereby making a crucial contribution to the stability of the family unit.

56. The weakening of intergenerational connections in the context of ageing societies implies that various needs of youth, children and older persons, which may have been supported through intricate and complex familial relationships, are increasingly not being met and are instead becoming the responsibility of the State or the private sector.

57. It is therefore incumbent on Governments and relevant sectors of society to develop programmes that renew or restore intergenerational solidarity. Where there has already been substantial erosion of the ability of communities to meet

this objective, Governments should intervene to ensure that basic needs for protection are met.

Proposals for action

Strengthening families

58. While respecting individual preferences for living arrangements, all sectors of society, including Governments, should develop programmes to strengthen families and to foster intergenerational relations.

Empowering young women

59. Governments should promote greater participation by young women in the labour force, including those living in rural and remote areas, by providing and developing the necessary skills to enable them to find employment, especially taking measures to eliminate male and female stereotypes, promoting role models and facilitating better reconciliation of work and family life.

Strengthening intergenerational solidarity

60. Government and private sector businesses should capitalize on the opportunity to use the experience and skills of older workers to train younger and newer employees.

61. Governments should promote equality and solidarity between generations, including by offering young people full and effective participation in poverty eradication, employment creation and social integration programmes within their societies.

62. All sectors of society should be encouraged to develop reciprocity in learning, which provides older persons with opportunities to learn from younger generations.

63. Where traditional forms of social support have been reduced by migration, globalization and related situations, Governments should work with non-governmental organizations and the private sector to provide assistance and support to older caregivers, especially those providing care for HIV/AIDS orphans, in meeting the needs of their children and grandchildren.

64. Governments should take steps to strengthen solidarity among generations and intergenerational partnerships through the promotion of activities that support intergenerational communication and understanding, and should encourage mutually responsive relationships between generations.

65. The full and effective participation of young people and youth organizations at the local, national, regional and international levels is important for the realization of the Millennium Development Goals, the promotion and implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, and the evaluation of the progress achieved and the obstacles encountered in its implementation, and for support of the activities of mechanisms that have been set up by young people and youth organizations. Governments should encourage their participation in actions and decisions and in strengthening efforts to implement the World Programme of Action, bearing in mind that girls, boys, young women and young men have the same rights, but different needs and strengths, and that they are active agents in decision-making processes and for positive change and development in society.

World Youth Report 2007

The *World Youth Report 2007: Young People's Transition to Adulthood: Progress and Challenges* [Sales No. E.07.IV.1] observed that, in 2007, the 1.2 billion people between the ages of 15 and 24 years (those that the United Nations defined as "youth" or "young people") were the best educated youth generation in history. Constituting 18 per cent of the world's population, they were a tremendous resource for national development. With chapters covering seven geographic and/or economic groupings (Asia; Latin America; sub-Saharan Africa; the Middle East and North Africa; small island developing States; economies in transition; and developed market economies), the *Report* provided a regional overview of major youth development trends in the 15 priority areas of the World Programme of Action for Youth.

In its review of key issues, opportunities and challenges for youth transition in different world regions, the *Report* found that there were many unique aspects to the progress made by youth and the challenges they faced. A common constraint, however, was the absence of an enabling environment for youth development and participation. Factors such as inadequate investment in education, high private costs of quality education and health care, and shrinking labour markets in which youth were often the last hired and first fired all presented youth with real obstacles to meaningful participation in the development of their communities.

In its final chapter on ensuring global youth development, the *Report* noted that an important challenge for youth policies and programmes in the coming decades was to make up for the major shortfall in investment in young people, especially women, in past decades. It was essential for all stakeholders to work towards eliminating discrimination against young women, to increase their access to education and literacy, including non-formal education and remedial programmes, and to develop gender-sensitive programmes, including sexual and reproductive health services. In addition, specific efforts should be made to provide skills training for young women and to increase their employment opportunities while ensuring their equal representation at decision-making levels.

Youth employment

Report of Secretary-General. In response to General Assembly resolution 60/2 [YUN 2005, p. 1296], the Secretary-General submitted a report on follow-up to the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond [A/62/61-E/2007/7].

While the first part of the report reviewed progress made and constraints faced by young people in relation to their participation in the global economy (see

p. 1220), the second part, in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/15 [YUN 2006, p. 1380], discussed progress achieved by the Youth Employment Network. The Network was established by the Secretary-General, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the World Bank in 2001 [YUN 2001, p. 1100] to develop and implement strategies to give young people a chance to find decent and productive work, as called for in the 2000 Millennium Declaration [YUN 2000, p. 49].

The report noted that the High-level Panel on Youth Employment, established in 2001 to advise the United Nations, ILO and the World Bank on youth employment policy and to mobilize opinion and action in favour of youth employment worldwide, had drawn up a comprehensive strategy for achieving decent and productive work for young people that included the following: a focus on employment creation, entrepreneurship, employability and equal opportunities; a delivery mechanism based on the preparation and implementation of national action plans on youth employment; and a follow-up process of information sharing and policy development. The High-level Panel had subsequently added three new areas of action to the strategy: capacity-building for sustainable partnership engagement; knowledge management and communication; and coordination and facilitation, including leveraging and pooling political, technical and financial resources for youth employment initiatives. Many countries had declared their commitment to the issue of youth employment and 19 countries, representing broad regional and economic diversity, had volunteered as lead countries to take political leadership on youth employment within the international community.

Based on the progress that had been achieved by the Network, the report presented recommendations for the General Assembly's consideration: encourage those countries that had prepared national reviews and action plans on youth employment to move forward to the implementation stage; encourage other countries that had not yet prepared national action plans to do so; encourage all countries to submit periodic progress reports on their national action plans to address youth employment; and invite the Network secretariat to report on progress achieved, including progress in the preparation and implementation of national action plans on youth employment, to the Assembly at its sixty-third (2008) session.

Commission for Social Development action. At its February session [E/2007/26], the Commission for Social Development considered, as an emerging issue, youth employment: impact, challenges and opportunities for social development. It had before it a Secretariat note on the subject [E/CN.5/2007/3], which pointed

out that youth unemployment could impose large economic costs on society and had a negative impact on social development. The note suggested discussion points for the Commission's consideration, covering: employment creation; maximization of the benefits of globalization; education and training; interventions to increase the employability of young people; implementation of youth employment policy; and participation of young people in social dialogue. The Chairperson's summary of the discussion, which addressed the points suggested in the Secretariat note, was included in the Commission's report [E/2007/26].

General Assembly action. In resolution 62/126 (see p. 1221), the General Assembly requested the Commission for Social Development, at its forty-sixth (2008) session, to include youth employment in the discussions on its priority theme "Promoting full employment and decent work for all", taking into account the recommendations on youth employment contained in the Secretary-General's report. It invited young people and youth-led organizations to contribute to those discussions.

Ageing persons

Follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing (2002)

Commission for Social Development. The Commission for Social Development, at its forty-fifth session (New York, 7-16 February) [E/2007/26], organized a panel discussion to launch the first review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002 [YUN 2002, p. 1194], which was adopted by the Second World Assembly on Ageing [*ibid.*, p. 1193]. Three fundamental areas necessary for active ageing emerged from the discussion: financial security, either in the form of non-contributory social pensions or more traditional contributory social protection schemes; health promotion, including an emphasis on preventive care and effective management of chronic conditions, training of health-care providers in geriatric medicine and an expansion of home-care services and support to family caregivers; and the participation and empowerment of older persons, giving them a meaningful voice in policies and programmes that affected them.

In response to a 2006 request of the Commission for Social Development [YUN 2006, p. 1382], the Secretary-General submitted to it a report on major developments in the area of ageing since the Second World Assembly on Ageing [E/CN.5/2007/7 & Corr.1]. The report addressed a range of socio-economic issues such as the sustainability of social protection systems, older workers' participation in the labour market, approaches to

adjusting health-care and social-care services, and issues of empowerment of older persons, including the protection of their rights, facilitation of their participation in society and promotion of positive and balanced images of ageing.

The report noted that population ageing was an issue of global concern that required concrete, well-focused and forward-looking policy measures at the national, regional and international levels. With regard to the demographic landscape, it was noted that the global median age was expected to rise from 28 years in 2007 to 38 years by 2050 and the share of ageing persons in the population was expected to rise from 1 in 10 to more than 1 in 5. Age inequalities in terms of access and outcomes of health care were issues for debate and action in both developed and developing countries. Noting that the fight against age-based discrimination and the promotion of the dignity of older persons were fundamental to ensuring the respect that older persons deserved, the Secretary-General said that the protection of the rights of older persons was the core element of any policy related to ageing and the most important prerequisite of empowerment of older persons.

The Secretary-General made a number of suggestions to the Commission regarding action that could be taken by Governments to accelerate progress in implementing the Madrid Plan of Action, including: redouble efforts to integrate older persons into the mainstream of development policies; and encourage coordinated actions on the ageing agenda, particularly by improving working conditions for older workers, dismantling employer barriers to hiring and retaining older workers, promoting employability and providing better care services.

Given that the first cycle of the review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action would be concluded at the Commission's 2008 session, it was suggested that the Commission might wish to invite all major stakeholders, including Governments, academia and NGOs, to organize during that session parallel and satellite events, including panel discussions, seminars and round tables, to explore the findings of the review and appraisal exercise and to identify future priorities for implementation of the Plan of Action.

On 16 February, the Commission adopted a resolution on modalities for the first review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002 [E/2007/26 (res. 45/1)]. It invited Governments that had not done so to designate focal points for coordinating the review and appraisal and called on Governments to promote a bottom-up participatory approach throughout its entire implementation process. All countries were invited to cooperate in the review and appraisal exercise by organizing regional meetings. Major stakeholders, including civil society, were invited to participate in the process. The Com-

mission reiterated the importance of national independent and impartial monitoring of progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action, and invited Governments, autonomous institutions, academia and civil society organizations to conduct further studies, share their findings during the review and appraisal and formulate recommendations for future policy action. The Secretary-General was requested to submit to the Commission's 2008 session a report that included the analysis of preliminary conclusions of the first review and appraisal exercise, along with the identification of prevalent and emerging issues and related policy options.

Economic and Social Council action. The theme of the high-level segment of the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council, held from 2 to 6 and on 10 July [A/62/3/Rev.1], was "Strengthening efforts at all levels to promote pro-poor sustained economic growth, including through equitable macroeconomic policies". One of the reports before the Council for its thematic discussion was an overview of the World Economic and Social Survey 2007: Development in an Ageing World [E/2007/50 & Rev.1], which underscored the need to fully recognize and better harness the productive and social contributions to societies that older persons could make but were often prevented from making. The report emphasized a most pressing challenge: that arising from the prospect of a shrinking labour force that had to support an increasingly larger older population. Moreover, changes in intergenerational relationships could affect the provision of care and income security for older persons, particularly in developing countries where family transfers often played a major role. Societies had to cater for the particular needs of older populations in terms of the requisite health care, assistance in case of disabilities and appropriate living conditions.

Report of Secretary-General. In response to General Assembly resolution 61/142 [YUN 2006, p. 1383], the Secretary-General submitted a July report [A/62/131 & Corr.1] on follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing [YUN 2002, p. 1193]. He highlighted national efforts to develop or strengthen national capacity on ageing, provided information on national, regional and global activities related to the first cycle of the review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002 [YUN 2002, p. 1194], and analysed the status of international cooperation with respect to assisting Member States in their efforts to develop their capacity to implement the Madrid Plan of Action.

The report noted that since the adoption of the Plan of Action, Member States had created or strengthened various institutional mechanisms to facilitate policy development in the area of ageing, including the establishment of agencies dealing with ageing issues within

various government offices, national committees on ageing and specifically appointed focal points on ageing within the Government. Many countries had passed specific legislation devoted to promoting social inclusion and the well-being of older persons. Regulatory and legal mechanisms were established, providing a basis for further action and serving to increase the range of social services aimed at older persons.

The report noted that the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) continued to implement the Development Account project entitled "Capacity-building to integrate older persons in development goals and frameworks through the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing". In cooperation with the International Institute on Ageing, DESA organized an expert group meeting on policies on ageing at the national level: challenges of capacity development in Malta (June). ILO dealt with issues of ageing in the context of its various programmes, particularly social protection programmes, and UNFPA was increasingly being called on, at the country level, to assist in the development of policies and programmes on ageing.

In 2007, regional conferences to review and appraise the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action were conducted by the Economic Commission for Europe (Leon, Spain, 6-8 November), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (Brasilia, Brazil, 4-6 December) and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (Macao, China, 9-11 October).

In recommendations for further action, the Secretary-General suggested that the General Assembly might consider reminding Member States to take part in the participatory bottom-up approach of the review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action, through the sharing of ideas, data collection and best practices, and reporting on them to the 2008 session of the Commission for Social Development. The Assembly might recommend that Member States redouble their implementation efforts on developing national capacity to address the national implementation priorities identified during the review and appraisal exercise. In addition, a strong focus on legislation and subsequent policy and programme development to implement national objectives, as well as periodic quantitative and qualitative evaluation of policy implementation, might be encouraged.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 18 December [meeting 76], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/62/432], adopted **resolution 62/130** without vote [agenda item 62 (c)].

Follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 57/167 of 18 December 2002, in which it endorsed the Political Declaration and the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002, its resolution 58/134 of 22 December 2003, in which it took note, inter alia, of the road map for the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action, and its resolutions 60/135 of 16 December 2005 and 61/142 of 19 December 2006,

Recalling also Commission for Social Development resolution 42/1 of 13 February 2004, in which the Commission decided to undertake the review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action every five years,

Mindful that, in its resolution 44/1 of 17 February 2006, the Commission decided to start the first global cycle of review and appraisal in 2007 at its forty-fifth session and to conclude it in 2008 at its forty-sixth session,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General,

1. *Encourages* Governments to pay greater attention to building capacity to eradicate poverty among older persons, particularly older women, by mainstreaming ageing issues into poverty eradication strategies and national development plans, and to include both ageing-specific policies and ageing-mainstreaming efforts in their review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002 and in their national strategies;

2. *Stresses* that, in order to complement national development efforts, enhanced international cooperation is essential to support developing countries in implementing the Madrid Plan of Action, while recognizing the importance of assistance and the provision of financial assistance;

3. *Calls upon* Member States to actively take part in the participatory bottom-up approach of the review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action, through, inter alia, sharing ideas, data collection and best practices and reporting on them to the Commission for Social Development at its forty-sixth session in 2008;

4. *Encourages* the United Nations regional commissions to consolidate the national findings of the review and appraisal by involving, inter alia, representatives of organizations of older persons from various regions that are directly involved in the participatory bottom-up review and appraisal exercise;

5. *Invites* Governments to conduct their ageing-related policies through inclusive consultations with relevant stakeholders and social development partners, in the interest of creating national policy ownership and consensus-building;

6. *Encourages* the international community to support national efforts to forge stronger partnerships with civil society, including organizations of older persons, academia, research foundations, community-based organizations, including caregivers, and the private sector, in an effort to help to build capacity on ageing issues;

7. *Encourages* the international community and the relevant agencies of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, to support national efforts to provide funding for research and data-collection initiatives on ageing in order to better understand the challenges and opportunities presented by population ageing and to provide policymakers with more accurate and more specific information on gender and ageing;

8. *Encourages* Member States to strengthen their efforts to develop national capacity to address their national implementation priorities identified during the review and appraisal exercise, and invites Member States that have not done so to consider a step-by-step approach to developing capacity that includes the setting of national priorities, the strengthening of institutional mechanisms, research, data collection and analysis and the training of necessary personnel in the field of ageing;

9. *Stresses* the need for additional capacity-building at the national level in order to promote and facilitate implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action, and in this connection encourages Governments to support the United Nations Trust Fund for Ageing to enable the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat to provide expanded assistance to countries, upon their request;

10. *Calls upon* Governments to ensure, as appropriate, conditions that enable families and communities to provide care and protection to persons as they age and to evaluate improvement in the health status of older persons, including on a gender-specific basis, and to reduce disability and mortality;

11. *Reiterates* that ongoing efforts to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, should take into account the situation of older persons;

12. *Recommends* to the Commission for Social Development to include in the deliberations of its forty-sixth session in 2008 the outcomes of the first cycle of the review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action, including identifying progress made and obstacles encountered during the first five years of the implementation process;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to submit to the Commission for Social Development at its forty-seventh session a report on the analysis of the conclusions of the first review and appraisal exercise, including a strategic implementation framework based on an analysis of national activities since 2002, in order to provide identification of policy priorities for the future and the identification of measures for international cooperation to support national implementation activities.