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Statement submitted by CLAN (Caring and Living As Neighbours) and Lehigh University in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statements, which are being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

*The present statements are issued without formal editing



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Statement

Excellencies, to achieve the 2030 Agenda, we must accelerate transformative action for child health through scalable innovation and strategic global partnerships.

Newborn screening is a universal life-saving initiative in high-income countries yet remains absent in lower-income settings. True equity requires addressing systemic biases in medical technology. My research at Lehigh University focuses on overcoming newborn screening limitations like in pulse oximetry, which historically fail newborns with darker skin tones. By innovating bias-free diagnostic methods, we ensure life-saving surveillance is accessible to every child, regardless of their background.

Strategic partnerships turn innovations into impact. A compelling model is New Zealand's commitment to support newborn screening in Tonga. Leveraging regional collaborations with Fiji, Vanuatu, Australia, Indonesia and the Solomon Islands, knowledge-sharing and culturally grounded approaches can catalyse scalable solutions. We must expand these models to foster coordinated global action.

To accelerate the Sustainable Development Goals, we recommend:

- Prioritizing equitable access to diagnostics through local manufacturing and policy reform.
- Scaling bias-free technologies that function across all skin tones and contexts.
- Strengthening cross-country partnerships centering the needs of children and vulnerable populations.
- Investing in AI-enabled systems for continuity of care and decision-making in low-resource settings.

By aligning technology and partnerships with an equity-first approach, we secure a healthy future for all. Thank you.

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