

EVALUATION
REPORT

EVALUATION OF THE INNOCENTI RESEARCH CENTRE

EVALUATION OFFICE
FEBRUARY 2005

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INNOCENTI RESEARCH CENTRE**

Evaluation of the Innocenti Research Centre
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UNICEF
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This evaluation of the Innocenti Research Centre (IRC) has been conducted by Doug Daniels, Consultant of UNIVERSALIA, and Lucien Back, Senior Programme Officer in the Evaluation Office in UNICEF New York Headquarters. Christian Privat of the Evaluation Office provided research assistance for this evaluation.

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For further information, please contact:
Evaluation Office
UNICEF, 3 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017, USA
Tel. (1 212) 824 6567, Fax (1 212) 824-6492

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Oversight was provided by an Evaluation Panel with the following members:

- Mr. Jean Quesnel, Director of the Evaluation Office UNICEF NYHQ (chair)
- Mr. Antonio Bernardini, Permanent Mission of Italy New York
- Ms. Maria Pia Rizzo, Multilateral Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy
- Mr. Roberto Salvan, Director General of the UNICEF Italian National Committee
- Ms. Elizabeth Lewin, Head, Division for Multilateral Co-ordination, Sida
- Ms. Maria Calivis, Regional Director for CEE/CIS
- Mr. John Donohue, former Director of the Evaluation and Research Office and former Regional Director CEE/CIS
- Ms. Marta Santos-Pais, Director of the IRC (ex officio member)

The evaluation involved consultations through surveys and interviews with a large number of stakeholders both inside and outside UNICEF. We would like to thank all those who have contributed to this evaluation in one way or another for their valuable inputs.

Jean S. Quesnel
Director, Evaluation Office
UNICEF New York, NY

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ACRONYMS

CFCI	Child Friendly Cities Initiative
CO	(UNICEF) Country Office
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DAC-OECD	Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
GOI	Government of Italy
HQ	Headquarters
ICDC	International Child Development Centre
IAC	(Innocenti) International Advisory Committee
IDI	Istituto degli Innocenti
IFI	International Financial Institution(s)
ILO	International Labour Organization
IRC	Innocenti Research Centre
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MTSP	Medium Term Strategic Plan
NATCOM	UNICEF National Committee
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OMP	Office Management Plan
RO	(UNICEF) Regional Office
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRRA	United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration
UCW	Understanding Children's Work
WHO	World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Context and background

The evaluation of the Innocenti Research Centre (IRC) was conducted between October 2004 and January 2005 at the request of the International Advisory Committee (IAC). The Director of the Evaluation Office at UNICEF Headquarters appointed an evaluation team composed of one senior external consultant and one senior evaluation officer from UNICEF. An independent Evaluation Panel provided the oversight of the evaluation process. The evaluation occurred at mid-point of the current IRC Programme (2003-2005). Its findings and recommendations are meant to feed into the next Programme (2006-2008).

The IRC (also known as the International Child Development Centre - ICDC) was created in 1986 and confirmed by Italian Law no. 312 in 1988. The Centre is hosted by the Istituto degli Innocenti, an institution, which dates back to the 15th Century as a facility for the protection and basic education of abandoned children.

Throughout its existence, IRC's work has focused on two key areas: socio-economic analysis of the well being of children and children's rights. Its research is selected on the basis of three criteria, endorsed by the Executive Board of UNICEF and by the IAC: a) focus on areas that are relatively new to UNICEF and that may be of increasing importance in the future; b) focus on statistics and areas that may be sensitive or even controversial; c) fill knowledge gaps in areas of UNICEF's work that are already mainstreamed.

Relevance

The IRC occupies a unique position as UNICEF's only dedicated research centre and it is one of the few research institutions in the world that address children's issues. The Centre is part of UNICEF, but it is granted relative independence to undertake innovative research and tackle sensitive issues. There is a consensus among partners and stakeholders that the IRC should principally articulate its research and advocacy in tune with UNICEF priorities while maintaining its independence to remain innovative and critical. As the Centre is relatively small, it can only address some of the priorities of UNICEF.

The geographical focus of key components of IRC's work is a major factor determining the contribution of IRC to different UNICEF objectives. The Centre has a significant program on Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS as well as on the industrial countries. The IRC is the only part of UNICEF providing analysis on the situation of children in the industrialised countries and this is particularly appreciated by some of the European countries and the UNICEF National Committees. This work demonstrates that UNICEF is concerned about all children globally and that every country needs to address national problems.

The Centre's activities dealing with developing countries are also numerous, but more diverse and less cohesive. Partnerships with developing countries are on the whole less systematic than with European countries.

Effectiveness

The Monee project (established in 1992) is one of the 'flagship' activities of IRC, and it is widely considered as one of its most successful projects. It monitors child welfare, social conditions and public policy in the transition countries of the CEE/CIS region with the objective of stimulating national and international policy debates on economic and social policies affecting children. Other activities cover a wide range of subjects, e.g. birth registration, international criminal justice and children, child poverty, child trafficking and children in armed conflict.

Over the past 15 years, the IRC has produced more than 300 publications, including books, papers, and brochures. Many of IRC's outputs appear to have contributed to the achievement of higher-level results, at the outcome level. IRC has had a demonstrable effect in changing policies and practices at both the international and national levels. They have contributed to the development of new legislation at the national level and to changes in international conventions. They have provided UNICEF country offices with stronger evidence to advocate for national changes and helped create a more positive environment for the protection of children.

The evaluation observes that the number of research activities is still relatively high and diverse given the number of staff. IRC has been effective in generating new knowledge through its own research and tapping external knowledge and expertise in preparing its publications. IRC has a comparative advantage in being at the interface between academia and UNICEF's field experience. It has a limited but growing role as a knowledge broker, whereby it would draw on external knowledge, create a shared agenda between different researchers and research organizations and coordinate complimentary or collaborative research.

IRC is developing a more sophisticated communication approach to address some weaknesses in distribution of its outputs and the dissemination of its research findings although IRC's Internet site is not fully developed. It has become more successful in identifying opportunities to publicize its work and work more closely with some UNICEF offices. IRC support for capacity development within UNICEF is limited and takes place as a component of other activities.

IRC has established good working relations with some parts of UNICEF, particularly with the ROs in Europe, the National Committees and the COs in CEE/CIS. The collaboration is not as strong with other parts of UNICEF, e.g. Headquarters Divisions in New York and field offices in developing countries. The existing communication and consultation mechanisms within UNICEF (e.g. the Programme Group of which IRC is a member) has not allowed for sufficient consultation on research agendas and integration of IRC's findings and insights into UNICEF's overall programmes and advocacy.

Research networks on issues relating to children are not as strong as they are in other fields of research (e.g. agriculture, health). IRC has established effective networking relationships with policy and advocacy groups dealing with children's issues but less so with research organizations or research oriented NGOs. IRC networks tend to be based on personal contacts although this is improving. A second concern is that these networks, both the more formally established advocacy networks and informal researcher contacts, tend to be Eurocentric and hence smaller than the potential from a more global network. UNICEF RO/CO offices have good links in some cases with academic institutions in their regions and they could become useful partners in developing broader research networks if there is a shared research agenda

Efficiency

IRC has the status of a division of UNICEF HQ reporting to the Deputy Executive Director who heads the Programme Group. IRC's status is different from that of a country or regional office in that it holds a global mandate, but it is also different from other HQ based units in that it has a more detached status and modus operandi. Its budgets and workplans are scrutinized through the standard Programme Budget Review process. The Director of the IRC is supported by the International Advisory Committee (IAC). By and large, oversight mechanisms are effective.

While the criteria for selection of research priorities are relevant and appropriate, the process by which research priorities are selected is not well documented and external consultation for identifying priorities is limited. A Research Review Committee (RRC) was created in 2000 as an

internal committee, but a number of stakeholders expressed concerns that this process was still inadequate. Performance measurement is difficult due to the lack of well documented plans showing planned outputs and expected outcomes.

IRC has significantly increased the recruitment of staff with academic expertise from elsewhere in UNICEF and now employs fewer researchers with a purely academic background. This increases IRC's ability to function more as a knowledge broker with other parts of UNICEF. The number of staff in the management team is higher than is found in independent research or policy analysis institutes of this size, but the IRC has to follow more demanding procedures as a part of UNICEF than these independent organisations. The IRC is well staffed to perform financial and administrative functions taking into account administrative requirements of UNICEF. IRC's facilities in the Istituto degli Innocenti are adequate for the present staff but additional staff would have to be located in another building.

Financial viability

IRC has depended on external funding (Other Resources) since its creation. The relative contribution of the Government of Italy has declined from 87% of IRC's total resources in 1997-1999 to a projected share of 58% in the current programme cycle through 2005. Over the same period, the share of other governments increased from 8% to 27% and funding from the Natcoms rose from less than 1% to 13%. Overall, IRC has been able to increase its income over each of the last three programme cycles. However it is becoming increasingly dependent on project funding. IRC is financially viable at a modest level if current unrestricted core contributions from Other Resources are maintained.

The Decision of the Executive Board of UNICEF to provide Regular Resources for the funding of the post of Director of the IRC constitutes an important acknowledgement by UNICEF of the Centre's importance. The IRC and the Regional Office for CEE / CIS have employed innovative approaches to generate funding for staff positions from within UNICEF programme funding.

While IRC has diversified its donor base over the last three programming cycles, it has not had a resource generation strategy to secure funding on a medium to long-term perspective. Programme activities have not been described in the most appropriate format for marketing to donors. As part of IRC's medium term fund raising strategy, the Centre could strengthen its marketing and look at more user-friendly programme and project descriptions. In particular, it should assess the potential to define broader projects that could attract multi-donor thematic support.

Opportunities and challenges

If UNICEF wishes to further develop its intellectual leadership in key areas for children, it will have to decide how much research it needs to support, how and where this research should be done and how UNICEF can most effectively utilize research findings..UNICEF should decide who will take the lead in coordinating its research efforts. This may be a role the IRC can play. The IRC is the only fully dedicated research institute in UNICEF but it is certainly not the only part of UNICEF that does research. The Country and Regional Offices of UNICEF support a number of location specific studies and other divisions of the Programme Group at New York Headquarters, as well as regional offices, also have some responsibilities in this area

UNICEF and the IAC should review the geographical focus and scope of work in IRC. In particular, UNICEF should decide, in consultation with its partners, whether the IRC should expand its work on research areas that are most relevant for developing countries, including through networking and partnerships with research institutions in developing countries. IRC

should establish a mechanism with other parts of UNICEF and especially the other Divisions of the Programme Group in New York Headquarters to periodically review IRC planned research and progress, and the integration of research findings into the mainstream of UNICEF activities.

IRC should exploit its comparative advantage from its position at the interface between academic research and UNICEF field experience to leverage more intellectual expertise to address key UNICEF objectives. It should devote more of its resources to this knowledge brokering role and pursue more complementary or collaborative research with other institutions.

IRC should promote research networks related to children's issues and expand them beyond Europe. It should also pursue collaborative research with other organizations including some of the more research-oriented NGOs. The Centre should seek more opportunities to host staff seconded from other organizations for a period of time or visiting academics on sabbatical.

The three-year Office Management Plan (OMP) should be used for more strategic planning and selection of research, networking development, fund raising and advocacy planning. The use of a logical framework approach and clear results statements in annual workplanning would allow for more programme coherence and transparency and improve performance monitoring and reporting.

The IRC should further reduce the number of specific research activities and create larger research teams around selected topics that cut across the present divisions between child rights and socio-economic research clusters. Its advocacy work should to a larger extent make use of other parts of UNICEF (including Natcoms) and other strategic partner institutions within and outside of the UN system.

The Communication Section within the IRC can play a useful role in advocacy in conjunction with UNICEF's overall advocacy activities, particularly through the development of its website, but this should not be at the expense of the dissemination of research findings where there is still room for improvement.

As far as resource mobilization is concerned, UNICEF should consider providing more core (regular) resources to IRC in view of the contribution the IRC can make to a strengthening of research in UNICEF. The GOI should maintain and, to the extent possible, expand the overall level of unrestricted funding support it has been making in recent years as well as its additional voluntary contributions. More effort should be made to assess possibilities to increase the UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration) component of the funding by the Government of Italy that is provided by the Ministry of the Interior.

The IRC should urgently complete its resource mobilization strategy, in continuing cooperation with the Programme Funding Office and the Geneva UNICEF Regional Office. It should assess the potential to develop broader research themes that could attract multi-donor thematic support. It should explore with the Natcoms and other partners potential new sources such as research funding foundations. This strategy should look at how to better package and market the Centre's activities.

In conclusion, IRC has several precious comparable advantages. In the first place, it has some convening power in being a part of a respected UN agency with the global mandate concerned with children. Secondly, IRC is located in an appealing and inspiring location. It can be an important interface between the field experience of UNICEF, the policy linkages of UNICEF and

the academic community. IRC can build on these advantages to further enhance its role as a centre of excellence for reflection and collaboration among different constituencies.

RESUME ANALYTIQUE

Contexte et historique

L'évaluation du Centre de recherche Innocenti (IRC) a été effectuée d'octobre 2004 à janvier 2005 à la demande du Comité consultatif international (IAC). Le Directeur du Bureau d'évaluation au siège de l'UNICEF a nommé une équipe formée d'un consultant externe principal et d'un responsable principal des évaluations de l'UNICEF. Un Comité indépendant d'évaluation était chargé de superviser le processus. L'évaluation a été faite à mi-parcours du Programme actuel de l'IRC (2003-2005). Ses conclusions et ses recommandations sont destinées à informer le Programme suivant (2006-2008).

L'IRC (aussi connu sous le nom de Centre international pour le développement de l'enfant - ICDC) a été créé en 1986 et confirmé par le décret no. 312 de la législation italienne en 1988. Ses bureaux se trouvent à l'Istituto degli Innocenti, une institution fondée au XV^e siècle pour offrir une protection et une éducation de base aux enfants abandonnés.

Depuis qu'il existe, l'IRC concentre ses activités dans deux domaines principaux : l'analyse socio-économique du bien-être des enfants et les droits des enfants. Ses projets sont sélectionnés en fonction de trois critères approuvés par le Conseil exécutif de l'UNICEF et par le Comité consultatif international : a) ils doivent porter sur des sujets relativement nouveaux pour l'UNICEF et qui pourraient revêtir une importance accrue à l'avenir ; b) ils doivent examiner des statistiques et des champs d'étude potentiellement sensibles ou controversés ; c) ils doivent combler des lacunes sur des questions déjà intégrées aux activités de l'UNICEF.

Pertinence

L'IRC occupe une position unique du fait qu'il est le seul centre de recherche spécialisé de l'UNICEF et l'une des rares institutions de recherche dans le monde à s'intéresser aux problèmes des enfants. Le Centre fait partie de l'UNICEF, mais il dispose d'une liberté relative pour entreprendre des recherches innovantes et aborder des questions sensibles. Les partenaires et les principaux intéressés s'accordent à reconnaître que l'IRC devrait axer la plupart de ses recherches et de son travail de mobilisation sur les priorités de l'UNICEF tout en conservant son indépendance pour rester innovant et critique. Comme le Centre est relativement modeste, il ne peut tenir compte que de quelques priorités de l'UNICEF.

La spécificité géographique de certains éléments clés du travail de l'IRC est un facteur important pour déterminer la contribution du Centre à différents objectifs de l'UNICEF. Le Centre dispose d'un programme de grande envergure sur l'Europe centrale et orientale/CEE, ainsi que sur les pays industriels. L'IRC est la seule unité de l'UNICEF à fournir des analyses sur la situation des enfants dans les pays industrialisés, et ce travail est particulièrement apprécié par certains pays européens, ainsi que par les Comités nationaux. Cela prouve que l'UNICEF s'intéresse à tous les enfants dans le monde, et que chaque pays doit régler des problèmes nationaux.

Les activités du Centre sur les pays en développement sont aussi très nombreuses, mais elles sont plus diverses et moins concertées. Les partenariats forgés avec les pays en développement sont, dans l'ensemble, moins systématiques que ceux passés avec les pays européens.

Efficacité

Le projet Monee (démarré en 1992) est l'une des activités « phares » de l'IRC, et est largement reconnu comme l'une de ses initiatives les plus réussies. Ce projet surveille le bien-être des

enfants, les conditions sociales et la gestion publique des pays en transition de l'Europe centrale et orientale et de la CEE, en vue d'encourager des débats nationaux et internationaux sur les politiques économiques et sociales qui affectent les enfants. D'autres activités portent sur des sujets très divers, par exemple, l'enregistrement des naissances, la justice pénale internationale et les enfants, la pauvreté des enfants, la traite des enfants, et les enfants dans les conflits armés.

Au cours des quinze dernières années, l'IRC a produit plus de 300 publications, parmi elles des livres, des documents et des brochures. Beaucoup de ses travaux semblent avoir aidé à obtenir des résultats au niveau supérieur, celui des aboutissements. L'IRC a produit un effet démontré sur l'évolution des politiques et des pratiques à la fois aux niveaux international et national. Le Centre a contribué à la formulation d'une nouvelle législation nationale et à la modification de plusieurs conventions internationales. Il a fourni aux bureaux de pays de l'UNICEF des données plus fiables pour militer en faveur de changements nationaux et a aidé à instaurer un environnement plus positif pour la protection des enfants.

L'évaluation observe que le volume de la recherche reste relativement élevé et que les sujets sont diversifiés, compte tenu des effectifs. L'IRC s'est rendu utile en générant de nouvelles connaissances grâce à sa propre recherche et en exploitant des connaissances et des expertises externes pour préparer ses publications. L'IRC bénéficie d'un avantage comparatif en étant à l'interface de la recherche théorique et de l'expérience sur le terrain de l'UNICEF. Il joue un rôle limité mais croissant de courtier en connaissances. Il pourrait à ce titre exploiter des connaissances externes, établir un programme commun entre différents chercheurs et instituts de recherche, et coordonner des projets complémentaires ou concertés.

L'IRC élabore actuellement une méthode de communication plus sophistiquée pour combler certaines lacunes dans la distribution de ses travaux et la diffusion de ses recherches, bien que son site Internet ne soit pas encore tout à fait au point. Le Centre a mieux réussi à saisir des occasions de faire connaître ses activités et à travailler plus étroitement avec certains bureaux de l'UNICEF. Le soutien que l'IRC consacre au développement de ses capacités au sein de l'UNICEF est limité et a lieu dans le cadre du déroulement d'autres activités.

L'IRC a forgé de bonnes relations de travail avec certaines unités de l'UNICEF, notamment les bureaux régionaux en Europe, ainsi que les Comités nationaux et les bureaux de pays en Europe orientale et Centrale/CEE. La collaboration n'est pas aussi forte avec d'autres unités de l'UNICEF, par exemple les divisions du siège à New York et les bureaux extérieurs des pays en développement. Les mécanismes de communication et de consultation existant au sein de l'UNICEF (par exemple, le Groupe des programmes dont est membre l'IRC) n'ont pas permis une consultation suffisante sur les programmes de recherche et l'intégration des conclusions et des idées de l'IRC au sein des programmes et des campagnes de l'UNICEF.

Les réseaux de chercheurs sur les questions liées aux enfants ne sont pas aussi solides que dans d'autres domaines de la recherche (par exemple, l'agriculture ou la santé). L'IRC a établi des contacts utiles avec des groupes de responsables et de militants travaillant sur des questions liées à l'enfance, mais travaille assez peu avec des organismes de recherche ou des ONG dont les activités sont tournées vers la recherche. Les réseaux de l'IRC s'appuient surtout sur des contacts personnels, bien que des progrès aient été faits dans ce domaine. Un deuxième sujet de préoccupation est que ces réseaux, qu'il s'agisse des réseaux de promotion au statut officiel ou des contacts informels dans le domaine de la recherche, sont en grande partie tournés vers l'Europe et donc, offrent un potentiel plus réduit que des réseaux mondiaux. Les bureaux régionaux et de pays de l'UNICEF ont, dans certains cas, de bons rapports avec

les instituts de recherche théorique dans leur région, et pourraient devenir des partenaires utiles pour créer des réseaux de chercheurs plus étendus, s'il existe un programme de recherche commun.

Efficienc

L'IRC a le statut d'une division du siège de l'UNICEF faisant rapport au Directeur exécutif adjoint à la tête du Groupe des programmes. Son statut est différent de celui d'un bureau de pays ou d'un bureau régional car le Centre a une mission mondiale, mais il se distingue aussi d'autres unités du siège du fait que son statut et son *modus operandi* sont plus indépendants. Ses budgets et ses plans de travail sont examinés dans le cadre du processus standard d'examen des budgets de programmes. Le Directeur de l'IRC est appuyé dans son travail par le Comité consultatif international (IAC). Dans l'ensemble, les mécanismes de supervision fonctionnent bien.

Quoique les critères de sélection des priorités de la recherche soient pertinents et adéquats, le processus à l'issue duquel les priorités de recherche sont sélectionnées n'est pas bien documenté et la consultation externe est limitée concernant l'identification des priorités. Un Comité d'examen de la recherche (RRC) a été créé en 2000 en interne, mais certaines parties prenantes ont exprimé la crainte que ce processus ne soit pas entièrement satisfaisant. Il est difficile de mesurer les performances en raison du manque de plans bien documentés énonçant les travaux et les résultats anticipés.

L'IRC a recruté un plus grand nombre de fonctionnaires en provenance d'autres unités de l'UNICEF ayant une expertise dans la recherche et emploie à l'heure actuelle moins de chercheurs de formation purement théorique. De ce fait, la fonction de l'IRC en tant que courtier en connaissances auprès des autres unités de l'UNICEF se trouve facilitée. Le nombre de personnes qui forment l'équipe dirigeante est plus élevé que dans les instituts de recherche ou d'analyse de politique indépendants de taille équivalente, mais, du fait qu'il est rattaché à l'UNICEF, l'IRC doit s'astreindre à des procédures plus contraignantes que ces organismes indépendants. L'IRC est doté d'un personnel suffisant pour remplir les fonctions financières et administratives exigées par la gestion de l'UNICEF. Les bureaux de l'IRC à l'Istituto degli Innocenti sont adéquats pour accommoder le personnel existant, mais devront être déplacés dans un autre bâtiment si les effectifs augmentent.

Viabilité financière

Depuis sa création, l'IRC dépend pour son fonctionnement de financements extérieurs (Autres ressources). La contribution relative du gouvernement italien a été réduite, passant de 87 % des ressources globales de l'IRC en 1997-1999 à 58 % (selon les estimations) pour le cycle de programmation s'achevant en 2005. Pendant la même période, la part d'autres gouvernements a progressé de 8 % à 27 % et les financements des Comités nationaux ont augmenté de moins de 1 %, à savoir 13 %. Dans l'ensemble, l'IRC est parvenu à améliorer ses recettes chaque année pendant ses trois derniers cycles de programmation. Toutefois, il dépend de plus en plus du financement de ses projets. L'IRC est viable financièrement à un modeste niveau si les contributions actuelles non restreintes provenant des Autres ressources sont maintenues.

La décision du Conseil exécutif de l'UNICEF de financer le poste de Directeur de l'IRC à partir des Ressources ordinaires est une façon, pour l'UNICEF, de reconnaître l'importance accordée au Centre. L'IRC et le Bureau régional pour l'Europe centrale et orientale/la CEE ont utilisé des méthodes innovantes pour financer des postes à partir des financements réservés aux programmes de l'UNICEF.

Quoique l'IRC ait diversifié sa base de donateurs au cours des trois derniers cycles de programmation, il n'a pas élaboré de stratégie propre à générer des fonds à moyen ou à long terme. Les activités des programmes n'ont pas été décrites sous la meilleure forme pour susciter l'intérêt des donateurs. Dans le cadre de sa stratégie de collecte de fonds à moyen terme, le Centre pourrait renforcer ses activités de marketing et envisager d'utiliser des descriptions de programmes et de projets plus conviviales. En particulier, il devrait évaluer la possibilité de définir des projets plus vastes susceptibles de bénéficier du soutien thématique de multiples donateurs.

Opportunités et difficultés

Si l'UNICEF souhaite accroître son rôle de leader intellectuel sur les questions qui ont trait à l'enfance, il devra décider du volume de recherche nécessaire à cette fin, comment et où cette recherche sera effectuée, et comment exploiter ses résultats le plus efficacement possible. L'UNICEF doit décider de l'entité chargée de coordonner ses efforts de recherche. L'IRC pourrait peut-être jouer ce rôle. L'IRC est le seul institut totalement voué à la recherche au sein de l'UNICEF, mais il n'est pas la seule unité de l'UNICEF à effectuer des recherches. Les bureaux de pays et les bureaux régionaux soutiennent un certain nombre d'études d'intérêt géographique spécifique et d'autres divisions du Groupe des programmes au siège de New York, ainsi que certains bureaux régionaux, ont aussi des responsabilités dans ce domaine.

L'UNICEF et le Comité international consultatif devraient examiner la spécificité géographique et la magnitude des travaux de l'IRC. L'UNICEF, notamment, devrait décider, en consultation avec ses partenaires, si l'IRC doit étendre ses travaux dans des domaines particulièrement pertinents pour les pays en développement, y compris dans le cadre de réseaux et de partenariats forgés avec les instituts de recherche de ces pays. L'IRC devrait créer avec d'autres unités de l'UNICEF, et tout spécialement avec les autres divisions du Groupe des programmes au siège de New York, un mécanisme chargé d'examiner ponctuellement les activités planifiées et les résultats de l'IRC, et d'intégrer les résultats de ses recherches aux activités de l'UNICEF.

L'IRC devrait exploiter l'avantage comparatif qu'il tire de sa position à l'interface de la recherche théorique et de l'expérience de l'UNICEF sur le terrain pour mettre une plus grande partie de son expertise intellectuelle au service des objectifs clés de l'UNICEF. Il devrait consacrer davantage de ressources à établir son rôle de courtier en connaissances et entreprendre des recherches plus complémentaires ou plus concertées avec d'autres institutions.

L'IRC devrait promouvoir des réseaux de chercheurs sur les questions liées à l'enfance et les étendre au-delà de l'Europe. Il devrait travailler en collaboration avec d'autres organisations, y compris certaines ONG dont les activités sont tournées vers la recherche. Le Centre devrait rechercher davantage d'occasions d'accueillir le personnel d'autres organisations pendant une période déterminée ou d'inviter des universitaires en congé sabbatique.

Le Plan de gestion du centre sur trois ans (OMP) devrait être davantage utilisé aux fins de la planification stratégique et de la sélection de la recherche, de la création de réseaux, de la collecte de fonds et de la planification des campagnes de mobilisation. Le recours à un cadre logique et à une déclaration claire des résultats inscrits dans un plan de travail annuel contribuerait à la cohérence des programmes et à la transparence, et permettrait d'améliorer le suivi et les rapports de performance.

L'IRC devrait aussi réduire le nombre de ses activités spécifiques et former des équipes plus vastes travaillant sur des sujets qui transcendent les divisions actuelles entre les droits de

l'enfant et la recherche socio-économique. Son travail de mobilisation devrait dans une large mesure s'appuyer sur les autres unités de l'UNICEF (y compris les Comités nationaux) et d'autres partenaires stratégiques au sein et en dehors du système de l'ONU.

La section de la communication de l'IRC peut jouer un rôle utile en matière de mobilisation, en conjonction avec les activités générales de l'UNICEF dans ce domaine, notamment en développant son site Web, mais ce travail ne doit pas prendre le pas sur la diffusion des résultats de la recherche qui pourrait être encore améliorée.

S'agissant de la mobilisation des ressources, l'UNICEF devrait envisager d'offrir davantage de ressources principales (ordinaires) à l'IRC, considérant qu'il a le potentiel de renforcer ses activités de recherche. Le GOI devrait maintenir et, dans la mesure du possible, étendre le niveau actuel de soutien financier sans restriction qu'il a accordé au Centre ces dernières années, ainsi que ses contributions volontaires. Des efforts supplémentaires devraient être faits pour évaluer la possibilité d'accroître la composante UNRRA (Administration des Nations Unies pour les secours et la reconstruction) du financement offert par le gouvernement italien en provenance du Ministère de l'Intérieur.

L'IRC devrait de toute urgence mettre au point une stratégie de mobilisation de ressources, en continuant à coopérer avec le Bureau de financement des programmes et le Bureau régional de l'UNICEF à Genève. Il devrait évaluer la possibilité de développer des sujets de recherche plus vastes susceptibles de bénéficier du soutien thématique de multiples donateurs. Il devrait explorer, avec les Comités nationaux et d'autres partenaires potentiels, de nouvelles sources de financement, entre autres, les fondations spécialisées dans le financement de la recherche. Cette stratégie devrait comprendre les moyens de mieux présenter et promouvoir les activités du Centre.

En conclusion, l'IRC dispose de plusieurs avantages comparatifs précieux. Tout d'abord, il possède un certain pouvoir de rassemblement de par sa position au sein d'une agence respectée de l'ONU dotée d'une mission mondiale de protection des enfants. Deuxièmement, l'IRC est situé dans un lieu attrayant et inspirant. Il peut servir d'interface très utile entre l'expérience sur le terrain de l'UNICEF, les contacts politiques de l'UNICEF et la communauté des chercheurs. L'IRC peut tirer pleinement parti de ces avantages pour mieux asseoir son rôle en tant que centre d'excellence pour la réflexion et la collaboration entre différents groupes d'intérêt.

RESUMEN EJECUTIVO

Contexto y antecedentes

La evaluación del Centro de Investigaciones Innocenti (IRC, en inglés) fue realizada entre los meses de octubre de 2004 y enero del 2005 a petición del Comité Consultivo Internacional (IAC). El Director de la Oficina de Evaluación en la sede del UNICEF nombró un equipo de evaluación compuesto por un consultor superior externo y un oficial superior de evaluación del UNICEF. Un Grupo independiente de Evaluación realizó la labor de supervisión del proceso de evaluación. La evaluación se produjo a mediados del Programa actual del IRC (2003-2005). Sus resultados y recomendaciones deberán aplicarse en el próximo Programa (2006-2008).

El IRC (conocido también como Centro Internacional para el Desarrollo del Niño - ICDC) fue creado en 1986 y confirmado en 1988 por la Ley no. 312 de Italia. El Centro se encuentra en el Istituto degli Innocenti, una institución dedicada a la protección y educación básica de los niños y niñas abandonados que se remonta al siglo XV.

Durante toda su existencia, la labor del IRC se ha centrado en dos esferas: el análisis socioeconómico del bienestar de la infancia y los derechos de la niñez. La selección de las investigaciones se basa en tres criterios, refrendados por la Junta Ejecutiva del UNICEF y por el IAC: a) centrarse en esferas que son relativamente nuevas para el UNICEF y que podrían tener cada vez más importancia en el futuro; b) centrarse en las estadísticas y en las esferas que podrían ser delicadas o incluso controvertidas; c) superar las lagunas en el conocimiento de determinadas esferas de la labor del UNICEF que ya están integradas en las actividades de la organización.

Pertinencia

El IRC ocupa una posición exclusiva debido a que se trata del único centro del UNICEF dedicado a la investigación y es una de las pocas instituciones de investigación del mundo que aborda cuestiones relacionadas con la infancia. El Centro forma parte del UNICEF, pero disfruta de una relativa independencia para llevar a cabo investigaciones innovadoras y abordar cuestiones delicadas. Existe un consenso entre los aliados y las partes interesadas sobre la necesidad de que el IRC articule sus investigaciones y sus labores de promoción en sintonía con las prioridades del UNICEF, y mantenga al mismo tiempo su independencia para seguir siendo una entidad innovadora y crítica. Debido a que el Centro es relativamente reducido, solamente puede abordar algunas de las prioridades del UNICEF.

La concentración geográfica de los elementos clave de la labor del IRC es uno de los principales factores que determina la contribución del IRC a los diferentes objetivos del UNICEF. El Centro tiene un programa importante sobre Europa Central y del Este y la CEI, así como sobre los países industrializados. El IRC es el único organismo del UNICEF que proporciona análisis sobre la situación de los niños y las niñas en los países industrializados y su labor está bien considerada en algunos de los países europeos y por los Comités Nacionales en pro del UNICEF. Esta labor demuestra que el UNICEF se preocupa por todos los niños del mundo y que cada uno de los países necesita abordar sus propios problemas nacionales.

Las actividades del Centro relacionadas con los países en desarrollo son también numerosas, pero más variadas y menos coherentes. Las alianzas con los países en desarrollo son en general menos sistemáticas que con los países europeos.

Eficacia

El proyecto Monee (establecido en 1992) es una de las actividades punteras del IRC, y es para muchos uno de sus proyectos con mayor éxito. Su misión es supervisar el bienestar infantil, las condiciones sociales y la política pública en los países en transición de la región ECE/CEI con el objetivo de estimular debates nacionales e internacionales sobre políticas económicas y sociales que afectan a la infancia. Otras actividades abarcan una amplia gama de temas, como por ejemplo el registro del nacimiento, la justicia criminal internacional y la infancia, la pobreza infantil, la trata de menores de edad y la situación de los niños y las niñas en los conflictos armados.

Durante los últimos 15 años, el IRC ha producido más de 300 publicaciones, entre ellas libros, documentos y folletos. Muchos de estos productos del IRC parecen haber contribuido al logro de resultados de alto nivel en el plano de los efectos. El IRC ha demostrado su influencia en los cambios de las políticas y prácticas tanto en el ámbito internacional como nacional. Ha contribuido a la promulgación de nuevas leyes en el plano nacional y a la realización de cambios en convenciones internacionales. Ha proporcionado a las oficinas nacionales del UNICEF pruebas más firmes para promover cambios nacionales y ha contribuido a crear un entorno más positivo en favor de la protección de la infancia.

La evaluación observa que el número de actividades de investigación es todavía relativamente elevado y variado en relación al número de empleados con que cuenta el Centro. El IRC ha sido muy eficaz para generar nuevos conocimientos por medio de sus propias investigaciones y recurriendo a conocimientos técnicos externos en la preparación de sus publicaciones. El IRC demuestra una ventaja comparativa al ser un punto de contacto entre el mundo académico y la experiencia del UNICEF sobre el terreno. Realiza una función limitada, pero cada vez mayor, como intermediario en materia de conocimiento, lo que le permite recurrir al conocimiento externo, formular un programa compartido entre diferentes investigadores y organizaciones de investigación y coordinar investigaciones complementarias y en colaboración.

El IRC está estableciendo un enfoque más sofisticado de comunicación para abordar algunos problemas en la distribución de sus productos y la difusión de las conclusiones derivadas de sus investigaciones, aunque el sitio del IRC en Internet no está completamente terminado. Cada vez obtiene mejores resultados para identificar oportunidades destinadas a dar a conocer su labor y trabajar más estrechamente con algunas oficinas del UNICEF. El apoyo del IRC al desarrollo de capacidades dentro del UNICEF es limitado y tiene lugar en el marco de otras actividades.

El IRC ha establecido buenas relaciones de trabajo con algunas secciones del UNICEF, especialmente las Oficinas Regionales en Europa, los Comités Nacionales y las Oficinas de país en la ECE/CEI. La colaboración no es tan firme con otras secciones del UNICEF, como por ejemplo las Divisiones de la sede en Nueva York y las oficinas sobre el terreno de los países en desarrollo. Los mecanismos de comunicación y consultas existentes dentro del UNICEF (por ejemplo, el Grupo de Programas, del cual el IRC es miembro) no han facilitado un número suficiente de consultas sobre los programas de investigación y la integración de las conclusiones y hallazgos del IRC en los programas generales y las tareas de promoción del UNICEF.

Las redes de investigación sobre cuestiones relacionadas con los niños y las niñas no son tan efectivas como lo son en otros terrenos de investigación (por ejemplo, agricultura, salud). El IRC ha establecido relaciones eficaces con grupos dedicados a las políticas y la promoción de temas relacionados con la infancia, pero menos con organismos de investigación u ONG

orientadas hacia la investigación. Las redes del IRC suelen estar basadas en contactos personales, aunque esta faceta se encuentre en proceso de mejora. Una segunda preocupación es que estas redes, tanto las redes de promoción establecidas de manera más formal, como los contactos de investigación más informales, suelen centrarse en torno a Europa y por tanto su potencial es más reducido que el que tendría una red más internacional. Las Oficinas Regionales/Oficinas de país del UNICEF tienen buenos enlaces en algunos casos con instituciones académicas en sus regiones y podrían convertirse en aliados muy útiles para establecer redes más amplias de investigación si existe un programa de investigación común.

Eficiencia

El IRC tiene el estatus de división de la sede del UNICEF, bajo la dirección del Director Ejecutivo Adjunto a cargo del Grupo de Programas. El estatus del IRC es diferente del de la oficina del país o regional, ya que el Centro dispone de un mandato internacional, pero también es diferente de otras unidades ubicadas en la sede debido a que su estatus y su modus operandi son más independientes. Sus presupuestos y planes de trabajo se realizan dentro del marco del proceso estándar del Examen del Presupuesto de Programas. El Director del IRC recibe apoyo del Comité Consultivo Internacional (IAC). Por lo general, los mecanismos de supervisión son eficaces.

Aunque los criterios para la selección de actividades de investigación son pertinentes y apropiados, el proceso por el cual se seleccionan las prioridades de investigación no está suficientemente documentado y las consultas externas para definir prioridades son limitadas. En 2000 se creó un Comité de Examen de Investigación (RRC) como comité interno, pero varias partes interesadas expresaron su preocupación de que este proceso era todavía inadecuado. La medición del desempeño es difícil debido a la falta de planes bien documentados que muestren productos planificados y resultados esperados.

El IRC ha aumentado de manera considerable la contratación de personal con conocimientos académicos de otras partes del UNICEF y emplea menos investigadores con antecedentes puramente académicos. Esto aumenta la capacidad del IRC para funcionar más como un intermediario de conocimientos con otras secciones del UNICEF. El número de empleados en el equipo de gestión es más elevado que en los institutos independientes de investigación o análisis de políticas del mismo tamaño; sin embargo, al formar parte del UNICEF, el IRC tiene que seguir procedimientos más exigentes que estos organismos independientes. El IRC está bien equipado para llevar a cabo las funciones financieras y administrativas que exigen las normas de contabilidad administrativa del UNICEF. Las instalaciones del IRC en el Istituto degli Innocenti son adecuadas para el personal actual, pero los nuevos empleados tendrían que ser ubicados en otro edificio.

Viabilidad financiera

Desde su creación, el IRC ha dependido de la financiación externa (Otros Recursos). La relativa contribución del Gobierno de Italia ha disminuido desde un 87% del total de recursos del IRC en 1997-1999 a una proporción proyectada de un 58% en el ciclo actual del programa a lo largo de 2005. Durante el mismo período, la proporción de otros gobiernos aumentó de un 8% a un 27% y los fondos de los Comités Nacionales aumentaron desde menos de un 1% a un 13%. En general, el IRC ha conseguido aumentar sus ingresos durante cada uno de los tres últimos ciclos de programas. Sin embargo, cada vez depende más de los fondos para proyectos. El IRC es financieramente viable a un nivel modesto si se mantienen las actuales contribuciones básicas sin restricciones provenientes de Otros Recursos.

La Decisión de la Junta Ejecutiva del UNICEF de asignar Recursos Ordinarios para la financiación del puesto de Director del IRC constituye un reconocimiento por parte del UNICEF de la importancia del Centro. El IRC y la Oficina Regional para ECE/CEI han utilizado enfoques innovadores para financiar puestos dentro de la financiación reservada a los programas del UNICEF.

Aunque el IRC ha diversificado su base de donantes durante los últimos tres ciclos de programa, no dispone de una estrategia para la generación de recursos destinada a asegurar su financiación desde una perspectiva de medio a largo plazo. Las actividades programáticas no se han presentado en el formato más apropiado para atraer a los donantes. Como parte de la estrategia de recaudación de fondos a mediano plazo del IRC, el Centro podría fortalecer su estrategia de comercialización y considerar descripciones más accesibles de los programas y proyectos. En concreto, debería evaluar el potencial de definir proyectos amplios que puedan atraer el apoyo temático de múltiples donantes.

Oportunidades y desafíos

Si el UNICEF desea desarrollar más aún su liderazgo intelectual en determinadas esferas infantiles fundamentales, tendrá que decidir el nivel de investigación que es necesario apoyar, cómo y dónde debe realizarse esta investigación y cómo puede resultar el UNICEF más eficaz en la utilización de las conclusiones de las investigaciones. El UNICEF debe decidir quién debe dirigir la coordinación de las actividades de investigación. El IRC podría desempeñar esta función. El IRC es el único instituto plenamente dedicado a la investigación dentro del UNICEF, pero no es sin embargo la única sección del UNICEF que realiza investigaciones. Las oficinas de país y regionales prestan apoyo a una serie de estudios en lugares específicos, y otras divisiones del Grupo de Programas en la sede de Nueva York, así como las oficinas regionales, tienen también algunas responsabilidades en este ámbito.

El UNICEF y el IAC deberían analizar el enfoque geográfico y el ámbito de trabajo del IRC. En particular, el UNICEF debería decidir, en consulta con sus aliados, si el IRC debería ampliar su labor hacia esferas de investigación que son más pertinentes para los países en desarrollo, incluso mediante el establecimiento de redes y alianzas con instituciones de investigación en los países en desarrollo. El IRC debería establecer un mecanismo con otras secciones del UNICEF, y especialmente con otras Divisiones del Grupo de Programas en la sede de Nueva York, para analizar periódicamente las investigaciones planificadas por el IRC y sus progresos, así como la integración de las conclusiones de las investigaciones en las actividades generales del UNICEF.

El IRC debería aprovechar su ventaja comparativa derivada de su posición como punto de contacto entre la investigación académica y la experiencia sobre el terreno del UNICEF para adquirir mayores conocimientos técnicos intelectuales destinados a abordar objetivos clave del UNICEF. Debería dedicar más de sus recursos a esta función de intermediario de conocimientos y llevar a cabo más investigaciones complementarias o en colaboración con otras instituciones.

El IRC debería promover redes de investigación relacionadas con cuestiones infantiles y ampliarlas más allá del grupo. También debería tratar de realizar labores de investigación en colaboración con otras organizaciones, inclusive algunas de las ONG más orientadas hacia la investigación. El Centro debería buscar más oportunidades para acoger a personal proveniente de otras organizaciones por un determinado periodo de tiempo o a profesores de visita en periodo sabático.

El Plan Gestión de Oficinas (OMP), de tres años de duración, debe utilizarse para una planificación y selección más estratégicas de las investigaciones, el desarrollo de redes, la recaudación de fondos y la planificación de la promoción. La utilización de un enfoque de marco lógico y declaraciones de resultados claras en la planificación de trabajo anual permitiría adquirir una mayor coherencia y transparencia de los programas y mejoraría el seguimiento del rendimiento y toda la información relacionada.

El IRC debería reducir aún más el número de actividades específicas de investigación y establecer equipos de investigación mayores en torno a temas seleccionados que puedan abarcar la división actual que existe entre los derechos de la infancia y la investigación socioeconómica. Su labor de promoción debería recurrir en gran medida a otras secciones del UNICEF (inclusive los Comités Nacionales) y otras instituciones aliadas estratégicas dentro y fuera del sistema de las Naciones Unidas.

La Sección de Comunicación del IRC puede desempeñar una función útil en la promoción, a la par de las actividades generales de promoción del UNICEF, especialmente por medio de la finalización de su sitio en Internet, pero no debe ser a costa de la difusión de conclusiones de investigación que todavía puedan mejorarse.

Por lo que atañe a la movilización de recursos, el UNICEF debería considerar la provisión de más recursos ordinarios al IRC, considerando la contribución que el IRC puede hacer para reforzar la investigación en el UNICEF. El Gobierno de Italia debe mantener y, siempre que sea posible, ampliar, el nivel general de apoyo financiero sin restricciones que ha estado proporcionando en los últimos años, así como contribuciones voluntarias tradicionales. Deberían tomarse las medidas necesarias para evaluar las posibilidades de aumentar el componente UNRRA (Administración de las Naciones Unidas para el Socorro y la Rehabilitación) de la financiación del Gobierno de Italia que proviene del Ministerio del Interior.

El IRC debería concluir de manera urgente su estrategia de movilización de recursos, con la cooperación constante de la Oficina de Financiación de Programas y la Oficina Regional del UNICEF en Ginebra. Debería evaluar el potencial derivado de desarrollar amplios temas de investigación que puedan atraer el apoyo temático de donantes múltiples. Debería explorar con los Comités Nacionales y otros potenciales aliados nuevas fuentes como las fundaciones que financian investigaciones. Esta estrategia debería analizar la manera de comercializar mejor las actividades del Centro.

En conclusión, el IRC tiene varias ventajas comparables muy valiosas. En primer lugar, tiene en cierta medida el poder añadido de formar parte de una organización respetada de las Naciones Unidas con un mandato mundial que se refiere a la infancia. El segundo lugar, el IRC se encuentra en una ubicación atractiva y que sirve de inspiración. Puede ser un punto de contacto importante entre la experiencia de campo del UNICEF, los vínculos del UNICEF en materia de políticas y la comunidad académica. El IRC puede aprovechar estas ventajas para mejorar más aún su función como centro de excelencia para la reflexión y colaboración entre públicos distintos.

1. Introduction

The International Advisory Committee (IAC) of the Innocenti Research Centre (IRC), during its last meeting held in Florence in February 2004, recommended that the Centre be the subject of an evaluative review in 2004.

The purpose set for the Evaluation was to inform senior management of UNICEF and sponsoring agencies of the IRC's work and results achieved with a particular emphasis on the last three programme cycles (1997-1999, 2000-2002, current cycle 2003-2005) and to assess future potential and strategic orientations.

It was hoped that the evaluation would allow decision-makers to consolidate the Centre's role and functions, within and beyond UNICEF; strengthen and expand IRC's partnerships and resource base; and contribute to organizational reflection within UNICEF and feeding into the next Medium-Term Strategic Plan (2006-2010).

The *objectives* of the evaluation of the IRC are to:

- Assess the organizational performance of the IRC in terms of its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and financial viability and to
- Identify opportunities, challenges, and relevant changes in the external environment of UNICEF in general and the IRC in particular that may impact on the Centre's future and influences strategic orientations.

A full text of the Terms of Reference is provided in **Annex 1**.

An Evaluation Panel, chaired by the Director of the UNICEF Evaluation Office, was created with representatives from the governments of Italy and Sweden, the UNICEF National Committee in Italy, external experts, and UNICEF Regional Offices. The Director of the IRC participated as an ex officio member.

The Evaluation Panel reviewed the evaluation TOR's, and provided the evaluation team with advice on the evaluation outline, and methodology. It reviewed and provided feedback on the draft of the evaluation report. This has been taken into consideration in the final version.

The evaluation applied commonly agreed evaluation norms and standards (OECD/DAC and Evaluation Associations) to ensure utility (ownership by stakeholders); feasibility (political viability and cost-effectiveness); propriety (impartiality, respect of rights of stakeholders, cultural sensitivity) and accuracy (adequate information).

The evaluation team was composed of an external consultant and a member of the Evaluation Office. The following methods were applied in the evaluation to assess organizational performance of the IRC in terms of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and financial viability:

- A comprehensive desk review of relevant external and internal documents with a particular emphasis on the last three programme cycles.

- IRC staff undertook a self-assessment, which was completed with considerable detail by nearly all the members of the IRC staff¹, followed by a series of interviews with IRC staff.
- IRC staff also attempted an ex-post construction of a results-matrix documenting outputs, outcomes and possible impact but the evidence was not sufficient to complete this.
- A questionnaire was sent to various UNICEF staff and other strategic partners of the Centre to get their perceptions on past contributions and perceptions on niche and comparative advantage of the Centre.
- As the response rate was very limited, the team expanded the planned number of interviews through person-to-person meetings or by telephone interviews with key stakeholders and partners of IRC.

Data collection methods hence included a mix of interviews, surveys / questionnaires, group discussions, panel discussions, and document review and information obtained from these different sources were validated and triangulated to the greatest possible extent. A list of the individuals consulted is provided in **Annex 2**. A list of different documents that were reviewed is shown in **Annex 3**.

The evaluation had to cope with some limitations:

- Variations in programme and project titles and descriptions in planning documents and reports;
- Absence of a results-matrix both at the design and reporting stages;
- Limited institutional memory combined with high degree of mobility of international staff;
- Limited evidence for the uptake of IRC work in academic journals and publications (with the exception of the MONEE project)².

The available documentation on the three-year program cycles (1997-1999, 2000-2002, 2003-2005) to be assessed is not sufficient to determine with precision when specific activities were started or completed. The presentation of programmes and achievements (section 3) therefore roughly covers a ten-year timeframe. The presentation of IRC programmes and achievements is illustrative rather than exhaustive.

¹ The evaluation team expresses their appreciation to those individuals interviewed as well as to the management and the staff of the IRC. The Director provided considerable period of time, as did other IRC staff during a busy period in IRC. The principal Secretary of the Director provided excellent logistical support.

² Citation analysis was considered as one way to test academic merit and data was collected for the MONEE publications. However, it appears that the number of researchers writing on many of the issues IRC addresses is not large and therefore, citation analysis might give a misleading low rate of citations relative to other fields.

2. IRC History and Evolution

The International Child Development Centre³ was established in 1986 and confirmed by Italian Law no. 312 of 04 August 1988. The Government of Italy committed itself to provide UNICEF with facilities in Florence as well as funding for a UNICEF “Centre for study, research, information and education in the field of assistance to children”⁴. The Centre is hosted by the Istituto degli Innocenti, an institution, which dates back to the 15th Century as a facility for the protection and basic education of abandoned children.

The UNICEF Executive Board accepted this offer on the understanding that “there will be no general resources expenditures incurred for the upkeep and basic staff of the centre during this period or thereafter” (Board Decision 1987/22). In 1994, the Executive Board clarified that UNICEF General (Regular) Resources could be used by IRC for specific Board-approved actions and where other UNICEF offices request the Centre to undertake certain aspects of these actions on their behalf (Board decision 1994/R.2/10).

UNICEF and the Government of Italy (GOI) signed an agreement in 1986 whereby the GOI committed to provide core funding for IRC for a three-year period. The agreement provided for seven IRC permanent international staff with status of international officials, and part of the premises of the Istituto degli Innocenti in Florence. It provided for consideration of renewed funding beyond the initial three-year period. This agreement with continued GOI funding has been renewed through six extensions to date. The GOI-UNICEF IRC agreement in 1999 (Article 7), indicated that the number of international staff would “determined by the Executive Director according to the needs of the Centre and within the financial support available from all donors”. At the same time, it was agreed that the post of the Director of the Centre would be paid out of UNICEF General (Regular) Resources for the period commencing 1 January 2000.

The initial objectives were very broad and covered training, journalism, school curricula, advocacy and 6 other activities. These broad objectives were the basis for the development of work programmes, the first of which (1987-1990) proposed using policy analysis, applied research, capacity building, and training initiatives⁵ to address:

- National capacity building for child survival and development, focusing initially on several African countries,
- Economic policies and the mobilization of resources for children,
- The rights of the child, and
- The needs of the urban child

The overall purposes of IRC’s work were to inform UNICEF policy formulation, strengthen UNICEF’s role as advocate for children’s rights, enhance the organization’s capacity to research and learn from its field experience, and support programme development and capacity building.⁶

³ The Centre now uses the title of the Innocenti Research Centre (IRC), a name that will be used by the present evaluation for easy reference. The first mention of this informal name was in the 1991 ICDC Progress Report to the UNICEF Executive Board session of February 1991. This report will use the term IRC in recognition of the name by which it is generally known.

⁴ Law no. 312 of 19 July 1988, published in the Gazzetta Ufficiale della Repubblica Italiana on 04 August 1988.

⁵ a. See E/ICEF/1991/L.9, p. 3.

⁶ IRC website.

There were two main factors that influenced the direction of IRC's early years:

- UNICEF had a major influence on the development agenda at the time of the creation of the Centre through its analysis of the effects of IFI-supported adjustment programmes. UNICEF played a major role in promoting "Adjustment with a Human face", as a precursor to the human development approach that was subsequently widely adopted by the development community. There was a strong interest at the time by UNICEF senior management in influencing the global macro socio-economic policy agenda in favour of children. IRC was encouraged to provide evidence to support this UNICEF position. Senior academic professionals were hired and the IRC produced influential publications contributing to UNICEF advocacy on this issue. During the early 1990s, the agenda of socio-economic analysis shifted in response to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the need to address the desperate situation of children in the CEE/CIS countries. UNICEF had no field offices in the region so IRC initiated a data-driven analysis effort and an annual series of publications examining the economic and social conditions of children in this region (MONEE Project). This was to become the most consistent research output of the Centre over the 12 years since it was created. The success of this programme is examined in more detail in the next section on achievements.
- A second major priority arose from the adoption of the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1989. In anticipation of the ratification of the Convention by member states, IRC was expected to support UNICEF advocacy and programme support for the Convention.⁷ IRC's research programme progressively focused more on children's rights, and the Centre's mandate was expanded to explicitly require that IRC become a knowledge and training centre working for implementation of the Convention of the Rights of the Child in both developing and industrialized countries.⁸

A review was commissioned in 1993, which found that IRC had already made significant contributions in its first five years (see box text.)

During the 1990s the Centre mainly conducted research on the CEE / CIS, on children in the industrialized countries and on key topics on the implementation of the Convention of the Rights of the Child. Apart from that, the Centre produced a large number of 'one-off' studies on specific topics and themes, which led to concerns about dispersal of efforts and lower effectiveness. The number of publications reached over 30 a year at several points in the nineties.

IRC has helped to shape UNICEF's Human rights agenda for children...has allowed UNICEF to contribute to better international understanding of the role and impact of economic and social policies and forces on the lives of vulnerable children and families in a globalizing world ... has helped to fuel policy changes which benefit children and poor families... Research and identification of best practices have helped to provide road maps for the current work of UNICEF.

External IRC Assessment 1993

Within the context of IRC's mandate, the Centre's mission was expressed in the 1988 Board document as to "strengthen the capacity of UNICEF and its cooperating institutions to respond to the evolving needs of children and to help promote an emerging new global ethic for caring for children."⁹

⁷ In 1996, as approved by the Executive Board, the CRC was confirmed as the guiding framework for UNICEF's work.

⁸ Approved by the UNICEF Executive Board in September 1996 for ICDC programme cycle 1997-2000. See letter from Carol Bellamy to UN staff, September 29th, 1997.

⁹ Approved by the UNICEF Executive Board and the centre's Advisory Committee in 1988, and confirmed in subsequent Board documents and in Letter by Carol Bellamy to Regional Directors, September 29th, 1997.

There has been considerable variation in the stated objectives of the IRC over time. The strategic objectives of IRC during the current programme cycle have been summarized as follows:

- i. Enhance IRC's role as a key component and resource to UNICEF;
- ii. Increase linkages with UNICEF field offices and National Committees;
- iii. Ensure IRC visibility as a centre of excellence for children's rights, including through its substantive support to the UN Committee on the rights of the child;
- iv. Enhance its institutional partnerships with policy and research institutions; and
- v. Pursue diversified donor support to IRC work.¹⁰

The centre strives in particular to expand its role as a policy oriented research centre, guided by UNICEF work and cooperation with partners, as an institution with a universal mandate i.e. addressing issues in developing and industrialized countries¹¹, and with regards to the implementation of the CRC.¹²

A number of major changes can be identified in the more recent period of IRC's existence, beginning roughly with the three programme cycles addressed by this evaluation: 1997-99, 2000-2002, and 2002-05:

- There was a gradual decline in real terms of the GOI contribution and a concern expressed by the GOI that it was the sole funding source for IRC.
- IRC began to solicit other sources of funding, and funding from sources other than the Government of Italy now represents more than 40% of IRC's total budget. Three significant contributions to this change can be noted. UNICEF started to cover the costs of the Director's post in 2000; SIDA provided a substantial three year grant as from 2003; UNICEF National Committees (Natcoms) have become a major source of funding for IRC (and user of its products).
- The number of IRC projects was pruned down and the number of publications dropped from a peak of 36 in 2000 to 13 in 2003. There has been a notable effort to streamline and focus the IRC's agenda and workload.
- There has also been a gradual shift in the kind of staff employed at the Centre. The number of staff recruited from academia declined and more UNICEF field staff with research backgrounds but with experience in HQ or the field joined the Centre.

¹⁰ Note by Marta Santos Pais, Director of the IRC, in preparation of the renewal of the agreement with GOI, April 2002. These objectives are reflected as the four IRC Programme Goals for 2003-2005 in the Board-approved document (E/ICEF/2002/13, para 40-41), as follows: IRC "(a) to become a strategic and reinvigorated centre of excellence for children's rights; (b) to be a resource for UNICEF, including the expansion of existing links with UNICEF headquarters, field offices and National Committees; (c) to enhance partnerships with research and policy institutions and development agencies; and (d) to enhance and further diversity its donor support." it may be worth noting that these are institutionally-related objectives or 'management strategies', concerning how IRC does its work rather than specifically what IRC aims to accomplish in terms of programme outcomes or results for children.

¹¹ It might be added that within UNICEF, IRC is also specifically concerned with the situation of children in 'transitional' countries, i.e. that are neither 'developing' in the sense of low-income, or fully industrialised/ Western. IRC's work in CEE/CIS relates particularly to this transitional group, which includes a number of 'middle income' countries.

¹² Ibid.

Communication was upgraded from an Information Officer at the L-3 level during the mid-1990s to a Communication Officer at level L-4 during the latter part of the 1990's.

The various changes responded to a large extent to recommendations made by the Executive Board and by the Innocenti International Advisory Committee. The implications of these changes are examined in more depth in later sections.

The record of IRC shows that it developed the characteristic elements of an applied policy research organization. It employed research staff with analytical expertise and supplemented this expertise with external expertise. It has addressed issues of some concern to external stakeholders concerned with children and undertaken research and analysis to demonstrate the effects and potential benefits from introducing changes in policy and practice. It has undertaken synthesis and presentations of data that provide a sense of the big picture on important issues. Finally, like other applied policy institutes, it goes beyond research to be an active advocate for its findings.

3. IRC Programmes and Achievements

3.1. IRC Programmes

With the exception of a period in the mid-nineties when IRC spread its activities over a large number of different fields, IRC's work has been focused on two key areas: Socio-economic analysis of the well being of children and Children's Rights. The overall organization of the Centre's work has evolved over time as shown in Exhibit 3.1¹³

Exhibit 3.1 IRC Programme Titles

1991-1993 ¹⁴	1999 ¹⁵	2000-2001 ¹⁶	2001-2002 ¹⁷	2003-2004 ¹⁸
Economic policies and mobilization of resources for children	Socio Economic Policy Analysis		Monitoring socio economic impact on children	Monitoring the impact of economic and social policies on children's rights
Rights of the child	Implementing International Human Rights Standards	Global Child Rights issues	Global issues	Promoting advocacy and policy dialogue to support the implementation of intern. standards and the development of child friendly policies
The urban child				
		Industrialized Countries	Children in industrialized countries	
		Developing countries		

While these overarching categories remained relatively stable over time, the two main programme areas have exhibited very different approaches in terms of continuity of topics. The Socio-Economic programme has focused for some years on annual reports providing data-driven analysis and commentary on a variety of topics related to child welfare in both the CIS/CEE countries as well as the industrialised countries.

In contrast there has been a wider range of topics and geographical focus covered within the Child Rights programme. The current IRC website gives an overview of present and past research topics, including links to related publications, with an impressive range of different topics related to children's well being, and children's rights. (See box text).

¹³ In the organization of UNICEF's work within specific offices, 'programmes' refer to broad, strategic groupings of specific 'projects', which are in turn composed of a number of 'activities'.

¹⁴ IRC 1994 Progress report to Economic and Social Council, E/ICEF/1994/L9

¹⁵ IRC Annual Review 1999-2000

¹⁶ IRC Annual Review 2000-2001

¹⁷ IRC Annual Review 2001-2002

¹⁸ IRC Annual Review 2002-2003, and on current IRC website.

A key product of the Child Rights programme is the Innocenti Digests with 11 being produced to date. They are designed to produce succinct and reliable information on key child rights issues that can be used for advocacy, policy and programme work of UNICEF offices, as well as for the work of partners within and outside of the UN system.

Some of IRC's Past Areas of Work¹⁹

- Basic social services - Child poverty - Child Work and Labour - Child rights in Latin America - Children in armed conflict - Children in institutions - Children of ethnic minorities - Children with disabilities - Convention on the Rights of the Child - Countries in Transition: Indonesia - Countries in Transition: Middle East and North Africa - Early childhood development - European monetary union - European Union enlargement - Financial crisis - Gender Issues - Health - Home-based work - Inter-country adoption - Juvenile justice - Participation - Rights of the Child - Urban Child - Basic education

At present, the two main program strands are articulated as follows:

- The Programme: *Monitoring the impact of social and economic policies on children's rights* has two primary components: the Monitor reports on the situation of children in the CEE/CIS region and the Report Card publications on the situation of children in the industrial countries. Both these annual reports rely on analysis of data showing the conditions of children.
- The Programme *Promoting Advocacy and policy dialogue to support the implementation of international standards and the development of child friendly policies* is focused broadly on issues related to the legal and policy dimensions of the protection of children's rights.

Producing a Digest

The Digest process often begins with an expert meeting at IRC, which includes UNICEF staff from NY HQ and field offices, academics and representatives of NGOs and international agencies. The participants are invited to continue providing comments and guidance during the subsequent research and writing process. IRC plans for a follow-up phase with a launch event and participation in national and regional events to promote the Digests finding. In some cases, IRC has built on a Digest by undertaking more specific studies relating to the same subject.

Both programme areas include a range of research, advocacy, and networking activities. In addition to the two research areas, IRC's Communication unit is responsible for publication and marketing of IRC products.

3.2. IRC Achievements

Over the past 15 years, the IRC has produced more than 300 publications, including books, papers, and brochures. While the centre still produces a considerable number of publications per year, it has reduced its output in comparison to earlier years.²⁰ The publication of research papers, books, and other documentation constitutes a major basis for IRC's achievements at an output level.

Many of IRC's outputs appear to have contributed to the achievement of higher-level results, at the outcome level. IRC has had a demonstrable effect in changing policies and practices at both the international and national levels. They have contributed to the development of new legislation at the national level and to changes in international conventions. They have provided

¹⁹ IRC Website.

²⁰ Publication numbers had been as high as 32 in 1994, went down to 9 in 1996, and then rose to a peak of 36 in 2000. They have decreased since then to a total of 16 in 2002 and 13 in 2003, with some studies having been made available only through the Web (e.g., Children in a Globalising World; HIV/AIDS, Public Policy and Child Well-Being).

UNICEF country offices with stronger evidence to advocate for national changes and helped create a more positive environment for the protection of children. Exhibit 3.2 provides a summary of some of the achievements of IRC.²¹

Exhibit 3.2 Selected IRC achievements in topical areas

SUBJECT	ACHIEVEMENT
Birth registration	<i>Birth Registration: Right from the Start, (Innocenti Digest No. 9, 2002)</i> has had a demonstrable effect on policies and practice at an international level and in individual countries. It has been used as a basis for discussion at conferences outside IRC and it has stimulated further research by other organizations. It has been a stimulus for the development of more active birth registration campaigns in different countries. IRC carried out a review of UNICEF Country Office annual reports for 2002 and found that as many as 56 countries had started birth registration initiatives. Within IRC the Digest is now being followed up by a more extensive publication investigating <i>Birth registration and Armed Conflict</i> . ²²
International Criminal Justice and Children	An IRC book on <i>International Criminal Justice and Children</i> providing an overview of the international legal protection framework has served as a reference for numerous experts in the international criminal justice and child rights communities. ²³
Child Poverty	The Report Card publication on Child Poverty showing the UK as having the second highest level of child poverty in the industrial countries caused discussion in the UK parliament and, according to one UK interviewee, led to the government making child poverty reduction a top government priority. The contribution this Report Card made in the UK was also noted by one of the governments in a UNICEF Executive Board meeting
Initiatives on specific themes or with regional emphasis	
Trafficking in Human Beings	The Innocenti Insight on <i>Trafficking in Human Beings – especially women and children in Africa (Innocenti Insight No. 9)</i> has been the basis for a variety of different actions on trafficking in Africa such as the African Union Plan of Action on Trafficking in Human Beings, Especially Women and Children (the Insight was launched on the occasion of the AU Ministerial Meeting in Benin in April 2004). Experience and information gathered in the report has been shared with other UN organizations such as ILO, OHCHR, UNHCR, and with IOM. It has also been the basis for collaboration with UNODC in drafting legislative guide on trafficking, and for collaboration with the Stability Pact taskforce on trafficking. The research results have been used as resources during the EU Human Rights Forum; they informed the drafting of the first report adopted by the EU/ACP Parliamentary Assembly on the Rights of the Child; they were a source for the drafting the Communication on Trafficking developed by the European Commission in 2004; and they serve as reference documents for child rights training for EU officials. ²⁴
Truth and reconciliation	IRC in collaboration with UNICEF Freetown contributed to the first child friendly Truth and Reconciliation Report, serving the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Sierra Leone. IRC was associated with the process which involved numerous children in the preparation, and gave support to the drafting of the text.

²¹ These are selected examples to illustrate the kind of achievements IRC has gained over time. The IRC paper “Selected Inventory and Analysis: Some UNICEF IRC Initiatives in Child Protection” provides more information.

²² “Selected Inventory and Analysis: Some UNICEF IRC Initiatives in Child Protection. Florence, October 2004. IRC internal paper.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Training held in July 2004.

SUBJECT	ACHIEVEMENT
Children in Armed Conflict	In 2004 IRC, in collaboration with other parts of UNICEF, UN agencies, international NGOs and the EU, promoted the drafting and adoption of the first EU Guidelines on the Rights of the Child with a specific emphasis on children in armed conflict. IRC is associated with the process of implementation of the Guidelines which constitute a key dimension of capacity building activities for EU staff.

The MONEE Project²⁵

The Monee project (established in 1992) is one of the ‘flagship’ activities of IRC, and it is widely considered as one of its most successful projects. It monitors child welfare, social conditions and public policy in the transition countries of the CEE/CIS region with the objective of stimulating national and international policy debates on economic and social policies affecting children. The project incorporates research, advocacy and capacity-building components. It is directed at three audiences: a) UNICEF, b) the international development community including multi-laterals, academic and applied researchers, and NGOs; c) national and local governments, local NGOs and other groups working in the targeted countries.

MONEE:²⁶

“Quite simply, one of the best publications we put out. It actually contributes to policy making. That for me is the acid test for any UNICEF publication.” (Carol Bellamy, Executive director, UNICEF)

“Outstanding series. It complements perfectly our work in the region’s economic issues. Long may it continue.” (Willem Buiters, Chief Economist, EBRD)

“It is still the MONEE project that most inspires and challenges us to do our work” (Edmund Vaskis, Director of social statistics department, Central statistical bureau of Latvia)

Regional and local stakeholders included the national statistical offices of 27 countries in transition, which collaborate directly with the MONEE team.

The Regional Monitoring Reports/Social Monitors as well as the regularly updated “TransMonee database” have been widely acknowledged as influential and relevant for a broad range of stakeholders. These include:

- **UNICEF:** The CEE/CIS Regional Office and NYHQ have used Project results for elaborating regional and sub-regional strategies. The project has been slightly less successful in contributing to the work of specific country offices as its broad monitoring approach provides limited information on each single country, although national impacts have been seen, e.g. in support of national policy for inter-country adoption in Romania,
- **The international development community:** MONEE data and research findings have been used and quoted by organizations such as UNESCO, Population Action International, the Inter-Consultative Group on Early Childhood Development, and the ILO/CEET. The World Bank published an education strategy paper for the CEE/CIS region that used almost exclusively data from the MONEE project database. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the UN-Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) cited social data from the project in their work which otherwise focuses more generally on economic issues.

²⁵ Based on data from IRC website, interviews with MONEE officers and other stakeholders, and from IRC paper on MONEE impact.

²⁶ Slideshow on MONEE on IRC website.

- **Academic researchers:** MONEE regional monitoring reports have been cited in articles published in a range of journals such as The Population and Development Review, Health Policy and Planning, Social Indicators Research, American Journal of Public Health and Journal of European Social Policy. Since 1997, in the social sciences research literature, the regional monitoring reports were among the most-cited of all UNICEF publications.

The MONEE project, now in its twelfth year of operation, has reached a turning point. The situation in the region has changed considerably and IRC is now considering the future of MONEE. The economic and social conditions in the 27 CEE/CIS countries have diverged so much that it is now more appropriate to think of this group as a region of regions. Those countries that have joined the EU can now be covered more appropriately in the Report Card series on the industrialised countries. The situation has also changed in terms of UNICEF capability in the region. At the time that MONEE was created in the early nineties, UNICEF had no field presence or detailed knowledge of the countries covered. The MONEE reports gave UNICEF a chance to quickly influence the debate in these countries. The RO and COs from this region have demonstrated the value of MONEE reports to them by contributing funding to IRC. Thirdly, national statistical offices are also much stronger in a number of these countries. Discussions are now underway between the RO/COs concerned and IRC to see how this programme might be modified in future.

If IRC stopped producing the MONEE reports on the region or reduced the effort it takes to produce them, there is an experience and expertise in IRC that could also be used elsewhere. IRC reported in its 2002 Annual Report on a project called MEDIN, which was intended to replicate this approach in UNICEF's Middle East and North Africa region, involving the MENA RO and the 9 COs in the region. The first phase of the MEDIN project had been completed in 2001, involving development of a database and policy analysis. The second phase, of a more operational nature, was dependent on receipt of additional funding which was not provided by donors to the RO and the concerned COs. Thus the project failed to go ahead for mainly financial reasons. Discussions are now underway with the UNICEF Lebanon CO to develop a policy monitoring and data-driven analysis mechanism for that country. This might lead to a region wide initiative in future for situation monitoring and policy analysis, with components of technical support and capacity building similar to what has been provided under the MONEE project Programme Performance

4. Programme Performance

4.1. Relevance

4.1.1. Mandate and Role

Finding 1: By its mandate, the IRC is part of UNICEF. The Centre is granted relative independence to undertake innovative research and tackle sensitive issues.

The mandate of IRC established in Italian Law no. 312 of 1988 and the original agreement between the GOI and UNICEF in 1988 covered a wide range of possible activities.²⁷ In the early 1990s its role was confined primarily to research and advocacy.

While it has maintained this basic focus on research and advocacy since then, the mission of IRC has been defined in many different ways over the years. Even at present, it is expressed in various ways in different documents.

The Programme of Activities, 2003-2005, states that IRC's objectives are "to reinvigorate IRC as a centre of excellence for children's rights, enhance its role as a resource for UNICEF offices and National Committees, be a catalyst with partners in mobilization for a new global ethic for children, and widen its donor cooperation and consolidate the Centre's financial basis."²⁸

The current IRC programme (2003-2005), as indicated on the IRC website, "supports the implementation of the MTSP (of UNICEF), its human rights approach and results-based management. In particular, IRC works to ensure that its research supports the five priorities of the MTSP: girls' education; integrated early childhood development; immunization 'plus'; fighting HIV/AIDS; and increased protection of children from violence, abuse, exploitation and discrimination."

Its research is selected on the basis of three criteria, endorsed by the Executive Board of UNICEF and by the Centre's International Advisory Committee:

- i. To focus on areas that are relatively new to UNICEF and that may be of increasing importance in the future;
- ii. To focus on statistics and areas that may be sensitive or even controversial;
- iii. To fill knowledge gaps in areas of UNICEF's work those are already mainstreamed.

²⁷ GOI agreement. As expressed in the 1988 Board document, "As an institution with freedom for critical analysis and intellectual enquiry, the centre is to provide a forum for international professional exchange of experiences and to undertake or promote policy analysis, applied research and field experimentation, as well as advocacy of innovative strategies and dissemination of ideas towards the goals of child survival, development and protection. (E/ICEF/1988/L.9, para 3).

²⁸ The presentation of IRC's objectives varies according to different documents. The OMP/Budget Proposal for 2003-05, and the approved IRC programme document (paras 40-41), indicate that IRC aims to become a strategic and reinvigorated Centre of Excellence for Children's Rights, and to pursue the following aims:

- To be a resource for UNICEF, including by increasing its linkages with field offices and National Committees
- To enhance its partnerships with research and policy institutions, and development agencies, to advance the cause of children, including by supporting the substantive work of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and
- To enhance and continue to diversify its donor support.

- The underlined sections differ from the IRC website description.

The Centre has functioned with a considerable degree of autonomy. Previous reviews and the IAC have endorsed the value of the Centre having the independence to choose research and carry it out in an atmosphere of academic freedom. It was felt that IRC should have sufficient space from the rest of UNICEF that it can explore and speak on sensitive issues without compromising UNICEF.

But there has also been a consensus among all partners that the IRC is part of UNICEF. IRC played a prominent role in UNICEF in its early years when the management of the Centre was interested in supporting the UNICEF policy agenda to advocate for “investing in human resources and, to this end, for preserving and mobilizing additional financial resources for children... even in periods of scarcity or economic recession” (E/ICEF1988/L), following on the successful experience of advocacy for “adjustment with a human face”. IRC was encouraged to produce research that could inform and contribute to this UNICEF advocacy. Some UNICEF staff have expressed the view that UNICEF has focused more in recent years on its field programming objectives, leading to less internal demand for and receptivity to the research that IRC produces. IRC’s work therefore became more peripheral to the central concerns of UNICEF.

There are a variety of mechanisms in place to promote regular exchange on IRC’s agenda, including the annual meeting of the Innocenti International Advisory Committee, the monthly Programme Group meetings and the Global Management Team meetings, in addition to specific discussions with relevant divisions and offices,. However there seems to be no single formal process within UNICEF to ensure that consultations on IRC research agendas take place (e.g. between New York Headquarters and the IRC) and that important IRC insights and findings are assessed and integrated into the rest of UNICEF’s programmes and advocacy.

4.1.2. IRC Programming Choices and Geographical Focus

Finding 2: IRC resources allow it to address only some of the priorities of UNICEF. The geographical focus of key components of IRC’s work is a major factor in determining the contribution of IRC to different UNICEF objectives.

The three criteria that have been established for IRC guidance in choosing priorities are helpful at the level of choosing specific research topics but less so in determining which research programmes IRC should maintain. The choice of programme areas has been left largely to the decisions of senior management in IRC. However the two main programme areas of Socio-Economic Policies and Implementation of International Child Rights Standards have both received favourable comment from members of the UNICEF Executive Board and the IAC.

IRC Self-assessment Survey:²⁹

43% of surveyed IRC staff thinks that IRC has had good success in global initiatives on CRC promotion related to the WFFC, the Millennium Declaration and MDGs;

69% feel that IRC has been successful in initiatives on specific themes or with regional emphasis;

35% see appropriate successes in the area of quick response to topical issues.

²⁹ The self assessment survey completed by nearly all IRC staff asked staff to indicate moderate or strong agreement or moderate or strong disagreement with various statements. The answers have been combined into agreement or disagreement percentages.

The most significant program choice is probably the geographical focus of parts of the Centre's work on the industrialised countries and the CEE/CIS states since this affects the involvement that IRC can have with UNICEF staff in other regions and the kinds of issues IRC should address. This primarily affects the Socio-Economic programme where most of its resources have been directed to ongoing work on these two regions. This has led to reduction of IRC's work on macro analysis of issues that affect the broad development agenda.³⁰

IRC has a unique UNICEF niche in its coverage of children's issues in the industrialised countries. It has provided strong support to UNICEF interests in the CEE/CIS region but it has limited research on developing country interests or contact with researchers and institutions in these countries.

IRC's annual production of the Report Cards on the situation of children in the industrialised countries is the only UNICEF assessment of these countries. The Natcoms in Europe were very supportive of this work in helping them to develop their own advocacy and they have become an important source of funding for the IRC. These publications are seen as a way to reflect UNICEF's global mandate and to show that children's protection and rights is a global issue and not just a problem in developing countries. It demonstrates that economic wealth certainly does not by itself solve all children's needs.

The MONEE publications on the CEE/CIS, as already documented, have given UNICEF strong evidence to engage in advocacy and programme cooperation in this region and these publications are well integrated with the RO/COs in the region to the extent that they are now providing significant funding from the different offices for this work.

IRC has done some work on other parts of the world such as Central America (adoption), Africa (Trafficking, HIV/AIDS), South Asia (economic crisis in Indonesia), as well as globally (e.g. Birth registration, indigenous children, HIV/AIDS, Child Friendly cities, and children in armed conflicts). However the resources devoted to working with research institutions in developing countries is limited and IRC has not had a significant or consistent focus on developing countries. The one IRC staff position that was designated for work on developing countries in the socio-economic policy area was eliminated in 2002, to enable the establishment of a core post for the MONEE Project and promote a mainstreaming of developing country concerns within the IRC programme. In 2004 a cooperative arrangement was developed between IRC and the Americas and Caribbean Region to enable more consistent, cross-cutting attention to issues in these regions. Discussions are currently underway for a similar arrangement with the Eastern and Southern Africa Region. IRC is also in communication with the MENA Region for collaboration in the social policy area.

The two main research areas in IRC on child rights and socio-economic analysis illustrate another variation in programme choices that have different advantages and disadvantages. In general, the Child Rights programme concentrates on a number of individual topics, each addressed in one publication although advocacy may continue for some time. This allows it to select and research a number of new and neglected issues over time. Working on different topics limits this programmes potential to create and sustain an ongoing research network on a systematic basis and provide follow up work on these issues. In some areas (for example, child

³⁰ IRC has carried out some broader studies in recent years such as a study on the allocation of ODA resources for basic social services ('Basic Services for All?', 2001) and on the impact of the Asian financial crisis on children. Work also continued on topics such as the impact of globalization and children and the socio-economic impact of HIV/AIDS on children.

trafficking and CRC implementation), work on a common theme has continued with a series of related studies extending over a number of years. The Socio-Economic programme has concentrated more narrowly on two ongoing annual publications for the CEE/CIS region and the industrial countries. This has allowed them to build an ongoing relationship with interested stakeholders and to provide follow-up analysis over time. It, however, ties up resources on limited subjects, at the cost of looking at new areas.

4.1.3. Stakeholder Perspectives

Finding 3: There is a consensus among partners and stakeholders that the IRC should principally articulate its research and advocacy in tune with UNICEF priorities while maintaining its independence to remain innovative and critical.

The relevance of IRC to UNICEF as its only dedicated research center was widely recognized by nearly all individuals interviewed. At the same time, this perception was based on very different views on what IRC’s contribution is and what it should be. This is consistent with the IRC self-assessment in which staff considered that there is a lack of understanding among external stakeholders about the Centre’s mandate and mission.

<p>IRC Self Assessment</p> <p>78% agree that IRC has a clearly defined mandate and mission</p> <p>13% agree that it is clear to other UNICEF staff in HQ and the field</p> <p>26% agree that it is clear to external organizations 61% agree</p>

There were a few senior individuals in UNICEF who felt that IRC should not be judged at all by whether it is relevant and beneficial to UNICEF but by its value to the wider community of those interested in child protection and children’s rights. However most UNICEF staff and external stakeholders, including the donors who are funding IRC, believe the Centre must primarily serve UNICEF’s knowledge needs for its programming and advocacy.

Some recognized the value to UNICEF of having a Centre with the autonomy to address issues that UNICEF cannot fully take up directly. They also confirmed the continued relevance of the three criteria established in the early nineties for IRC’s work: areas that are new to UNICEF; issues that may be sensitive or controversial; and areas that fill a knowledge gap.

<p>“IRC’s ability to access and draw from UNICEF RO and CO work in research and policy development is unique... On the one hand, IRC, as the research arm of UNICEF, has a comparative advantage with regard to convening key people and partners. On the other hand, IRC has some distance within the organization, which allows for a more outspoken view on controversial issues.”</p> <p>IRC Staff Member</p>

Its work was perceived as relevant to at least some advocacy needs in UNICEF and many singled out IRC’s work on the CIS/CEE and the industrialized countries. It is the only part of UNICEF providing analysis on the situation of children in the industrialized countries and this is particularly appreciated by some of the European countries and the Natcoms. This work demonstrates that UNICEF is concerned about all children globally and that every country needs to address national problems.

There was a considerable difference in the views of different interviewees depending on the contact and involvement they have with the IRC. Those with the most involvement tended to be from regions where IRC has been active and they were generally in agreement that its work is

relevant to some UNICEF needs. The different Europeans consulted, whether in European UNICEF offices, National Committees or external stakeholders tended to agree that IRC was relevant to their needs.

Other individuals, primarily in other UNICEF offices, questioned the value of IRC's work to them. They have had little involvement with IRC. While they receive IRC publications, they do not have time to read them or see any particular relevance for their work. However, there are cases where recent IRC work on some neglected issues such as birth registration and indigenous children were recognized as being very relevant and beneficial to UNICEF field offices.

The most significant concern was that IRC is working on some relevant issues for UNICEF but they are not the most critical areas. One of the most common concerns expressed, in particular by UNICEF staff is that IRC's present work is not tied closely enough to the main priorities of UNICEF expressed in the MTSP. They feel that IRC should look at some of the macro issues involved in helping UNICEF develop a more comprehensive strategy for issues such as childhood education, health or the development of healthy adolescent youth, particularly girls.

4.2. Effectiveness

4.2.1. Research and Advocacy

Finding 4: IRC research and advocacy has been effective in contributing to the knowledge and influence of UNICEF with quality research work on many relatively new topics.

A number of the research products of IRC were judged to be of high quality in the opinion of independent academic experts and various users of IRC products. This applies in particular to the ongoing products of the MONEE programme and at least some of the Report Cards with which external observers were familiar. Selected examples of some of the Digests published in the period under review have also been judged as based on good expert input and bringing the best knowledge to bear on an issue.

The review of programme achievements in chapter 3 is selective and not always well documented but the evidence is sufficient to allow for a judgment that the Centre has been very effective in achieving positive outcomes in specific areas.

The MONEE program has been effective in providing a complementary perspective to that of the major multilateral funding agencies on the implications of the new economic systems introduced in these countries after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Its data and analysis have been introduced into their publications and used for dialogue and advocacy by the UNICEF CO/ROs. The Transmonee database is also significantly used outside of IRC,

There is evidence in some cases that the Report Cards have been effective. The extensive discussion in the UK media and parliament on the IRC Report Card on child poverty provides a good illustration of what outcomes can be achieved in a best-case scenario. The work of the Child Rights programme has also had evidence of effectiveness in bringing about change in policy and practice. The Birth Registration Digest has led to a number of countries establishing stronger birth registration procedures.

The Centre has selected research topics that meet each of the three selection criteria that have been established for the Centre. The Birth Registration study is a good example of a novel approach. A controversial issue tackled by IRC was the assessment of official and other higher estimates of infant mortality in the CEE/CIS countries

IRC's mandate states that it should support and promote advocacy and it has been an active advocate for its various findings. It has supported public presentations and actively participated in lobbying or preparing briefs for UN meetings such as the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. It has also been an active participant in meetings with the Council of Europe and the European Parliament in promoting better child protection and children's rights. It has helped create or provide assistance to new networks such as the Global Network of Ombudsmen for Children. It has been involved in assisting the European Union to prepare guidelines for their staff on children in armed conflict. It has also participated in more specific country initiatives such as assisting in the development of legislation in Guatemala on intercountry adoption, in line with the CRC and the relevant Hague Convention.

Some individuals interviewed felt that it is not IRC's role to push the results of its work. "The job of IRC is not to push the results of its research but to go back and do more research."³¹ This is the responsibility of other parts of UNICEF. However the selection criteria do put an onus on IRC to promote its findings when they deal with novel or controversial issues that UNICEF HQ may not want to directly address.

4.2.2. Communications and Capacity Development

Finding 5: IRC is developing a more sophisticated communication approach to address some weaknesses in distribution of its outputs and the dissemination of its research findings. It has become more successful in identifying opportunities to publicize its work and work more closely with some UNICEF offices. IRC's Internet site is not fully developed. IRC support for capacity development within UNICEF is limited and takes place as a component of other activities.

IRC identifies a wide set of constituencies that it targets for communication and dissemination of its work. This includes government, international and national NGOs, decision makers and donor agencies in the industrial countries, multilateral organizations, UNICEF and its sister agencies, the academic community, the media and the general public.

IRC has made efforts to upgrade its communication strategy since 2000. It aims to become more strategic in its dissemination, reducing the number of hard-copy publications and promoting more downloading of publications from its Internet site. It has pruned its distribution lists and the number of printed copies it is producing of any one publication. Publication announcements are sent out to some 2000 addresses. The data for 2003 and 2004 shows that the number of publications downloaded now is still below the print run in most cases. Posting on the Internet is relatively recent and its success cannot yet be judged.

It is giving more emphasis to generating visibility through more public launches of its publications and identifying strategic events for the launch occasions. It has been successful in recent years with this approach. Senior UNICEF management and leading experts have been

³¹ Report of the Annual Meeting of the IAC, February 2004. p. 3

associated with the launch of the Centre's publications; as a key example, the UNICEF Executive Director has been present to launch several IRC studies including the last three Social Monitor reports, in New York and European cities. Related to this has been greater success in generating more media coverage.

IRC wishes to promote the distribution of information also via its Internet web site. Its site allows for online purchasing of publication and has a journalists sign up function. However the information on its website is not up to date and external observers have commented that it is not as user friendly as other web sites.

IRC publishes reports in the following titled series: Report Cards, Social Monitor reports, Insights, Digests and Working Papers. The most common concern expressed by external observers was that they had difficulty in understanding the rationale for the different denominations IRC uses for its different kinds of publications.

An objective of the Centre since its creation has been the development of capacity in UNICEF. It has been referred to many times over the years beginning with the 1993 IRC evaluation, mentioned in the letter of the Executive Director to UN staff in 1997 and in numerous annual reports. There was a special section on Strengthening Capacity to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child in the 1999 IRC annual report.

The Centre acts as a capacity-building forum for UNICEF and its partners by:

- Documenting experiences on organizational issues relating to the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and disseminating good practices
- Promoting debriefing of staff members whose experience may contribute to organizational learning
- Organizing and hosting seminars and expert discussions on emerging and current children's rights issues.

(IRC website)

Capacity building is now directed primarily to Children's Rights issues although the MONEE project also provides some training for national counterparts and UNICEF staff in some of the CIS/CEE countries.

IRC was involved in the late nineties, during the first of the three periods under review, with a number of capacity development initiatives with UNICEF field staff. The Centre published a number of reports on UNICEF experience in Burundi, Eritrea and Ethiopia in the late nineties in connection with emergency situations, and it held a debriefing session for staff representatives from five emergency countries in 2000. In 2003, a UNICEF Representative was in the Centre for several months between assignments. The Centre has indicated its openness to pursue these initiatives, which were considered to have been useful for the organization, but faces limited availability of resources for these endeavors. Other types of staff capacity development continue to be carried out, including participation in expert discussions and sharing of experiences, which in turn represent key information sources for IRC studies and publications.

4.2.3. IRC as a Knowledge Generator and Broker

Finding 6: IRC has been effective in generating new knowledge through its own research and tapping external knowledge and expertise in preparing its publications. IRC has a unique niche and a comparative advantage in being at the interface between academia and UNICEF's field experience. It has still a limited role as a knowledge broker.

A major evolution in the last decade among applied research and policy institutes has been a dramatic increase in developing knowledge and research networks. Advocacy networks have also grown rapidly and some involve thousands of organizations and individuals. The Internet and electronic communication has made it easy to create linkages among institutions and individuals on a global basis. These networks are perceived as bringing benefits in sharing experience, expertise, resources and credibility.

Applied research institutes have been active in participating in such networks. Some organizations have taken on a role as a knowledge broker for these networks. A knowledge broker role can be limited to drawing on and synthesizing external knowledge or be as broad as drawing together different researchers and research organizations to create a shared research agenda and design and to coordinate complimentary or collaborative research.

These organizations that are playing a key knowledge broker role also maintain some of their own in house research since this allows them to stay at the forefront and to maintain credibility.

Knowledge Brokering in Other Organizations

The ODI in the UK and the IISD in Canada are two good examples of applied research and policy advocacy centres that have become active knowledge brokers, creating and serving as secretariats for a number of research networks that carry out collaborative research. One of the research networks that the ODI hosts is the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action. Fifty-one different organizations from bilateral, multilateral and the NGO sectors participate in sharing all evaluations on humanitarian action and conducting and publishing a meta evaluation each year. One of the networks that IISD hosts is a Trade Knowledge Network which brings together different institutes in both developed and developing countries to link research and to develop communities of practice.

IRC is both a knowledge generator in that it conducts its own research, collecting and analyzing data as well as having a limited type of knowledge brokering where it collects and summarizes existing knowledge from a variety of sources.

Much of IRC's work, and in particular its flagship publication series involve in house or consultant research by IRC: the Innocenti Insights, MONEE monitoring reports, the Report Card series, and other thematic studies.

The Digest series on the other hand have more of the characteristics of knowledge brokering since IRC identifies and summarizes in the Digests the best practices and experiences from different sources on a specific topic. However, there is scope for the Centre to increase its collaboration with developing countries and to conduct shared research with other organizations.

IRC management estimated that more than half of its work has been devoted to generating new knowledge although it is shifting and it intends to keep shifting more attention to brokering knowledge. It is engaging more with external networks and bringing in external experts for consultation meetings. IRC will have to continue to maintain its own research in some cases

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where there are no other institutions that can do this research or do it as effectively as IRC. It also needs to maintain this inhouse research analysis to maintain its own staff expertise, knowledge and credibility in interactions with other partners. These are complementary functions and the issue for IRC is the balance it should maintain between these two functions.

There was strong support among many of the individuals consulted from within UNICEF and other stakeholders that IRC should place more emphasis on its knowledge brokering function. It was argued that this would allow IRC to pursue a more ambitious goal of facilitating and coordinating research on broader and more fundamental research issues. Only by combining the efforts of many actors will it be possible to address some of the more fundamental issues affecting children.

External observers also pointed to the advantages that IRC could enjoy through its access to UNICEF's field experience that academics in research institutions cannot usually access. It would draw them into working with IRC if they could access more of this field experience. These observers felt that IRC was not taking full advantage of this asset.

4.2.4. Linkages within UNICEF

Finding 7: IRC has established good working relations with some parts of UNICEF, particularly with the ROs in Europe, the National Committees and the COs in CEE/CIS. There is limited collaboration with other parts of UNICEF, e.g. Headquarters Divisions in New York and field offices in developing countries. There is no single formal mechanism within UNICEF to consult on research agendas and integrate the IRC's findings and insights into its programmes and advocacy.

IRC has improved its linkages with some parts of UNICEF over the last three programming cycles. The most significant change has been the development of a much closer working relationship with the UNICEF Natcoms. This is reflected as well in the increasing funding that the Natcoms have been providing to IRC over this period. Natcoms have indicated particular interest in IRC work related to the industrialized countries and to some extent in the CEE/CIS region. While a number of Natcoms have carried out 'development education' initiatives as part of their public awareness and fundraising activities, many Natcoms have not traditionally engaged in own-country advocacy on children's issues. There is however some evidence that this may change in future. This will make IRC research on their countries or on issues that are important to their countries more useful and appealing to them.

Several measures have been taken in the last five years to provide opportunities for developing a closer relationship with the field offices. The membership of the IAC was expanded in 2002 to include two ROs along with other stakeholders from Sweden, external experts, Natcoms and. However the mixed representation in these meetings and the limited time available to explore issues and pursue opportunities for cooperation means there is little indepth exchange on areas for collaboration.

A second change was the recruitment of more IRC staff from other UNICEF offices. The proportion of research staff with previous UNICEF experience is now at the highest level since IRC's creation.

IRC is a part of the HQ Programme Group and the Director participates in its monthly meetings as well as in more frequent consultations of the Programme Group Management Team. Interviews with staff in New York indicated some areas where they thought there could be more cooperation with other programme departments. The Division of Policy and Planning, the Programme Division, the Division for Emergency Programmes (EMOPS) and the Evaluation Office all deal with several areas that could directly benefit from IRC activities: global policies, programme guidance and planning (including the preparation of the MTSP), strategic information etc. At present, there seems to be no single mechanism for consultations on each other's agendas and workplans or even to provide adequate mutual information which may lead to overlaps and /or competing concepts). There is also a case to be made for an improved uptake of innovative findings and insights of IRC in the mainstream of UNICEF policy and strategy development and guidance.

IRC has cooperated with some ROs in carrying out studies such as cooperation with the Regional office for Eastern and Southern Africa, (Study on the socio-economic impacts of HIV/AIDS; 2001), and the Regional office for West and Central Africa (Study on Child Trafficking; 2002) UNICEF offices in the CEE/CIS have been particularly engaged in identifying upcoming research topics and thus genuinely interested in the results of MONEE. The MONEE project has had funding for IRC staff to visit country offices and staff in the national ministries of statistics so that there is an ongoing system of consultation. Interaction with other regions and countries did not reach the same level of intensity.

Child Trafficking in the West and Central African Region

IRC conducted a study in 2002 on Child Trafficking in the West and Central African region in partnership with the UNICEF Regional Office and 8 Country Offices. The study also involved collaboration with the ILO and the IOM. It prompted field driven research by UNICEF and its partners in the countries. This led to several donors providing funding for the whole of Africa with the intention of using this study for the EU/Africa Summit in 2003.

Field staff interviewed indicated that they feel they could benefit from greater IRC involvement in their region and that they could work in collaboration with IRC. They have the contacts and responsibility to develop links with research institutions in their countries. They see collaboration on complimentary research as the most appropriate way to proceed. They would not look to IRC to manage all research on regional issues on their behalf. Several interviewees from outside the region suggested that ROs and COs could divert a portion of their project funding to IRC to manage a research component. However others rejected this approach, as this might not be acceptable to some donors or national governments.

IRC's more limited involvement in research on developing countries and less intensive interaction with UNICEF field staff was the reason why some staff in the field offices and others in the NY HQ said that IRC is not relevant to their interests and that it is primarily a European based and oriented institution. It should in this context be mentioned that according to the Executive Board the current IRC programme "aims to consolidate progress achieved in Europe and advance the partnership process in other regions through close collaboration with UNICEF ROS." (E/ICEF/2002/13, para 67)

The lack of a close working relationship with some parts of UNICEF raises the issue of how the results of IRC's work can be more integrated within the rest of UNICEF. This has been raised as a key challenge a number of times in IRC's history. The Report to the Economic and Social Council in 1999 noted that previous reviews called for "improvement in the Centre's ability to transfer more systematically all of its research findings directly into UNICEF policy making, programme development, advocacy and staff training.... these challenges must be met or the

Centre risks marginalisation and UNICEF risks losing opportunities.³² It points to limitations on both sides that inhibit the absorption of research findings. Research centres are often found in relatively isolated environments, research findings are not action oriented and operational agencies lack time and a process to absorb research findings.

The experience of IRC and the CEE/CIS RO/COs in the MONEE programmes shows that some of these barriers can be overcome when there is a joint interest in research findings and ongoing collaboration in planning and conducting studies and in publicizing findings.

4.2.5. Networking and Partnering

Finding 8: Research networks on issues relating to children are not as strong as they are in other fields of research (e.g. agriculture, health). IRC has established effective networking relationships with policy and advocacy groups but less so with research organizations or research oriented NGOs. IRC networks tend to be based on personal contacts although this is improving

One of IRC’s objectives stated for the present planning period is to “to enhance its partnerships with research and policy institutions, and development agencies, to advance the cause of children, including by supporting the substantive work of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.” IRC’s current programme aims to consolidate alliances in Europe and advance partnerships in other regions

Both IRC and different academics consulted agreed that stable and active professional networks addressing various issues relating to children are not as strong as one finds in areas such as health or environmental protection. The most common reason stated for this is that there are fewer researchers and dedicated research groups working on issues relating specifically to children, cutting across different technical fields.

Over the past 15 years, as indicated in IRC’s current programme (E/ICEF/2002/13), IRC has worked in collaboration with a variety of different organizations, including UN agencies, NGOs, international advocacy and humanitarian organizations, research institutions, donor agencies, institutions like the EU, and international financial organizations.

<p>IRC self-assessment: Positive estimation of partnerships</p> <p>52% - other parts of UNICEF 21% - the research and policy communities 17% - other agencies in the UN system 48% - National Committees (NATCOMS) for UNICEF 26% - other international agencies and actors (e.g. NGOs) 52% - intergovernmental bodies and Human Rights Treaty bodies</p>

IRC has played a role in helping create networks, particularly in the last five years. It hosts and serves as a Secretariat for the recently created European Network for a Research Agenda on Children in Armed Conflict. IRC was involved in contacting over 100 research institutes in Europe (less than half of which committed to be associated with the initiative) and preparing a shared database. It is helping to coordinate a global network of Ombudsmen for Children. IRC hosts a web based Child Trafficking site that provides information on topics and organizations and individuals working in this area. However this is more of a information service than a network. Thus IRC has made progress in helping create or to link to more policy or advocacy

³² Report to the Economic and Social Council, 1999. p.5

networks in the last few years although most of these can be classified at the lower level of collaboration. There are however still no strong networks of a comparable nature that link researchers and research institutions.

Staff indicated that most networks are still based on personal contacts in IRC and that these contacts tend to be lost when staff members leave IRC. There is not a good system for sharing and building networks on a consistent basis. This is partly due to the number of different topics that IRC addresses compared to the networks that develop for ongoing research in one area. IRC is aware of the need to improve and broaden its networking and partnerships activities. As one action, it hosted a meeting in 2003 on enhancing partnerships and building alliances in the Communications area. The meeting included representatives of UNICEF NY/HQ, ROs and COs, offices, Natcoms communication group, and IRC staff.³³

A second problem is that these networks, both the more formally established advocacy networks and informal researcher contacts tend to be Euro centric and hence much smaller than the potential from a more global network. UNICEF RO/CO offices have good links in some cases with academic institutions in their region and they could become a useful partner in developing broader research networks if there is a shared research agenda.³⁵

Collaboration with Italian Partners:

IRC has maintained collaboration with the Istituto degli Innocenti, its host institution in Florence.³⁴ Besides joint research and publications on different topics, one major element of the partnership has been the establishment of the Innocenti Library in 2001. The library is documenting resource information on a broad range of issues affecting children and young people, both in form of traditional archives and digital and audiovisual material.

IRC has been successful in creating broader alliances with some specific advocacy and policy related institutions and with many UN agencies on a case-by-case basis on different subjects of shared interest. There are few formal research partnerships with the main shared project being an ILO/WB/IRC project on *Understanding Children's Work*. There is not a process in place to ensure systematic consultation and collaboration with other UN agencies such as UNHCR, ILO and UNESCO concerned with different issues related to children or with key child research oriented NGOs.³⁶

³³ Salvador Herencia: Presentation on: IRC International Advisory Committee Meeting. Enhancing Partnerships and Building Alliances. Florence November 13-14, 2003.

³⁴ The partnership is part of the original agreement for the establishment of ICDC between the Government of Italy and UNICEF; September 1986.

³⁵ The IRC website includes a number of links to other organizations, as well as relevant websites and databases. While the link section is well structured and allows for searching for various topical areas and types of organizations, it is outdated, and missing references to a number of organizations, which are mentioned on other IRC project websites.

³⁶ One suggestion to bring greater collaboration was to invite key UN agencies or other important partners to participate in IAC meetings.

4.3. Efficiency

4.3.1. Governance

Oversight

Finding 9: The IRC Director reports to the Deputy Executive Director who heads the Programme Group. Budgets and workplans are approved through the Programme Budget Review mechanism. The International Advisory Committee meets once a year to assist the Director on policy matters. Oversight mechanisms are effective.

IRC has the status of a division of UNICEF HQ reporting to the Deputy Executive Director who heads the Programme Group. IRC's status is different from that of a country or regional office in that it holds a global mandate, but it is also different from other HQ based units in that it has a more detached status and modus operandi. Its budgets and workplans are scrutinized through the standard Programme Budget Review process. The budget cycle for IRC is different since it is still based on the agreement with the GOI for a three year funding cycle unlike the two year cycle for other headquarter units of UNICEF. IRC uses the standard field programme/budget management system (ProMS). By and large, oversight mechanisms are effective.

One method for UNICEF oversight arises from UNICEF participation on IRC's International Advisory Committee. The original agreement between UNICEF and the Government of Italy for the creation of the International Child Development Centre included a clause to create an Advisory Committee to assist the Centre Director "on important policy matters"³⁷. Originally it consisted of representatives from UNICEF, the GOI, and from the host institution, the Istituto degli Innocenti. The IAC was expanded more recently to include representation from UNICEF National Committees, UNICEF Regional Directors, donor governments, and external experts. The Committee meets once a year to review activities and achievements and provide advice on IRC's future work. Some IAC participants indicated that it is difficult to get a good sense of IRC priorities and activities from such a short meeting.

4.3.2. Research Priorities in IRC

Finding 10: While the criteria for selection of research priorities are relevant and appropriate, the process by which research priorities are selected is not well documented and external consultation for identifying priorities is limited.

The UNICEF's Executive Board endorsed in 1999 the following criteria for selection of IRC research projects:

- i) Areas that are relatively new to UNICEF and that may be of increasing importance in the future;
- ii) Statistics and areas that may be sensitive or even controversial, and
- iii) Areas that the Centre is meant to fill knowledge gaps in areas of UNICEF's work that are already mainstreamed.

³⁷ Agreement between the Government of Italy and the United Nations Children's Fund, article 8 1988.

These criteria are used to screen possible research topics considered by the Centre. All of the IRC research topics chosen at random for assessment were consistent with one or more of these criteria.

The IAC provides advice to IRC management on the general direction and research priorities of IRC but it does not have the authority of a Steering Committee. There is evidence that management is making changes to respond to the advice on priorities of the IAC with more focus on fewer studies and more efforts being made to link IRC's work to the MTSP priorities.

A Research Review Committee (RRC) was created in 2000 as an internal committee. There are no records to show the kind of scrutiny that it provides. There is not a uniform process of consultation with outside experts or a uniform peer review process. Peer review takes place for the development of IRC studies, within UNICEF and beyond.

There was concern expressed by a number of individuals that this process is inadequate. It is, of course, difficult to select research priorities in a completely objective manner on the basis of some fixed criteria. The potential value of much research is uncertain although less so in applied research. It should be noted that the outcomes of a number of research topics shows that some of the choices made have been relevant and astutely chosen.

Performance Monitoring

Finding 11: IRC activities are monitored and outputs are measured at the level of individual projects. There is not a logical model to identify possible outcomes or a process for monitoring and tracking results.

Projects and activities are planned through the annual workplanning process, managed by each section and supervised by the Director. Workplans are monitored at the unit level and senior management, and are periodically reviewed by the OMT. An office-wide review is held at the end of each year, which forms the basis for preparation of IRC Annual Reports and the development of the following year's workplan.

There is no documented tracking of activities across the Centre. Monitoring has generally been done at the activity and output level and not in terms of identifying results. IRC is oriented towards product production whether through publications or workshops. It is concerned through its advocacy activities to promote the findings of its work but there is no systematic tracing of use and effectiveness except on an anecdotal basis. There has been some improvement recently with the 2002-2003 Annual Review stating achievements and challenges for each programme. It provides a better picture of results and a number of outcomes rather than just outputs.

Performance measurement is made more difficult by the lack of well documented plans showing planned outputs and expected outcomes. Some of the staff, particularly those with previous UNICEF experience are familiar with the logical framework approach used in UNICEF but this is not utilized in IRC.³⁸ It should be noted that many independent research organizations do not use a logical framework approach in developing their work programmes so IRC is not unique in

³⁸ An attempt was made to try to re-construct a results chain on an ex-post basis but it proved to be too time consuming to undertake for this review.

this respect. This in part reflects some difficulty in establishing indicators and benchmarks for measuring research performance.

One area that is more amenable to creating and measuring indicators is in IRC's outreach through its publications and other forms of communication. Publication sales and use, media coverage and user surveys offer opportunities to track the use and value of different kinds of IRC outputs. This is partly done through tracking data on media coverage and Internet downloads of IRC publications but IRC has not systematically undertaken user surveys.

The IRC self assessment indicated that staff reflection was not sufficient in the Centre and staff indicated in interviews that while they feel performance indicators would be difficult to develop, they could be useful in helping staff reflect on areas where they need to improve planning and performance.

4.3.3. Human Resources and Management

Staff composition

Finding 12: IRC has significantly increased the recruitment of staff with academic and policy development expertise from elsewhere in UNICEF and now employs fewer researchers with a purely academic background. This improves IRC's ability to function more as a knowledge broker with other parts of UNICEF.

The number of staff has increased from the original establishment size of seven international staff and local support staff to a total of 16 international staff positions and 10 local staff for a total of 26 staff in 2004. Management is composed of a Director, Deputy Director/Head of Research, and four unit chiefs for administration, communications and two research programmes. Two international staff members are located in the Communications programme and one in administration. Not counting the Director, this leaves a total of 12 international staff positions, including managers, in the research programmes.

The research staff members were originally largely drawn from academia with no UNICEF experience. In 2000 before the arrival of the present Director, there were only four staff members (and two research staff) with previous UNICEF experience, and only one staff member with UNICEF field experience. This has changed considerably over the last three years with more staff being drawn from elsewhere in UNICEF, including staff with previous field and research experience. All of the senior management staff now has had previous UNICEF experience elsewhere. This response by management in recent years addresses one of the frequent criticisms that were made of IRC staff in the past. External observers mentioned that IRC staff with an academic background used to be considered as too distant from UNICEF's field realities.

Since the Centre cannot maintain in-house expertise on all the issues that it has to address, it supplements its own expertise by drawing in consultants and experts from other organizations for specific studies. In addition to the regular staff, the Centre has two JPOs (supported by France and Italy), three temporary staff members as well as consultants. It has also had, on rare occasions, some visiting academics for short periods. The Director of Social Research for Statistics Canada worked at IRC as a visiting researcher for 12 months in 2003-2004 on studies contributing to the current Report Card on child poverty in rich countries. An Australian academic in the public health field also spent several months at IRC in 2004. External

academics consulted indicated that IRC could probably attract more academics on sabbatical if IRC actively solicited visiting scholars and IRC has indicated that it is actively exploring this area. The Centre would have to set some conditions for visiting scholars to make sure that they contribute to the work of the Centre.

There does not seem to be a good overall source showing management and operating standards in other organizations that one could compare to IRC. One alternative that the Centre might consider is the approach of the small International Institute for Sustainable Development, which has become one of the top two globally cited sustainable development institutes. It is located in a non-metropolitan city so it has recruited highly credible international experts in its field as Senior Associates who are located in other institutions in different cities around the world. These Associates do not receive any money from IISD unless they are involved in a research project. The external associates provide IISD with knowledge in a wide range of different areas and provide credibility and visibility for IISD. In return the Associates are frequently consulted by IISD and have access and input to its activities. IISD has moved some distance to becoming a virtual organization with high visibility while maintaining a small core staff.

Management Team and administrative support

Finding 13: The number of staff in the management team is higher than is found in independent research or policy analysis institutes of this size but the IRC has more demanding administrative and accountability requirements. The IRC is well staffed to perform financial and administrative functions taking into account administrative requirements of UNICEF.

The management team consisting of six people is higher than is found in a number of independent research or policy analysis institutes of this size. The position of Senior Operations Officer was replaced in 2003 by two positions of a Deputy Director/Head of Research and a Section Chief for Operations (administration, finance, information technology and human resources). The head of the operations unit is an international position.

One of the functions undertaken by managers at different levels is the review of draft research papers and publications. Staff members indicated that this leads to delays in approval for papers and publications and takes a lot of management time. The IRC does not distinguish between staff working papers that are primarily produced for internal use within UNICEF and full-fledged publications. While the former would not need extensive management review, the latter would have to be endorsed by the management. This distinction could reduce overall time required for assessments. The recommendation elsewhere that the Centre focuses on fewer issues and publications would also reduce the time necessary for reviewing publications.

An Office Management Team has been created to address management issues but, in the opinion of some of the staff, it does not yet seem to have become a vehicle for discussing the broad strategic issues facing the Centre or for discussing research, marketing and advocacy strategies and work plans. Although minutes of the OMT are circulated to all staff, there is still further effort needed to address the staff perception that the lines of communication within the Centre are not clear. This was the opinion of 61% of the IRC staff answering the survey. Some measures have been taken to reduce costs and increase efficiency such as the outsourcing of publication distribution since 2000.

As compared to other research institutions, the Centre is relatively well staffed with six persons to deal with financial and administrative support functions. However, as an operational unit of UNICEF, IRC has to follow more demanding procedures than independent research institutes, such as having to use the organizational financial management tool ProMs, and standard UNICEF contracting and reporting procedures. The IRC more resembles a UNICEF Country Office, as far as staffing for support functions is concerned.

Research Organization:

Finding 14: The Socio-Economic and the Child Rights Protection programme areas have different characteristics and operating styles and there are relatively few joint research activities between these two programmes.

Division of the research programmes into two areas causes some difficulties according to the IRC self-assessment and a few external interviewees. Staff members in the Socio-Economic Programme generally have an academic background, carry out more in-house research and publish more than the staff in the Child Rights programme. The latter are drawn more from within UNICEF and they have more interaction with a range of other parts of UNICEF, hold more workshops and undertake more normative research.

This difference in background and orientation contributes to what some staff members called a “stove pipe” effect where there is limited substantive interaction between the two research areas. A majority of IRC staff indicated in the IRC self assessment that IRC’s organizational structure does not ensure that the tasks of different units are coordinated or that it allows for efficient teamwork.³⁹

IRC records 32 different research-related activities in October 2004, clustered within nine main topic areas/projects, to be managed by 12 research staff members. This is a higher number than is found in other applied policy and research institutions. Even if some of these activities are not active in any one year and external experts are drawn upon to compliment the work of IRC staff, it is still difficult for such a small staff to work effectively on so many activities. In addition, the staff is organized in many small research teams. There is an average of less than two staff persons designated as principally responsible for each activity. This range of activity areas reduces the potential for staff to work on large multi-disciplinary teams. One of the advantages that IRC has compared to other research organizations that focus on one aspect of child welfare such as education or health is that it can take a holistic approach to the well being of the child. This requires bringing together many different disciplinary and sectoral perspectives.

Staff indicated in the IRC self assessment that they think there is little opportunity to maintain their professional skills with only 10% of those staff agreeing that the organization plans for and supports training and development of its staff.

³⁹ Sixty percent of the staff answering the question said they strongly or moderately disagreed with the statement that IRC’s organizational structure ensures coordination of the tasks of different units and allows for efficient teamwork .

Infrastructure

Finding 15: IRC's facilities in the Istituto degli Innocenti are adequate for the present staff but additional staff would have to be located in another building.

IRC is hosted by the Istituto degli Innocenti and located in a historically significant building in the heart of Florence. The offices are adequate for the staff although not ideal for staff interaction. A review by the office indicates that individual offices are adequate but limited space is available, including for meetings and joint work. The Istituto provided additional space in 2002 in a separate building in another location, at modest rent. The information technology facilities are adequate but could be expanded with technical software appropriate for researchers.

4.4. Resource Mobilization and Financial Viability

4.4.1. Financial Viability

Finding 16: IRC has depended on external funding (Other Resources) since its creation. IRC has been able to increase its income over each of the last three programme cycles. However it is becoming increasingly dependent on project funding. IRC is financially viable at a modest level if current unrestricted core contributions from Other Resources are maintained.

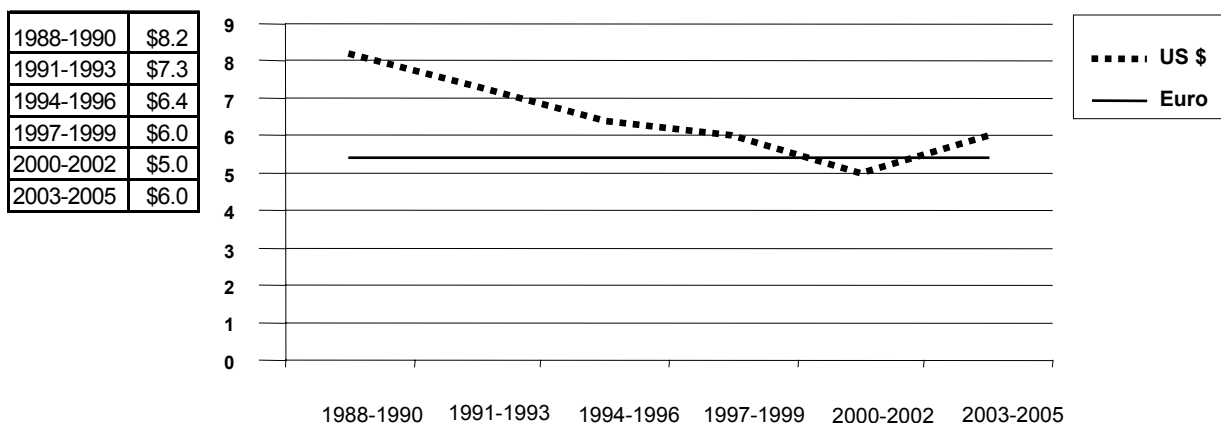
In its original agreement with UNICEF, the GOI committed itself to a contribution for IRC amounting to a total of 10,5 billion Lire (USD 8.8 million in January 1988, as noted in the 1988 Board document) over 3 years to cover staff costs as well as some research expenses.

The Board decision (1987/22) indicated that "the Italian Government has expressed its firm intention to promote, at the given time, the initiatives which will be suitable to extend, without interruption, the life of the centre after the agreed three years". The agreement also provided for the use of the Innocenti premises in Florence, with the request that IRC would contribute towards running costs of the building(s). The GOI has maintained its core funding level in Lira/Euro terms for subsequent three-year periods. In addition to this core funding, the IRC has received voluntary and / or additional funding for specific programming areas from GOI.⁴⁰ At the time of the renewal of the GOI-UNICEF agreement for 2003-2005, the GOI stated: "The Government of Italy will provide UNICEF with further support within the available resources, including the support to the joint library and its development as a European and international knowledge centre on children's rights." It further stated that "acknowledging the commitment to ensure an adequate core support to IRC, and further acknowledging the devaluation in nominal terms of its core contribution, the Government of Italy will make efforts to reverse this trend during the next triennium." (letter from the Permanent Representative to the UN to the UNICEF Executive Director, September 2002). The Board decision (E/ICEF/2002/13, Para 80) authorising the extension of the Centre noted the pledge of the GOI "to provide a minimum of Euro 5,430,000 (approximately \$5 million) for the core activities of the Centre, with the remainder to be sought from other donors, including a further additional contribution from the Government of Italy, for specific activities."

⁴⁰ Total voluntary and project-specific contributions, for different activities, including support to the IDI were US dollars \$707,683.88 in 2001, \$683,805.40 in 2002, and \$740,368.22 in 2003. In 2004 a voluntary contribution of Euros 300,000 was received (Dec. 28).

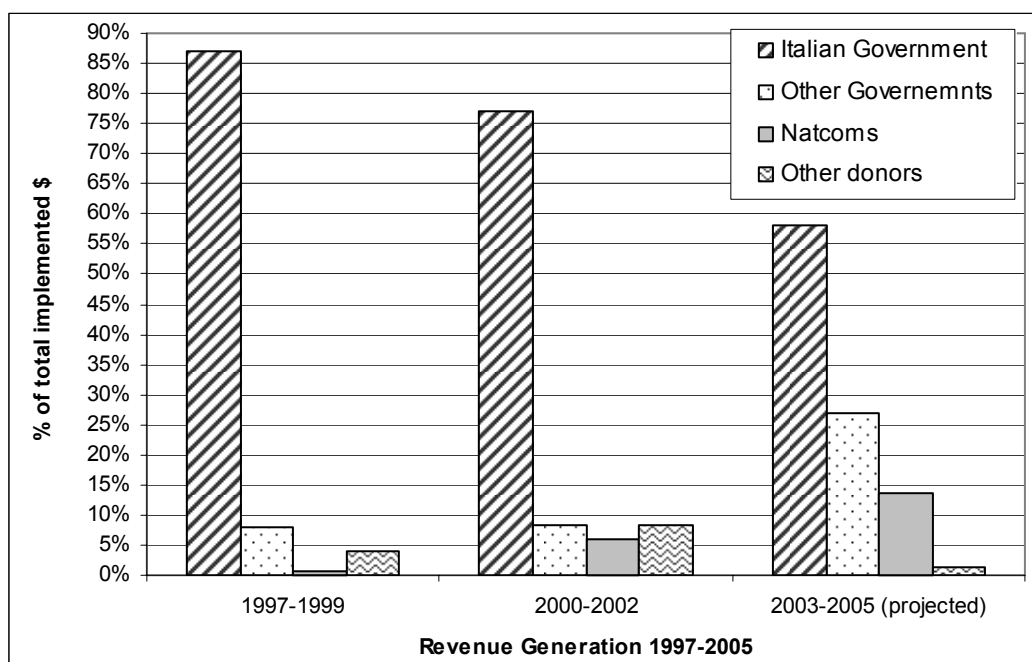
The devaluation of the Italian currency and inflation over time has reduced the real value of the GOI 'core' contribution until recently. Exhibit 4.1 shows that its value in US currency continued to drop until 2003. This has forced IRC to intensify its search for funding from other sources. The GOI also indicated by the start in 1997 of the three programme cycles being reviewed that they expected IRC to begin finding additional funding to supplement their contribution.

Exhibit 4.1. Italian Core Contribution by Programme Cycles (millions)⁴¹



During the period under review, IRC has succeeded in generating funding from a growing number of sources. Exhibit 4.2 shows the relative decrease of the share of the total GOI contribution as compared to funding received from other donors, in particular from other governments, and UNICEF Natcoms:

Exhibit 4.2. IRC Income Sources 1997-2005



⁴¹ For easier reference, the Italian contribution is expressed in Euros, even though the Euro was only introduced with a fixed parity rate of 1936,27 Italian Lire for 1 Euro on January 1, 1999.

The total GOI contribution has declined from 87% of IRC's total resources in 1997-1999 to a projected share of 58% in the current programme cycle through 2005. Over the same period, the share of other governments increased from 8% to 27% and funding from the Natcoms rose from less than 1% to 13%.⁴² Only contributions from the Other Donors category, such as World Bank funding, have decreased.⁴³

The record shows that IRC has had considerable success in meeting its own goal and the GOI request to diversify its funding sources in a consistent manner.

Similarly IRC has been able to increase its total budget consistently over the same period. IRC has also been successful in the last two programme cycles in achieving a higher percentage of the budget ceiling approved by the UNICEF Executive Board than the average achieved by all UNICEF offices.

Exhibit 4.3. Funds Received and Implemented (in thousands of USD)

CYCLE 1997-1999 (IMPLEMENTATION)	CYCLE 2000-2002 (IMPLEMENTATION)	CYCLE 2003-2005 FUNDS RECEIVED AS AT SEPT 04
7,373	9,549	13,449
Ceiling Authorized US \$10,500	Ceiling Authorized US \$12,800	Ceiling Authorized US \$14,000

The GOI is committed through an Act of Parliament (Law no. 312 of 04 August 1988) at the time of IRC's creation to providing a fixed contribution equivalent to the level of 10.5 billion lire, every three years. It should be noted that the Ministry of the Interior provides part of the statutory contribution from Italy from an old UN relief fund (UNRRA). It has expressed commitment to compensate for the decline in the value of its fixed contribution by important additional voluntary and / or additional contributions in addition to those required under the Italian Act.

However the Centre continues to be vulnerable due to its dependence on the GOI for unrestricted core funding. Any significant change in the overall Italian contribution would have a significant impact on the IRC's ability to continue employing the core staff.

With the exception of a significant contribution from the Government of Sweden, most of the recent additional funding has been provided as restricted project funding. Some of the Swedish contribution of 20.5 million kroner for the period 2003- 2005 is tied to approved IRC programme activities relating to Child Rights, including studies on CRC implementation and child trafficking. This contribution provides more flexibility to IRC in that it is a large grant and provides broad programme support to assist IRC in developing its Child Rights protection programme.

This project funding has been useful in allowing IRC to work with more USD partners and to expand the range of its activities but project funding cannot be a complete substitute for unrestricted core funding. An institute like IRC needs to have a secure funding base to allow it to cover general running costs and to respond to new research opportunities. Too heavy a reliance on project funding forces an organization to become dependent on the research interests of donors who may not have a comprehensive approach to child rights and child protection. Carrying project funding to an extreme would reduce IRC to becoming a consulting firm. This would subvert the vision and objectives defined for IRC.

⁴² All figures for 2003-2005 based on projected amounts.

⁴³ World Bank rules prevented renewal of funding for the Monee project.

UNICEF Funding

Finding 17: **The Decision of the Executive Board of UNICEF to provide Regular Resources for the funding of the post of Director of the IRC constitutes an important acknowledgement by UNICEF of the Centre’s importance. The IRC and the Regional Office for CEE / CIS have employed innovative approaches to generate funding for staff positions from within UNICEF programme funding.**

The original agreement between the GOI and UNICEF was based on the understanding that ‘there will be no general resources expenditures incurred for the upkeep and basic staff of the centre during this period or thereafter.’ However, upon approval by the Executive Board, UNICEF began to fund the post of the IRC Director from its Support Budget from 1 January 2000.⁴⁴

Other UNICEF offices in Headquarters and the field have also provided funds to IRC for specific (research) purposes. IRC and the UNICEF RO and COs in the CEE/CIS region have developed innovative methods of supporting the MONEE programme that has been a critical element in allowing UNICEF offices in the region to pursue their advocacy objectives. These UNICEF offices have each contributed funding to IRC to support this programme and to allow for almost two staff positions to be supported in the MONEE programme. In addition, IRC studies on such topics as HIV/AIDS, FGM/C, birth registration, trafficking and indigenous children have received support from other UNICEF HQ and field offices.

4.4.2. Resource Mobilization

Finding 18: **IRC has diversified its donor base over the last three programming cycles. However, the Centre does not have a resource generation strategy to secure funding on a medium to long-term perspective. Programme activities have not been described in the most appropriate format for marketing to donors.**

Although IRC management has had considerable success in identifying new funding sources and increasing its funding consistently over the last nine years, member governments in the UNICEF Executive Board, the IAC and other stakeholders have expressed concern about the level of funding. IAC minutes and interviews with other stakeholders indicate that many believe the level of funding is below what IRC needs and can effectively use. It is operating below optimum levels for an organization with so large a mandate.

IRC Self Assessment:

68% of survey participants think that IRC does not have an adequate resource mobilization strategy.

Securing long-term financial sustainability of the Centre has been an IAC priority for the past 10 years and it noted in its last meeting in February, 2004 that the “Committee acknowledges that

⁴⁴ At the last PBR process, IRC requested that UNICEF fund one additional international position (Operations Officer) in line with the funding priorities set out for the budget process in the organization. This request was not granted.

IRC resources are showing promising evolution but also reflect dramatic challenge to sustain and ensure long term viability.”⁴⁵

There is agreement by IRC management, as recommended by the 2004 IAC meeting, that the Centre develops a fundraising strategy. The Centre still lacks a documented fund raising strategy, and it does not have a specialized fundraising officer. The Director and other staff, in collaboration with PFO, GRO and other UNICEF offices, carry out fund raising. The UK Natcom is currently funding the costs of a consultant to assist IRC in developing a strategy. It is expected that part of the consultant’s work will be to identify improved packaging of proposals to increase their appeal to donors and to define a marketing approach that will identify key potential donors and prioritise a process to build a relationship and funding from different kinds of donors.

As part of developing a medium term fund raising strategy, the Centre could strengthen its marketing and look at more user-friendly programme and project descriptions. In particular, it should assess the potential to define broader projects that could attract multi-donor thematic support. A member government in the Executive Board made this suggestion and it is worth pursuing since this kind of broad support could provide the IRC with almost as much flexibility as unrestricted funding.

It should also undertake to identify possible funding sources and their interests. The Centre can turn to assistance from several sources for advice and support. The UNICEF Programme Funding Office can continue to help in approaching its traditional governmental donors. The relations between IRC and the Natcoms have become much closer in the last few years and the Natcoms have become important sources of funding for IRC. They can also help IRC identify new sources of funding, which could include the research-funding units in national ODA agencies or research funding foundations.

⁴⁵ IRC International Advisory Committee Meeting, 16 February 2004.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1. The role of research in UNICEF

Advocacy for children is a key objective of UNICEF and evidence based material is seen as an important tool for effective advocacy. The UNICEF MTSP highlighted the ongoing need for UNICEF to act as a researcher, policy analyst and communicator, to be able to provide practical and intellectual leadership on children's protection and rights.

The Medium Term Review of the 2002-2205 MTSP found that there was a consensus among UNICEF staff and donor governments that "UNICEF must focus on strengthening its role as a global knowledge centre for children"...and that "further promotion of relevant research, and communication and use of the results, will further underscore UNICEF's strategic role in support of global action for children."⁴⁶ The recent meeting of senior UNICEF management in Dubai decided that UNICEF had to make a greater effort to exercise intellectual leadership on children's issues.

As it pursues this leadership objective, UNICEF will have to decide how much research it needs to support, how and where this research should be done and how UNICEF can most effectively utilize research findings. The IRC is the only fully dedicated research institute in UNICEF but it is certainly not the only part of UNICEF that does research. The Country and Regional Offices of UNICEF support a number of location specific studies and other divisions of the Programme Group at New York Headquarters, as well as regional offices, also have some responsibilities in this area. In some fields, UNICEF also draws upon outside academic expertise. The flagship publication of UNICEF is the State of the World's Children prepared by the DOC and DPP. It frequently uses outside expertise from academic institutions to prepare analysis for this publication.

The Medium Term Review of the MTSP indicated that the number of research reports and evaluations by UNICEF field offices had significantly increased from 952 in 1999 to 1203 in 2003. Thirty percent of these studies were evaluations.⁴⁷ There has been no overall assessment of the quality and usefulness of these studies but a meta evaluation of the evaluation studies found that about one in five are excellent and about one third are of poor quality. UNICEF staff consulted for this meta-evaluation expressed concern about the value of many of these studies for broader use. They may be useful and important in a specific location but they do not seem to be contributing to a broader global understanding of issues within UNICEF. There is a centralized database that identifies evaluation studies, but not other research outputs. An Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan at the global level is being developing for use in the next MTSP, which will among other things also provide a guiding and supporting framework for various types of research studies.

Given the decentralized nature of UNICEF, there is not a comprehensive picture of the level of resources that UNICEF allocates to research. The present budget of the IRC represents less than one third of a percent of UNICEF's overall budget.⁴⁸ UNICEF's overall expenditure on

⁴⁶ The Medium Term Review of the UNICEF Medium Term Strategic Plan 2002-2205. p 38.

⁴⁷ The remainder of studies include survey reports as well as primary and secondary research. There is not a consistent definition of 'research' within the organization.

⁴⁸ As most of this is covered by direct support from the GOI and other donors and only one post is supported by UNICEF's core budget, the actual cost in relation to UNICEF's programme budget is minimal.

research may well be less than one percent of its budget. The Medium Term Review of the MTSP concluded “it is questionable whether UNICEF is investing adequately in analysis of the full range of supporting strategies of the Plan.”⁴⁹

One area that was singled out for further attention was Child Protection. It notes that there is a lack of “documentation on successful programmes and good practices as a basis for taking approaches to scale. UNICEF needs to...establish itself further as a knowledge hub” and “gaps need to be addressed through a well-structured research agenda.”⁵⁰

The Medium Term Review also noted that UNICEF field offices would like to see UNICEF play a greater role in social and economic policy formulation, influencing fiscal policies, social policies and promoting good governance. These issues were addressed more explicitly by the IRC during its early years. Any UNICEF efforts to play a leadership role on these macro issues will probably also require considerable research effort to backstop UNICEF advocacy in this area.

If UNICEF wishes to develop a more forceful intellectual leadership based on stronger analysis and evidence, it will have to identify priority research areas and provide sustained support for research on them. At present, there does not seem to be a well-articulated process for consultation and selection of research priorities.

Recommendation 1: If UNICEF wishes to further develop its intellectual leadership in key areas for children, it will have to decide how much research it needs to support, how and where this research should be done and how UNICEF can most effectively utilize research findings. UNICEF should decide who will take the lead in coordinating its research efforts. This may be a role the IRC can play.

5.2. IRC’s Mandate, Niche and Interface with other parts of UNICEF

IRC has a unique niche within UNICEF as its only global research centre. It also has a niche within the research community as the only research centre wholly dedicated to research on the rights and protection of the child. It has a comparative advantage over other research centres in that it can operate at the interface between academic research and UNICEF’s field experience.

IRC has demonstrated an ability to adjust its activities over time. IRC’s original mandate as defined in the 1988 agreement between UNICEF and the Government of Italy allowed for considerable freedom in the kinds of activities the Centre could undertake. The IRC has used that flexibility to refine the content of its programmes over time. This has allowed the Centre to respond to new opportunities or changing research interests of UNICEF and IRC management. The Centre adopted an early focus on research and advocacy, which it has maintained. Research priorities evolved from the early focus on macro adjustment policies to geographical programme concentration and growing emphasis on the practical dimensions of implementing child rights. The development of the MONEE programme is a good example of how the Centre seized an opportunity to begin addressing the situation of children in the CEE/CIS region when UNICEF had no other capacity to engage in dialogue and advocacy with the countries in the region.

⁴⁹ Ibid. p. 28, 29

⁵⁰ Ibid. p. 25

IRC is relevant to UNICEF's needs, particularly for certain regions and issues. It is relevant to meeting UNICEF information and advocacy needs in the CEE / CIS region and in the industrialised countries. It is the only part of UNICEF that addresses the situation of children in the industrialised countries and this work is the basis on which the Natcoms will be able to increase their own home-country advocacy over time. The information produced for the CEE/CIS countries has been the core reference material for UNICEF staff in the region to dialogue and advocate with governments and international agencies working in the region. It has also served as the basis for expanded work on policy issues affecting children by the RO and COs in the region. IRC's work has been relevant for UNICEF needs in selective cases in developing countries.

The mandate and mission of IRC is not clearly understood in other parts of UNICEF or external audiences. The IRC mission is broader than its resources allow it to address and it has had to concentrate on certain areas and subjects. Its research selection criteria direct its research towards emerging or sensitive and controversial issues. In part as a result of this condition, there has been some disconnect between its work and that of some other parts of UNICEF. IRC's programme focus has been described in different ways over the years and this has contributed to a lack of clarity among others on its mandate and objectives.

One of the challenging issues for IRC is the trade off it has to make between the benefits of freedom of having choice and some autonomy from the rest of UNICEF and the benefits that can be derived from being more integrally involved with the rest of UNICEF. IRC could encourage more understanding of its mission and a greater sense of involvement by more consultation on the setting of its medium term research agenda. It could meet with a broader range of UNICEF staff from the Programme Group in New York and with the Regional and Country Offices to review areas where IRC research could be most effective. This might identify more synergies in RO/CO research that would compliment the work of IRC. Similarly there could be opportunities for more collaboration with other parts of UNICEF in publicizing and joint advocacy on issues identified by IRC.

Collaboration in production of the State of the World's Children is another possible area for closer cooperation. UNICEF has to commission some research from the academic community to prepare material now for this publication. It might instead contribute some of these resources for an IRC coordinated study. IRC could not expect to produce significant new insights on an annual basis unless it had a large enough increase in its funding that it could maintain several major ongoing studies targeted for completion for several different annual deadlines in the future. Under present circumstances, IRC input would more likely be periodic and require considerably more than a year's lead time before it could commit to producing something substantive for this publication.⁵¹

These measures will allow IRC to maintain some freedom of action while developing a more consultative process at the planning level and in advocacy.

⁵¹ For SOWC 2005 IRC provided technical inputs on child poverty in rich countries, drawing on research conducted for its Report Card publication, and IRC staff reviewed and provided comments on the full text of the draft report.

Recommendation 2: UNICEF and the IAC should review the geographical focus and scope of work in IRC. In particular, UNICEF should decide whether the IRC should expand its work on research areas that are most relevant for developing countries, including through networking and partnerships and with research institutions in developing countries.

Recommendation 3: IRC should establish a mechanism with other parts of UNICEF and especially the other Divisions of the Programme Group in New York Headquarters to periodically review IRC planned research and progress, and the integration of research findings into the mainstream of UNICEF activities.

5.3. Enhancing the IRC's effectiveness

The IRC has been effective as a centre of research in producing products that have been widely used and there is evidence that it has helped change policies or practices in other agencies and countries. The evidence also indicates that it has been effective as an advocate for the use of knowledge for the betterment of children and the advancement of children's rights.

The Centre has developed its role as a convenor of events and training activities to a limited extent. Some events have led to useful follow up such as the creation of the European Network for Research on Children in Armed Conflict, which arose out of a seminar jointly convened by IRC and the Istituto degli Innocenti in 2001. However the Centre has not exploited the full potential of its convening power as a part of UNICEF to bring together influential groups and organizations to investigate new and joint approaches.

IRC has had more success in the last five years than at any time previously in developing networking, particularly with advocacy groups. It has served as secretariat for the European Network for Research on Children in Armed Conflict but by design, this still involves a limited form of collaboration only among European research centres. However, while making some progress, IRC has not yet been sufficiently effective in creating research networks or substantially increasing its partnerships for ongoing research.

The IAC identified this as an issue and encouraged IRC to develop more strategic alliances. As there are fewer well-established research networks on issues affecting the rights of children, this is a greater challenge than in other fields. IRC should also look at collaboration with some of the more child research oriented NGOs such as Save the Children and the Aga Khan Foundation. Some of the other UN agencies are becoming more involved in aspects of child well being and IRC could pursue stronger partnerships through its participation in the annual meetings of the UN research institutes.

Recommendation 4: IRC should exploit its comparative advantage from its position at the interface between academic research and UNICEF field experience and to leverage more intellectual expertise to address key UNICEF objectives. It should devote more of its resources to this knowledge brokering role and pursue more complementary or collaborative research with other institutions.

Recommendation 5: IRC should promote research networks related to children's issues and expand them beyond Europe. It should also pursue collaborative research with other organizations including some of the more research-oriented NGOs and other UN agencies. The Centre should review its experience and seek more opportunities to host staff seconded from other organizations for a period of time or visiting academics on sabbatical.

5.4. Enhancing IRC's Efficiency

The IAC has advised IRC to focus its efforts on strategic issues. IRC has consistently reduced the number of activities over the three programme cycles being reviewed although the number of publications did not peak until 2000 as a result of earlier research. However the Centre still lists 32 specific activities within nine major areas for a professional research staff of only twelve individuals including managers. Although many of these activities are related to broader common themes such as children's rights, this spread of activities increases management complexity and has effects on the potential for staff to work in larger teams and to share across programmes. It also affects the potential for ongoing collaboration with other researchers working on the same theme. IRC's effectiveness and efficiency would likely benefit from a much further narrowing of research topics.

Although the work of the IRC has increasingly been streamlined over the past few years, there is still a certain degree of vagueness in designations of programmes and projects and a lack of clear links between them. The coherence and transparency of the IRC activities would be greatly enhanced if some form of logical framework were developed as part of the Office Management Plans (OMP). This would also allow for improved performance monitoring, which is limited at present.

The demands on IRC management and staff to pursue advocacy are high when it addresses an issue independently for there is not as large a constituency who can share this responsibility. The more that IRC can develop a network of cooperating institutions and involve UNICEF staff from other parts of UNICEF, the less effort IRC will have to devote to its own advocacy. As a large proportion of IRC advocacy is directed to European institutions, greater involvement by the European Natcoms will reduce the pressures on IRC and allow it to devote more resources to research. There is evidence that the Natcoms are beginning to take on more of an advocacy role and IRC should actively promote a greater advocacy role for the Natcoms.

Recommendation 6: The three-year Office Management Plan (OMP) should be used for more strategic planning and selection of research, networking development, fund raising and advocacy planning. The use of a logical framework approach and clear results statements in annual work planning would allow for more programme coherence and transparency and improve performance monitoring and reporting.

- Recommendation 7:** The IRC should further reduce the number of specific research activities and create larger research teams around selected topics that cut across the present divisions between child rights and socio-economic research clusters.
- Recommendation 8:** Its advocacy work should to a larger extent make use of other parts of UNICEF (including Natcoms) and other strategic partner institutions within and outside of the UN system.
- Recommendation 9:** The Communication Section within the IRC can play a useful role in advocacy in conjunction with UNICEF's overall advocacy activities, particularly through the development of its website, but this should not be at the expense of the dissemination of research findings where there is still room for improvement.

5.5. Resource Mobilization and Viability

IRC is financially viable at a modest level of operations. It has successfully responded to its goal and to the request of the Government of Italy that it should broaden its donor base and generate more non-GOI funding. Much of the additional funding is related to specific issues and projects with a limited duration. The ability of the IRC to develop a strategic and independent research agenda with a longer timeframe will depend on the existence of core and / or broad thematic program funding. The GOI funding from its core and voluntary commitments are essential in allowing the IRC to function effectively This support should be complemented by an increase in support from UNICEF's Regular Resources (funding of two or three core posts) as well as contributions from other donors taking the recent grant from Sweden as a model.

IRC has a modest level of funding if one compares it to other institutes with such a broad mandate. As a result, IRC has continuing difficulties in undertaking its desired research programmes. There are many areas in its overall mandate that it is not addressing which could assist the rest of UNICEF. The Centre's existing research programs are providing benefits but there are other important research issues particularly relating to its work on developing countries that could be usefully addressed. Similarly this review has noted the potential benefits IRC can derive from developing its knowledge brokering role while still having to maintain some in house research capacity and analysis. These requirements are difficult to accommodate within IRC existing resource base.

IRC can look to project funding to address some of these needs but it must have a minimum unrestricted funding base. Project funding cannot be expected to cover all the basic operational costs of a research centre. Primary reliance on project funding would not allow IRC to pursue a long term strategy or address its research priorities in a coherent manner.

Although the financial viability of the Centre from the beginning of the next programme cycle in 2006 is not guaranteed, there is not, at present, a formal resource mobilization strategy. Such a strategy would involve a clear identification of all possible sources of funding (including research foundations), a mapping of funding policies and conditionalities as well as a fund raising strategy that is appropriate to different funding organizations. While additional core funding will be extremely difficult to achieve, multi-donor funding for broader thematic activities can be almost as useful to IRC in maintaining some freedom to design and carry out specific activities.

- Recommendation 10:** The GOI should maintain and, to the extent possible, expand the overall level of unrestricted funding support it has been making in recent years as well as its voluntary and additional contributions. More effort should be made to assess possibilities to increase the UNRRA component of the funding by the Government of Italy that is provided by the Ministry of the Interior.
- Recommendation 11:** UNICEF should provide more core (regular) resources to IRC in view of the contribution the IRC can make to a strengthening of research in UNICEF.
- Recommendation 12:** The IRC should urgently continue development of a resource mobilization strategy, in continuing cooperation with the Programme Funding Office and the Geneva UNICEF Regional Office, that targets in particular possible sources of core funding. It should assess the potential to develop broader research themes that could attract multi-donor thematic support. It should explore with the Natcoms and other partners potential new sources such as research funding foundations. This strategy should look at how to better package and market the Centre's activities.

5.6. Future Directions

While it appears that there are not many institutes with a similar mandate, the number of organizations within the UN, the NGO community and in academic institutions that are pursuing issues relating to some aspect of children's rights and protection is growing. This situation creates both an opportunity and a challenge for IRC. It could lead to declining visibility and impact as more actors enter the field. It also offers the potential to share research and advocacy efforts for greater effect.

IRC own resources are so limited that it is difficult to address broad issues on its own. IRC has both a knowledge generating and a knowledge brokering role although the latter has been limited. Pursuing a more explicit knowledge brokering model could bring considerable benefits. IRC has two important advantages in playing this brokering role. It has some convening power in being a part of a respected UN agency with the global mandate concerned with children. Secondly external stakeholders confirm that IRC is located in an appealing, if expensive, location. It can be an important interface between the field experience of UNICEF, the policy linkages of UNICEF and the academic community. IRC could further enhance its role as a centre of excellence, like the Bellagio Centre, for reflection and collaboration among different constituencies.

The Country and Regional Offices of UNICEF can play a more central role by communicating their policy concerns and by supporting linkages with regional research in program countries and by allowing for comparative analysis that would contribute to a global analysis. The development of ChildInfo (now DevInfo) provides a much richer database that UNICEF field offices can use for comparative and other kinds of studies to provide better evidence for its advocacy and to support global comparative analysis.

A more active knowledge broker role would have implications for the Centre. Two that can be singled out in particular involve the kind of staff and the degree of focus the Centre would have to maintain.

IRC would need to ensure that some staff members have a good understanding of the policy and research environment and credibility with possible partners. They would also need to continue to undertake some original research, as maintaining some in-house research capacity would add to the Centre's brokering credibility. This would probably require the Centre to focus on a narrower set of issues. Coordinating a large partner network would take more resources than a smaller in-house study.

It might also reduce the relative effort the Centre had to make in advocacy, as it would be working on fewer issues with a larger network of partners within and outside UNICEF.

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

EVALUATION OF THE INNOCENTI RESEARCH CENTRE 03 SEPTEMBER 2004

1. Background and context

The International Advisory Committee (IAC) of the Innocenti Research Centre (IRC), during its last meeting held in Florence in February 2004, recommended that the Centre be the subject of an evaluative review in 2004.

The Evaluation is timely as it occurs at mid-point of the current IRC Programme (2003-2005). The findings and recommendations of the Evaluation will be made available to the Advisory Committee in early 2005 and be taken into account in the preparation of the new programme 2006-2008. The evaluation will be conducted 12 years after a review conducted in 1992 and around 15 years after the Centre was created.

The Evaluation will be conducted by the Evaluation Office at UNICEF New York Headquarters. The Director of the Evaluation Office will appoint an Evaluation Team composed of one senior external consultant and one senior staff member.. The Evaluation Team will report to an Evaluation Panel composed of representatives of UNICEF and of the governments of Italy and Sweden.

2. Purpose of the evaluation

The purpose of the Evaluation is to inform senior management of UNICEF and sponsoring agencies of the IRC's work and results achieved over the last three programme cycles (1997-1999, 2000-2002, current cycle 2003-2005) and to assess future potential and strategic orientations.

The evaluation should allow decision-makers to a) consolidate the Centre's role and functions, within and beyond UNICEF, b) strengthen and expand IRC's partnerships and resource base; c) contribute to organizational reflection within UNICEF and contribute to the next Medium-Term Strategic Plan (2006-2010).

3. Objectives of the evaluation

The *objectives* of the evaluation of the IRC are to:

- a) Assess the organizational performance of the IRC in terms of its
 - Relevance,
 - Effectiveness,
 - Efficiency and
 - Financial viability.
- b) Identify opportunities, challenges, and relevant changes in the external environment of UNICEF in general and the IRC in particular that may impact on the Centre's future and influences strategic orientations. This will include issues related to the legal and administrative environment, existing and potential partnerships and strategic alliances within UNICEF, within the UN and with external partners in Italy, other countries in Europe and at the global level.

4. Specific issues

a) *Organizational performance*

Relevance

What have been the added value of IRC's work and the distinctive contribution of IRC to the fulfilment of UNICEF's mandate in relation to:

- (a) the IRC's mandate as originally defined in
 - the Agreement between the Government of Italy and UNICEF of 23 September 1986 (amended in 1999),
 - in Law no. 312 of 19 July 1988 and
 - in various documents and decisions of the Executive Board of UNICEF;
- (b) the organization's overall policy development and advocacy efforts for children
 - global initiatives (SSC, CRC promotion, MDGs)
 - initiatives on specific themes or with regional emphasis
 - time-bound actions or interventions on specific issues
- (c) partnerships with other organizations and actors in advancing child rights and well-being, including with:
 - other agencies in the UN system
 - other international agencies and actors (World Bank, NGOs)
 - intergovernmental bodies
 - the research and policy communities
- (d) policy development, research, information management and advocacy for children at the operational level
 - with country and regional offices (MONEE project, other country and regional support)
 - with national governments
 - in cooperation with National Committees

How has the Centre evolved over time taking into account its original mandate and its ability to adjust to a changing environment?

Effectiveness

How effectively has IRC functioned in its role as UNICEF's global research and knowledge centre on child rights -

- as a centre of research
 - as a convener of events, training activities, consultations
 - as an advocate for the use of knowledge for the betterment of the situation of children and the advancement of child rights?
- (a) within UNICEF
 - (b) within the UN system
 - (c) within the wider range and community of partners for the advancement of child rights (Italy, other countries in Europe and/or other regions, global level)

What have been specific results of the work of the IRC in terms of outputs and outcomes at the institutional or behavioural level? Has the work had any effect or impact on the realization of children's rights that could reasonably be attributed to or associated with the work of the IRC? Have there been any changes in knowledge, attitudes, policies or practices as a result of IRC's work? Are there examples of specific initiatives that have made a significant contribution to the work of other parts of UNICEF and / or among partners in either the short or long term?

What strategies and mechanisms are used for the generation and dissemination of research findings? Are the key stakeholders identified and targeted as recipients of IRC outputs? How well are interests of stakeholders (both inside and outside UNICEF) taken into account in design and process of research projects? How receptive are other parts of UNICEF to research activities and results? What dissemination mechanisms and strategies exist for knowledge, programmes and advocacy (e.g. publications conferences, publications in academic journals and the internet) for translation of research findings into advocacy tools?

Efficiency

To the extent that quantifiable information is available, have programme results been achieved at a reasonable cost?

What are determining factors in the establishment of the agenda and workplan of the IRC? What is the main focus of activities of professional staff (research, advocacy, communication, facilitation etc.?) Is there an appropriate balance between work carried out by staff of the Centre and by consultants and through research networks?

Is the Centre sufficiently staffed in terms of numbers and staff expertise to address planned activities? Does it have ready access to external expertise to complement its in-house staff resources? Is the physical infrastructure adequate for effective functioning?

Financial viability

Has the financial situation of the Centre supported its mandate and strategic objectives? How has the performance of the Centre contributed to a stable financial situation?

(a) Overall funding trends (current/past cycles funding targets, actual funding, expenditures)

(b) Funding from Government of Italy – trends, experience, issues (core, additional voluntary contributions) - Grant from Government of Sweden (2003-2005)

(c) Other Resources received – governments, Natcoms, others

(d) Funding from/through UNICEF (core, programme; Headquarters, Regional Offices, Country Offices)

(e) Assessment of budget in relation to core commitments (staff, operating costs, use of common premises with Istituto degli Innocenti, research) and specific project needs

(f) Financial risk analysis

How effective have the fundraising strategies of the Centre been?

(a) Funding needs (scenarios)

(b) Funding options and opportunities. What is the apparent sustainability of recent projects and of “work in progress”?

b) External environment of the IRC

What has been the Centre’s particular niche and comparative advantage? To what extent is the work of the Centre unique and / or complementary to the work of other partners dealing with children’s rights (e.g. other parts of UNICEF, HR treaty bodies, research institutions, NGOs etc.)?

How does the IRC collaborate specifically with other research institutions and offices, including those focusing on child rights?

What advantages can be drawn from the legal and administrative environment as well as financial support offered by the Government of Italy? What are possible limitations?

What are existing and potential partnerships and strategic alliances within UNICEF, within the UN and with external partners in Italy, other countries in Europe and at the global level?

5. Methods

The evaluation will take into consideration commonly agreed evaluation norms and standards (OECD/DAC and Evaluation Associations) to ensure *utility* (ownership by stakeholders), *feasibility* (political viability and cost-effectiveness), *propriety* (impartiality, respect of rights of stakeholders, cultural sensitivity) and *accuracy* (adequate information).

Key methods for the conduct of the evaluation will be the following:

- a) A comprehensive desk review of relevant external and internal documents with a particular emphasis on the last programme cycles;
- b) A review of past and recent studies, reviews and evaluations of projects and programmes;
- c) A self-evaluation exercise to be carried out by Innocenti staff with a particular emphasis on the ex-post construction of a results-matrix documenting outputs, outcomes and possible impact.
- d) A comprehensive mapping of major stakeholders, partners and strategic alliances of the Innocenti Centre with staff of the Centre;
- e) A survey among strategic partners of the Centre that should generate feedback on past contributions and perceptions on niche and comparative advantage of the Centre;
- f) An extensive round of interviews / focus group discussions with key stakeholders and partners (partner governments, UN agencies, NATCOMS, Istituto degli Innocenti, Region of Tuscany, City of Florence, UNICEF at global, regional and Country Office levels, eminent personalities having been involved in the development of the Centre in the past);
- g) An analytical examination of use of the financial resources of the Centre
- h) Possibly organisation of a participatory workshop during which main findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation will be discussed and finalised.

All information will to the largest possible extent be triangulated and validated. Findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned should clearly be user-oriented and feed into major decision-making during strategy development for the next programme cycle.

6. Organisation and management

The Evaluation is commissioned by the IRC Advisory Committee and conducted by the Evaluation Office at UNICEF New York Headquarters. It will be conducted with the participation of the Governments of Italy and Sweden. Outcomes of the Evaluation will be reported to the UNICEF Executive Board in the context of the submission of the IRC programme for 2006-2008. The Director of the Evaluation Office will appoint an Evaluation Team composed of one senior staff member and a senior external consultant. The Evaluation Team will report to an Evaluation Panel composed of representatives of UNICEF and of sponsors (notably Governments of Italy and Sweden).

None of the members of the Evaluation Panel should have had close involvement with the Innocenti Centre in the past. The proposed composition of the Evaluation Panel will hence be the following (to be confirmed):

- UNICEF Director of the Evaluation Office at NYHQ (chair)
- Representative of the Government of Italy
- Representative of the Government of Sweden
- Representative of Italian National Committee (NATCOM) of UNICEF
- UNICEF Regional Director CEE / CIS
- Team leader of the review of the Innocenti Centre (1993)

The Director of the IRC will be an *ex officio* member of the Evaluation Panel acting as a major resource person to the exercise.

The Evaluation Panel will meet once at the start of the evaluation exercise (03 September 2004) and once, when findings, conclusions and recommendations will be available (12 January 2005). The tasks of the Evaluation Panel will be the following:

- a) Advise on the interpretation of the scope of terms of reference.
- b) Provide guidance and advice on the evaluation focus, approach and process;
- c) Review draft report and notably key findings, conclusions and recommendations.
- d) Recommend final version of the report to the Executive Director
- e) Refer final version of the report to the International Advisory Committee of the IRC.

Subsequently a management response to the Evaluation will be prepared. The evaluation report and the management response will be submitted to UNICEF Evaluation Committee for consideration.

The Evaluation will be implemented between August 2004 and January 2005. Major stages of the evaluation process will be the following:

- a) Finalisation of draft terms of reference, document review, design of survey and (self-) evaluation tools (August 2004)
- b) Evaluation Panel meeting in Florence (early September 2004)
- c) Survey among partners and self-evaluation by IRC staff (September 2004)
- d) Further document review and interviews in Italy and at UNICEF NYHQ (October 2004)
- e) Write-up of draft report (November – December 2004)
- f) Evaluation Panel meeting in Florence (mid-January 2005)
- g) Finalisation of evaluation report (January 2005)
- h) Workshop with major stakeholders and partners (January 2004 – optional).
- i) Presentation to the IRC Advisory Committee (February 2005)
- i) Submission to UNICEF Evaluation Committee (June 2005)
- j) Outcomes of the Evaluation will be made available to the Executive Board of UNICEF (informal session and / or in the context of the submission of the IRC programme for 2006-2008).

The Evaluation will be funded from the budget of the Evaluation Office of UNICEF. Senior executive management of UNICEF will be informed on progress of the exercise at regular intervals by the Director of the Evaluation Office.

JQ / LB 03 September 2004.

Annex 2: Individuals consulted

IRC

Name	Title
Claire Akehurst	Senior Secretary
Susan Bissell	Senior Project Officer, Child Protection
Andrea Brilli	Senior Administrative Assistant
Luigi Capriotti	Senior IT Assistant
Cinzia Iusco Bruschi	Senior Secretary
Sandra Fanfani	Principal Secretary
Zinat Farzanegan	Project Officer, Child Protection
Patricia Faustini	Communication Assistant IV
Timothy Heleniak	Project Officer
Salvador Herencia	Communication Officer
Peggy Herrmann	Junior Professional Officer
Eva Jespersen	Chief
Michael Miller	TFT Child Rights PO
Francesca Moneti	Chief, Child Protection
Marie Mukagendo	Junior Professional Officer
Aida Oliver	Operations Officer
David Parker	Deputy Director
Gerard Redmond	Project Officer, Social Policy
Andrea Rossi	TFT Child Trafficking PO
Marta Santos Pais	Director
Saudamini Siegrist	Project Officer, Child Protection

UNICEF Staff

Name	Title
Mario Ferrari	UNICEF Representative, Angola
Kul Gautam	Deputy Executive Director, New York
Elizabeth Gibbons	Chief Policy Section, New York
Nora Godwin	Deputy Director, Division of Communication, New York
Saad Houry	Director, Division of Policy and Planning, New York
Joe Judd	Programme Division, New York
Nils-Arne Kastberg	Regional Director, TACRO
Mehr Khan	Former Director IRC and former Regional Director, EAPRO
Shahnaz Kianian-Firouzgan	Deputy Regional Director, Regional Office for CEE/CIS and the Balkans, Geneva
Karin Landgren	Chief, Child Protection, Programme Division, New York
Edilberto Loaiza	Strategic Information Division, New York
Dario Loda	Senior Programme Funding Officer, Programme Funding Office, New York
Carroll Long	UNICEF Representative, Myanmar
Thomas McDermott	Regional Director, MENARO
Patricia Moccia	Chief, Editorial and Publications, New York
Samuel Momanyi	Division of Programme and Planning, New York
Richard Morgan	Chief, Strategic Planning and Programme Guidance, New York
Philip O'Brien	Regional Director, UNICEF Geneva Regional Office, Geneva
Carolina Owens	Program Funding Division, New York
Detlef Palm	Division of Programme and Planning, New York
Nadine Perrault	Division of Programme and Planning, New York
Tessa Wardlaw	Strategic Information Division, New York

Others

Bernadette Abegglen	Ex-IRC staff member (retired), Switzerland
Massimo Livi Bacci	Professor, University of Florence, Italy
Keith Banting	Professor of Political Science, Queen's University, Canada
Jonathan Bradshaw	Professor, Department of Social Policy and Social Work, York University, UK
David Bull	Executive Director, UK Committee for UNICEF, UK
Giovanni Andrea Cornia.	Professor, University of Florence, Italy
Davide Carvazza	Amnesty International, Italy
Pippo Costella	Save the Children, Italy
John Donohue	Former Head of Evaluation Office and Regional Director, UNICEF, USA
Brian Forsyth	Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Yale University, USA
William Glenville	Vice President, International Institute for Sustainable Development, Canada
Ken Hayami	Secretary General, Japan Committee for UNICEF, Japan
Daniela Lastri	Deputy Municipal Counsellor, Commune of Florence, Italy
Professor Levy	University of Florence, Italy
Elizabeth Lewin	Director, Multilateral Coordination, SIDA, Sweden
Ornella Di Loretto	End Prostitution, Pornography, and Trafficking for Commercial Purposes, Italy
Alessandra Maggi	President Istituto degli Innocenti
Christine Meunier	Secretariat, Parliamentary Assembly
Elsbeth Mueller	Executive Director, Schneizeniches Komitee fur UNICEF, Switzerland
Angelo Passaleva	Vice President, Region of Tuscany, Italy
Robin Pope	ILO Training Centre, Turin, Italy
Maria Pia Rizzo	Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Italy
Roberto Salvan	Executive Director, UNICEF Committee for Italy, Italy
Trond Waage	Child Watch, University of Oslo, Norway
Elisabeth Waters	Chair in Public Health, Deakin University, Australia
Ann Weston	Vice President, North South Institute, Canada

Annex 3: Documents Consulted

History
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Annex 4: List of Findings and Recommendations

- Finding 1:** By its mandate, the IRC is part of UNICEF. The Centre is granted relative independence to undertake innovative research and tackle sensitive issues.
- Finding 2:** IRC resources allow it to address only some of the priorities of UNICEF. The geographical focus of key components of IRC's work is a major factor in determining the contribution of IRC to different UNICEF objectives.
- Finding 3:** There is a consensus among partners and stakeholders that the IRC should principally articulate its research and advocacy in tune with UNICEF priorities while maintaining its independence to remain innovative and critical.
- Finding 4:** IRC research and advocacy has been effective in contributing to the knowledge and influence of UNICEF with quality research work on many relatively new topics.
- Finding 5:** IRC is developing a more sophisticated communication approach to address some weaknesses in distribution of its outputs and the dissemination of its research findings. It has become more successful in identifying opportunities to publicize its work and work more closely with some UNICEF offices. IRC's Internet site is not fully developed. IRC support for capacity development within UNICEF is limited and takes place as a component of other activities.
- Finding 6:** IRC has been effective in generating new knowledge through its own research and tapping external knowledge and expertise in preparing its publications. IRC has a unique niche and a comparative advantage in being at the interface between academia and UNICEF's field experience. It has still a limited role as a knowledge broker.
- Finding 7:** IRC has established good working relations with some parts of UNICEF, particularly with the ROs in Europe, the National Committees and the COs in CEE/CIS. There is limited collaboration with other parts of UNICEF, e.g. Headquarters Divisions in New York and field offices in developing countries. There is no single formal mechanism within UNICEF to consult on research agendas and integrate the IRC's findings and insights into its programmes and advocacy.
- Finding 8:** Research networks on issues relating to children are not as strong as they are in other fields of research (e.g. agriculture, health). IRC has established effective networking relationships with policy and advocacy groups but less so with research organizations or research oriented NGOs. IRC networks tend to be based on personal contacts although this is improving
- Finding 9:** The IRC Director reports to the Deputy Executive Director who heads the Programme Group. Budgets and workplans are approved through the Programme Budget Review mechanism. The International Advisory Committee meets once a year to assist the Director on policy matters. Oversight mechanisms are effective.
- Finding 10:** While the criteria for selection of research priorities are relevant and appropriate, the process by which research priorities are selected is not well documented and external consultation for identifying priorities is limited.

- Finding 11:** IRC activities are monitored and outputs are measured at the level of individual projects. There is not a logical model to identify possible outcomes or a process for monitoring and tracking results.
- Finding 12:** IRC has significantly increased the recruitment of staff with academic and policy development expertise from elsewhere in UNICEF and now employs fewer researchers with a purely academic background. This improves IRC's ability to function more as a knowledge broker with other parts of UNICEF.
- Finding 13:** The number of staff in the management team is higher than is found in independent research or policy analysis institutes of this size but the IRC has more demanding administrative and accountability requirements. The IRC is well staffed to perform financial and administrative functions taking into account administrative requirements of UNICEF.
- Finding 14:** The Socio-Economic and the Child Rights Protection programme areas have different characteristics and operating styles and there are relatively few joint research activities between these two programmes.
- Finding 15:** IRC's facilities in the Istituto degli Innocenti are adequate for the present staff but additional staff would have to be located in another building.
- Finding 16:** IRC has depended on external funding (Other Resources) since its creation. IRC has been able to increase its income over each of the last three programme cycles. However it is becoming increasingly dependent on project funding. IRC is financially viable at a modest level if current unrestricted core contributions from Other Resources are maintained.
- Finding 17:** The Decision of the Executive Board of UNICEF to provide Regular Resources for the funding of the post of Director of the IRC constitutes an important acknowledgement by UNICEF of the Centre's importance. The IRC and the Regional Office for CEE / CIS have employed innovative approaches to generate funding for staff positions from within UNICEF programme funding.
- Finding 18:** IRC has diversified its donor base over the last three programming cycles. However, the Centre does not have a resource generation strategy to secure funding on a medium to long-term perspective. Programme activities have not been described in the most appropriate format for marketing to donors.
- Recommendation 1:** If UNICEF wishes to further develop its intellectual leadership in key areas for children, it will have to decide how much research it needs to support, how and where this research should be done and how UNICEF can most effectively utilize research findings. UNICEF should decide who will take the lead in coordinating its research efforts. This may be a role the IRC can play.
- Recommendation 2:** UNICEF and the IAC should review the geographical focus and scope of work in IRC. In particular, UNICEF should decide whether the IRC should expand its work on research areas that are most relevant for developing countries, including through networking and partnerships and with research institutions in developing countries.
- Recommendation 3:** IRC should establish a mechanism with other parts of UNICEF and especially the other Divisions of the Programme Group in New York Headquarters to periodically review IRC planned research and progress, and the integration of research findings into the mainstream of UNICEF activities.

- Recommendation 4:** IRC should exploit its comparative advantage from its position at the interface between academic research and UNICEF field experience and to leverage more intellectual expertise to address key UNICEF objectives. It should devote more of its resources to this knowledge brokering role and pursue more complementary or collaborative research with other institutions.
- Recommendation 5:** IRC should promote research networks related to children's issues and expand them beyond Europe. It should also pursue collaborative research with other organizations including some of the more research-oriented NGOs and other UN agencies. The Centre should review its experience and seek more opportunities to host staff seconded from other organizations for a period of time or visiting academics on sabbatical.
- Recommendation 6:** The three-year Office Management Plan (OMP) should be used for more strategic planning and selection of research, networking development, fund raising and advocacy planning. The use of a logical framework approach and clear results statements in annual work planning would allow for more programme coherence and transparency and improve performance monitoring and reporting.
- Recommendation 7:** The IRC should further reduce the number of specific research activities and create larger research teams around selected topics that cut across the present divisions between child rights and socio-economic research clusters.
- Recommendation 8:** Its advocacy work should to a larger extent make use of other parts of UNICEF (including Natcoms) and other strategic partner institutions within and outside of the UN system.
- Recommendation 9:** The Communication Section within the IRC can play a useful role in advocacy in conjunction with UNICEF's overall advocacy activities, particularly through the development of its website, but this should not be at the expense of the dissemination of research findings where there is still room for improvement.
- Recommendation 10:** The GOI should maintain and, to the extent possible, expand the overall level of unrestricted funding support it has been making in recent years as well as its voluntary and additional contributions. More effort should be made to assess possibilities to increase the UNRRA component of the funding by the Government of Italy that is provided by the Ministry of the Interior.
- Recommendation 11:** UNICEF should provide more core (regular) resources to IRC in view of the contribution the IRC can make to a strengthening of research in UNICEF.
- Recommendation 12:** The IRC should urgently continue development of a resource mobilization strategy, in continuing cooperation with the Programme Funding Office and the Geneva UNICEF Regional Office, that targets in particular possible sources of core funding. It should assess the potential to develop broader research themes that could attract multi-donor thematic support. It should explore with the Natcoms and other partners potential new sources such as research funding foundations. This strategy should look at how to better package and market the Centre's activities.

