

**EVALUATION  
REPORT**

**REVIEW OF UNICEF'S  
EVALUATION OF  
HUMANITARIAN ACTION**

**EVALUATION OFFICE  
NOVEMBER 2005**

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Health, Education, Equality, Protection  
**ADVANCE HUMANITY**





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HUMANITARIAN ACTION**

## **Review of UNICEF's Evaluation of Humanitarian Action**

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This review of UNICEF's evaluation of humanitarian action was conducted by Abby Stoddard, consultant for the Evaluation Office. Lucien Back, Senior Programme Officer in the Evaluation Office at UNICEF Headquarters managed the evaluation and provided guidance.

The purpose of the evaluation reports produced by the UNICEF Evaluation Office is to assess the situation, facilitate the exchange of knowledge and perspectives among UNICEF staff and to propose measures to address the concerns raised. The content of this report does not necessarily reflect UNICEF's official position.

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## **PREFACE**

This external review examines UNICEF's track record in evaluating its humanitarian-related programming. The research comprised a survey of 82 evaluations and reports submitted to the Evaluation Office by field offices between January 2000 and June 2005, a document review of internal policy and general literature on evaluation of humanitarian action, and interviews with 16 UNICEF staff members from 10 Country Offices, the Regional Office for South Asia and at UNICEF Headquarters.

The review was undertaken as part of the Country Programme Evaluation (CPE) Methodology and Guidance Development Project, funded by the United Kingdom (DFID). A key purpose was to determine whether and how the CPE model might be employed for the particular conditions, issues, and challenges of humanitarian response and transitions.

The review was carried out by Abby Stoddard of the Center on International Cooperation of New York University and managed by Lucien Back, Senior Programme Officer, Evaluation Office at UNICEF Headquarters in New York.

The evaluation would not have been possible without the valuable insights and generous sharing of information. I would hereby like to express my gratitude and appreciation to the author of the study as well as to all those who have contributed to this review. Special thanks are due to key informants in Angola, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Ethiopia, India, Lao PDR, Liberia, Mozambique, UNICEF's Regional Office for South Asia, and other divisions at New York Headquarters.

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## ACRONYMS

AJCSEE	American Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation
ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action
APO	Assistant Programme Officer
CAAC	Children Affected by Armed Conflict
CAP	Consolidated Appeals Process
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CCCs	Core Corporate Commitments (2000) / Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies (2004)
CHAP	Common Humanitarian Action Plan
CO	Country Office
CPE	Country Programme Evaluation
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECHA	Executive Committee for Humanitarian Affairs
ECHO	European Community Humanitarian Office
EMOPS	UNICEF Office of Emergency Programmes
EO	UNICEF Evaluation Office
EPRP	Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan
EU	European Union
HQ	Headquarters (UNICEF)
HRBAP	Human Rights-Based Approach to Programming
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IMEP	Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
JEEAR	Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda
LPA	Lembaga Perlindungan Anak (UNICEF-supported child protection bodies in Indonesia)
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MTR	Mid-Term Review
MTSP	Medium Term Strategic Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OECD/DAC	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development / Development Assistance Committee
OIC	Officer in Charge
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PPPM	Programme Policies and Procedures Manual
RBM	Results-Based Management
RMT	Regional Management Team
RO	Regional Office
ROSA	Regional Office for South Asia
RTE	Real Time Evaluation
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound objectives
SSRC	Social Science Research Council
SWAP	Sector-wide Approach
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	World Food Programme



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This external review, commissioned by UNICEF's Evaluation Office, examines UNICEF's track record in evaluating its humanitarian-related programming. The Evaluation Office is currently completing the final phase of the Country Programme Evaluation (CPE) Methodology and Guidance Development Project, funded by DFID, and requested this review to inform and support the project with an eye toward determining whether and how the CPE model might be employed for the particular conditions, issues, and challenges of humanitarian response and transitions. The research comprised a survey of 82 evaluations and reports submitted to the Evaluation Office by field offices between January 2000 and June 2005, a document review of internal policy and general literature on evaluation of humanitarian action, and interviews with 16 UNICEF staff members from 10 Country Offices, the Regional Office for South Asia and at UNICEF Headquarters.

The interviews yielded anecdotal evidence that the evaluation function in UNICEF is on an upward trend, and signaled the seriousness with which staff intended to continue the improvement. Nevertheless, a more systematic investigation suggests that there remains a considerable way to go to meet UNICEF's stated goals in this area. Overall, the review found paucity in both quality and numbers of evaluation of humanitarian actions, with the largest shortfalls evident in evaluations focused at country-wide and systemic levels. These findings suggest that the evaluation function currently plays a limited role in the strategic direction of the organization's country programmes and its role as a key actor in the international humanitarian system.

### **Key findings of the review of UNICEF-supported evaluation of humanitarian actions:**

#### ***Uneven quality, skewing toward the lower end***

Although UNICEF's humanitarian-specific evaluations produced a higher number of reports deemed "very good" than UNICEF evaluations overall (according to the 2003 Meta-evaluation), the majority still fell in the middle to poor range. The quality of the rated studies falls mostly within the lower end of "Satisfactory" according to UNICEF's own standards, which are based on generally accepted criteria and best practice including the OECD/DAC guidelines.

#### ***Low level of evaluation activity and predominantly narrow focus***

Less than 60 field level evaluations of humanitarian response activities from the past five years were available for the review. The low number was surprising when one considers UNICEF's prominent presence in humanitarian response and the number of UNICEF programme countries deemed to be in an emergency or transitional status during that period. This number represents only those humanitarian assistance evaluations that were submitted by field offices to the central database maintained by the Evaluation Office. Staff members from UNICEF country offices and the Evaluation Office interviewed for this review estimate the number to be close to the sum total of humanitarian-related evaluations undertaken during the review period.

Of perhaps greater significance is that the vast majority of these evaluations were at the level of individual projects and programmes. This is despite the fact that UNICEF frequently facilitates and even leads sectoral and inter-agency coordination in humanitarian contexts and the emphasis at UNICEF (and the UN generally) on country-level and inter-agency evaluations. Less than a fifth of the evaluations examined UNICEF's country-wide humanitarian responses or assessed the relevance and appropriateness of UNICEF programming beyond individual projects, sectors, and themes. Moreover, only a tiny fraction focused at the systemic level of UN common country programming and multi-agency emergency response.

### ***Limited strategic intent and use***

The source of the demand for the majority of evaluations is unclear, and anecdotal evidence suggests that many evaluations are driven more by funding and project cycles than by any strategic rationale. The tendency of reports to lack attribution, authorship and/or terms of reference both hinders and make it virtually impossible to track the use and impact of the recommendations and lessons learned from the evaluation. In general, evaluation in UNICEF seems heavily oriented toward planning and fairly weak on follow-up.

These findings suggest that, in the humanitarian sphere in particular, UNICEF is falling short of its stated goals to:

- Raise the level of quality and “strategic value” of the evaluations (Executive Board decision 2004/9);
- Use evaluations as management tools to “influence decision-making” (Programme Policy and Procedure Manual);
- Focus evaluations “more on country programme level (lessons learned) and on strategic governance of the organization as a whole” (Medium Term Strategic Plan 2002-2005); and
- “Strengthen evaluation within the United Nations system and with other partners” (Medium Term Strategic Plan 2006-2009) as per UN operational and reform goals mentioned in the 2004 Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review which includes “the systematic use of monitoring and evaluation approaches at the system-wide level and the promotion of collaborative approaches to the evaluation, including joint evaluations.”

Reasons for the shortcomings found in the evaluation function are linked to the following organizational factors.

- The demand for evaluations emanates almost solely from the country office and sub-country office levels which tend to focus more narrowly, on projects/programmes. The demand gap for policy level and country programme evaluations is related to the uneven and often underutilized links between the regional and country offices in initiation, prioritization/coordination, and management of evaluations.
- Associating evaluation with a development model that requires a long lead-time, close government partnership, and stable conditions, inhibits evaluation in humanitarian and transitional contexts.
- There is a continuing lack of new, quick and flexible tools for evaluations in humanitarian contexts. Additionally, evaluative tools for important aspects of humanitarian response, such as protection, children in armed conflict, prevention of sexual exploitation, and rights advocacy are undeveloped or still in their infancy.

The deficiencies and points of tension found in this review are neither unique to UNICEF, nor do they necessarily signal deep-seated organizational pathologies that will be especially difficult to overcome. They do, however, suggest a need for additional mechanisms to increase the demand, capacity, and follow-up of evaluations that examine the organization’s strategic-level approach and the policy and positioning of its programming. In this regard, the review examined the potential role and the added value of the Country Programme Evaluation – an evaluation framework that looks broadly at the performance of UNICEF’s Country Programme as a whole and informs strategic decisions – to establish a driver for evaluating the policy and positioning of UNICEF humanitarian action, and an adaptive and flexible mechanism for doing so in situations of evolving conditions.

## **Recommendations**

### ***Organizational action to address strategic shortcomings in evaluation (Headquarters and Regional Office)***

1. Systematize and regularize evaluations at the country programme level that examine UNICEF humanitarian action from a strategic and policy standpoint, particularly vis-à-vis the organization's role in the broader humanitarian response.
2. Strengthen the responsibility and capacity of Regional Offices to initiate, coordinate, and manage support for these evaluations.
3. Establish guidance and criteria for selecting the appropriate methodology for strategic level evaluations according to the context.
4. Consider policies that would counsel the use of real time evaluation during the acute emergency phase and CPE during longer-term emergency and transitional phases
5. Identify and programme additional resources to increase M&E staffing at both regional and country levels.

### ***Accountability, oversight, and support issues (Headquarters and Regional Office)***

6. Enhance the transparency and accountability of country offices for follow-through of accepted recommendations and lessons-learned through the audit mechanism and expand the evaluation submission process to include plans/steps taken for follow-through. (Evaluation office).
7. Establish and maintain links with government, universities, think tanks, non-governmental organizations and other appropriate sources in order to be able to provide country offices with updates and suggestions for staffing potential evaluation assignments. (Regional Office Monitoring & Evaluation staff)

### ***Technical and management issues (Country Office)***

8. Feed all major evaluations and studies of acceptable quality into the centrally managed Evaluation Database
9. Encourage evaluation teams to include the review of previous evaluations and studies that are relevant for the project, programme or thematic subject to be evaluated as part of the evaluation approach and methodology
10. Ensure all evaluation consultants are provided with and understand their responsibility for meeting UNICEF's Evaluation Report Standards. (Monitoring & Evaluation staff)



## RÉSUMÉ ANALYTIQUE

Cette étude externe, commanditée par le Bureau de l'évaluation de l'UNICEF, passe en revue les performances de l'UNICEF dans l'évaluation de sa programmation pour l'action humanitaire. Le Bureau de l'évaluation est en passe d'achever la phase finale de son Projet d'élaboration de méthodologie et de consignes de programmation pour l'évaluation des programmes de coopération (EPC) financé par le DFID ; il a sollicité cet examen pour apporter au projet information et soutien, tout en gardant pour objectif de déterminer si et comment le modèle d'EPC pourrait s'appliquer aux conditions, difficultés et problèmes particuliers de l'intervention humanitaire et de ses différentes étapes. Les recherches effectuées ont compris une enquête statistique portant sur 82 évaluations et rapports soumis au Bureau de l'évaluation par les bureaux de pays entre janvier 2000 et juin 2005, une étude des documents de politique interne et de la documentation disponible sur l'évaluation de l'action humanitaire, et des entretiens avec 16 membres du personnel de l'UNICEF en poste dans 10 bureaux de pays, bureaux régionaux et au Siège de l'UNICEF à New York.

Il relève de ces entretiens, d'un point de vue empirique, que la fonction d'évaluation à l'UNICEF prend de l'ampleur, et que c'est avec beaucoup de sérieux que le personnel entend poursuivre ces améliorations. Néanmoins, une enquête plus systématique suggère qu'il reste encore beaucoup de chemin à parcourir pour que l'UNICEF atteigne ses objectifs déclarés dans ce secteur. Dans l'ensemble, cette étude a trouvé une pénurie à la fois dans la qualité et dans le nombre des évaluations d'actions humanitaires, et les lacunes les plus importantes et les plus visibles ont trait aux évaluations qui portent sur les niveaux national et systémique. Ces constatations suggèrent que la fonction d'évaluation joue un rôle limité dans la direction stratégique des programmes nationaux de l'organisation et dans la mission qui est la sienne en tant qu'intervenant majeur du système humanitaire international.

### **Principales constats relevés par l'examen de l'évaluation des actions humanitaires commandité par l'UNICEF:**

#### ***Une qualité inégale, tirant vers le bas***

Bien que les évaluations de l'UNICEF qui se rapportaient spécifiquement à l'action humanitaire aient produit un plus grand nombre de rapports qualifiés de « très bons » que l'ensemble des évaluations de l'UNICEF (d'après la méta-évaluation de 2003), la majorité d'entre elles se situait toujours dans l'éventail moyen/médiocre. La qualité des études qui ont reçu une appréciation se situe principalement vers le bas de l'échelon « satisfaisant » d'après les normes propres à l'UNICEF, qui se fondent sur des critères et de bonnes pratiques généralement acceptés, dont en particulier les consignes de l'OCDE/CAD.

#### ***Un faible niveau d'activité d'évaluation et une focalisation généralement étroite***

Moins de 60 évaluations d'interventions humanitaires sur le terrain menées ces cinq dernières années étaient disponibles pour cette étude. Ce nombre peu élevé est surprenant si l'on considère la présence prépondérante de l'UNICEF dans les interventions humanitaires et le nombre de pays qui faisaient l'objet d'une programmation de l'UNICEF et dont la situation était qualifiée d'urgente ou de transitoire. Ce nombre représente seulement les évaluations d'aide humanitaire déposées par les bureaux de pays dans la base de données centrale gérée par le Bureau de l'évaluation. Le personnel des bureaux de pays de l'UNICEF et du Bureau de l'évaluation que l'on a interrogé pour cette étude estime que ce nombre est proche de la somme totale des évaluations liées à l'action humanitaire qui ont été entreprises au cours de l'étude.

Un fait qui est peut-être plus significatif est que la très grande majorité de ces évaluations se situait au niveau des projets et programmes individuels, et ce en dépit du fait que l'UNICEF facilite et même pilote la coordination sectorielle et interinstitutions dans les contextes humanitaires, et met l'accent, à l'instar de l'ONU dans son ensemble, sur les évaluations interinstitutions au niveau national. Moins de 20% des évaluations passaient en revue les mesures humanitaires prises par l'UNICEF au niveau national ou se penchaient sur la pertinence et l'opportunité de la programmation de l'UNICEF par-

delà les projets, secteurs et thèmes individuels abordés. Qui plus est, seule une fraction minuscule s'est fixée sur le niveau systémique de la programmation commune des Nations Unies et sur la réponse d'urgence multi-institutions.

### ***Un dessein stratégique et une utilisation limités***

Dans le cas de la majorité des évaluations, la source de la demande n'est pas claire, et certaines données empiriques sembleraient démontrer que beaucoup d'entre elles sont motivées davantage par l'existence d'un financement et de cycles de programmation que par une logique stratégique quelle qu'elle soit. Le fait que ces rapports sont souvent d'origine floue, ou n'ont pas d'auteurs désignés ni de termes de références, entrave les efforts menés pour savoir comment ils sont utilisés, pour jauger l'impact des recommandations et pour savoir si les enseignements de l'évaluation ont bien été tirés. En général, l'évaluation à l'UNICEF semble être fortement orientée vers la planification, et assez médiocre pour ce qui est du suivi.

Ces constatations tendent à prouver que, dans la sphère humanitaire en particulier, l'UNICEF n'arrive pas à atteindre ses objectifs déclarés, qui sont les suivants :

- rehausser le niveau de qualité et la « valeur stratégique » des évaluations (Décision 2004/9 du Conseil d'administration) ;
- utiliser les évaluations comme outils de gestion pour « influencer sur la prise de décisions » (Manuel des Politiques et Procédures de Programmation) ;
- centrer les évaluations « davantage sur le niveau des programmes nationaux (enseignements tirés) et de la bonne gestion stratégique de l'organisation dans son ensemble » (Plan stratégique à moyen terme 2002-2005) ;
- « renforcement de la fonction d'évaluation au sein du système des Nations Unies et avec d'autres partenaires » (Plan stratégique à moyen terme 2006-2009), conformément aux objectifs opérationnels et de réforme des Nations Unies mentionnés dans l'Examen triennal complet des activités opérationnelles de 2004, qui comprend « l'utilisation systématique des approches du suivi et de l'évaluation au niveau du système dans son ensemble, et la promotion d'approches évaluatives en coopération avec d'autres institutions, y compris au moyen d'évaluations communes. »

Les raisons des lacunes constatées dans la fonction d'évaluation sont liées aux facteurs d'organisation suivants :

- La demande d'évaluations émane presque exclusivement des bureaux de pays et sous-bureaux, niveau qui tend à se fixer plus étroitement sur les projets et les programmes. L'absence de demande au niveau des évaluations de politiques et de programmes de coopération est liée à l'inégalité et la sous-utilisation fréquente des liens existants entre les bureaux de pays et les bureaux régionaux pour ce qui est d'initier des évaluations, de les mettre par ordre prioritaire et les coordonner, et de les gérer.
- Associer l'évaluation à un modèle de développement qui demande une mise en place très lente, des partenariats gouvernementaux étroits et des conditions stables entrave l'évaluation dans les contextes de crise humanitaire et les situations de transition.
- Il existe un manque persistant d'outils d'évaluation nouveaux, rapides et souples dans les contextes de crise humanitaire. De plus, les outils d'évaluation portant sur certains aspects importants de la réponse humanitaire comme la protection de l'enfance, les enfants dans les conflits armés, la prévention de l'exploitation sexuelle des enfants et le plaidoyer en faveur de leurs droits ne sont pas développés ou en sont encore à leurs premiers balbutiements.

Les insuffisances et les points de tension découverts dans cette étude ne sont ni propres à l'UNICEF, ni nécessairement indicatifs de pathologies enracinées dans l'organisation qu'il sera particulièrement difficile de surmonter. Ils suggèrent toutefois bel et bien le besoin de mécanismes supplémentaires pour accroître la demande et améliorer la capacité et le suivi d'évaluations qui examinent l'approche

de l'organisation au niveau stratégique et la politique et le positionnement de sa programmation. À cet égard, le présente étude a examiné le rôle potentiel et la valeur ajoutée de l'évaluation du programme de coopération dans son ensemble (cadre d'évaluation qui jette un œil global sur la performance du Programme de coopération de l'UNICEF au sens large et alimente de ces informations la prise de décisions stratégiques) ; le but recherché est d'inciter à évaluer la politique et le positionnement de l'action humanitaire de l'UNICEF et d'instituer un mécanisme souple et adaptable permettant de le faire dans des situations où les conditions évoluent.

## **Recommandations**

### ***Mesures organisationnelles pour traiter des insuffisances de l'évaluation dans le secteur stratégique (Siège et Bureau régional)***

1. Systématiser et régulariser au niveau des programmes de coopération les évaluations qui examinent l'action humanitaire de l'UNICEF du point de vue des stratégies et des politiques, surtout pour ce qui est du rôle de l'organisation au niveau plus général de la réponse humanitaire.
2. Renforcer la responsabilité et la capacité qu'ont les Bureaux régionaux d'initier et de coordonner ces évaluations, et de gérer le soutien qui leur est apporté.
3. Établir des consignes et des critères de sélection des bonnes méthodologies adaptées au contexte pour les évaluations menées au niveau stratégique.
4. Envisager des politiques qui privilégient l'utilisation d'évaluations en temps réel (ETR) au cours de la phase d'urgence aiguë et d'évaluations des programmes de coopération (EPC) pendant des périodes d'urgence et de transition plus longues.
5. Identifier et programmer des ressources supplémentaires pour accroître des effectifs du Suivi et évaluation à la fois au niveau régional et à celui des pays.

### ***Questions de responsabilité, de supervision et de soutien (Siège et Bureau régional)***

6. Améliorer au moyen du système d'audit la transparence et la responsabilisation des bureaux de pays dans le suivi des recommandations acceptées et des enseignements tirés, et élargir le processus de soumission de l'évaluation pour y faire figurer les plans et mesures de suivi adoptés (Bureau de l'évaluation).
7. Établir et entretenir des liens avec les gouvernements, les universités, les groupes de réflexion, les organisations non gouvernementales et d'autres sources appropriées afin d'être en mesure de fournir aux bureaux de pays des mises à jour et des suggestions visant à ce que des postes éventuels d'évaluateurs puissent être pourvus (personnel régional du suivi et de l'évaluation).

### ***Questions techniques et de gestion (Bureau de pays)***

8. Déposer toutes les grandes évaluations et études dont la qualité est acceptable dans la base de données sur l'évaluation centralisée au niveau du Siège.
9. Encourager les équipes de l'évaluation à joindre à leurs travaux l'examen d'évaluations et d'études précédentes présentant une pertinence pour le projet, le programme ou le sujet thématique devant être évalués du point de vue de l'approche et de la méthodologie de l'évaluation.
10. S'assurer que tous les consultants de l'évaluation se sont bien vu signifier leurs responsabilités (et les comprennent bien) dans le domaine de l'adhésion aux normes des rapports d'évaluation de l'UNICEF (personnel du suivi et de l'évaluation).



## RESUMEN EJECUTIVO

Este estudio externo, encargado por la Oficina de Evaluación de UNICEF, pasa revista a la trayectoria de UNICEF en la evaluación de sus programas humanitarios. La Oficina de Evaluación se encuentra en la actualidad terminando la fase final del “Proyecto para el Desarrollo de Metodología y Directrices de Evaluación de Programas de Cooperación (EPC)”, financiado por Departamento para el Desarrollo Internacional (DFID) del Reino Unido, y encargó este estudio para recabar apoyo e información sobre el proyecto con miras a establecer si el modelo EPC podría emplearse para las situaciones, temas y problemas concretos que presenta tanto la respuesta humanitaria como la transición hacia una situación de normalidad, y de qué manera sería posible hacerlo. La investigación incluyó un análisis de 82 evaluaciones e informes presentados a la Oficina de Evaluación por las oficinas sobre el terreno entre enero de 2000 y junio de 2005, un estudio de documentos de política interna y de la documentación general disponible sobre la evaluación en situaciones humanitarias, así como entrevistas con 16 miembros del personal de UNICEF de 10 oficinas de país, de la Oficina Regional para Asia meridional y de la sede de UNICEF.

Las entrevistas proporcionaron datos incidentales que indican que la función de evaluación en UNICEF se encuentra en una tendencia ascendente, y remarcaron la seriedad con la que el personal tiene pensado mantener esta mejora. Sin embargo, una investigación más sistemática sugiere que sigue existiendo un desfase considerable entre la situación actual y los objetivos establecidos por UNICEF en esta esfera. En general, el estudio encontró carencias tanto en la calidad como en la cantidad de las evaluaciones sobre acciones humanitarias, y las mayores insuficiencias son evidentes en las evaluaciones centradas a nivel de países y a nivel sistémico. Estas conclusiones sugieren que la función de evaluación desempeña un papel limitado en la dirección estratégica de los programas de cooperación de la organización y en su cometido como actor clave del sistema humanitario internacional.

### **Conclusiones fundamentales del estudio de la evaluación de las acciones humanitarias que reciben apoyo de UNICEF:**

#### ***Calidad desigual, con tendencia hacia las puntuaciones más bajas***

Aunque las evaluaciones de UNICEF dedicadas a temas específicamente humanitarios produjeron un mayor número de informes considerados “muy buenos” en comparación con las evaluaciones de UNICEF en general (según la Meta-evaluación de 2003), la mayoría todavía se encuentran en la escala media a inferior. La calidad de los estudios examinados se sitúa en la mayoría de los casos en un nivel de puntuación inferior a “Satisfactorio”, según las propias normas de UNICEF, que están basadas en criterios y buenas prácticas generalmente aceptados, incluidas las directrices OCDE/CAD.

#### ***Un nivel bajo de actividades de evaluación y un enfoque generalmente reducido***

Menos de 60 evaluaciones de las actividades de respuesta humanitaria sobre el terreno de los últimos cinco años estuvieron disponibles para el estudio. Esta cifra tan reducida fue una sorpresa, si se considera que la presencia de UNICEF en las actividades de respuesta humanitaria es importante, y que un gran número de programas de cooperación de UNICEF tenían un estatus de emergencia o de transición durante ese período. Esta cifra representa solamente aquellas evaluaciones de la asistencia humanitaria que fueron presentadas por las oficinas de país a la base de datos central gestionada por la Oficina de Evaluación. Los miembros del personal de las oficinas de país y de la Oficina de Evaluación de UNICEF entrevistados para este estudio consideran que esta cifra está muy cerca de la suma total de evaluaciones relacionadas con actividades humanitarias llevadas a cabo durante el periodo de estudio.

Tal vez más importante aún sea que la gran mayoría de estas evaluaciones se realizaron al nivel de proyectos y programas individuales. Y esto es así a pesar de que UNICEF facilita e incluso dirige actividades de coordinación sectorial e interinstitucional en contextos humanitarios, y hace hincapié (al igual que las Naciones Unidas en general) en las evaluaciones a nivel de país e interagencias.

Menos de una quinta parte de las evaluaciones examinaron las respuestas humanitarias de UNICEF a nivel de país o evaluaron la pertinencia y la idoneidad de los programas de UNICEF más allá de los proyectos, sectores y temas individuales. Además, solamente una fracción muy reducida se centró en el nivel relacionado con la programación común de las Naciones Unidas en los países y la respuesta de emergencia realizada conjuntamente por varios organismos.

### ***Limitación de los propósitos estratégicos y la utilización***

En la mayoría de las evaluaciones no está clara la fuente de la demanda, y los datos incidentales sugieren que muchas evaluaciones están guiadas en mayor medida por la financiación y el ciclo de los proyectos que por una razón estratégica. La tendencia de los informes a no atribuir fuentes, autoría y/o términos de referencia dificulta y hace que sea virtualmente imposible realizar un seguimiento sobre su utilización y las repercusiones de las recomendaciones de la evaluación y las lecciones aprendidas. En general, la evaluación en UNICEF parece estar fuertemente dirigida hacia la planificación y es bastante deficiente en materia de seguimiento.

Estas conclusiones sugieren que, en la esfera humanitaria en particular, UNICEF no ha cumplido con sus objetivos establecidos para:

- Aumentar el nivel de calidad y el “valor estratégico” de las evaluaciones (decisión 2004/9 de la Junta Ejecutiva);
- Utilizar las evaluaciones como instrumentos de gestión para “influir en la toma de decisiones” (Manual de Políticas y Procedimientos para Programas);
- Centrar las evaluaciones “en mayor medida a nivel de programa de país (lecciones aprendidas) y en el gobierno de la organización en su conjunto” (Plan Estratégico de Mediano Plazo 2002-2005); y
- “Fortalecer la evaluación dentro del sistema de las Naciones Unidas y con otros aliados” (Plan Estratégico de Mediano Plazo 2006-2009) tal como se indica en los objetivos operativos y de reforma de las Naciones Unidas mencionados en la Revisión trienal amplia de la política que incluye “la utilización sistemática de los enfoques de seguimiento y evaluación a nivel de sistema y la promoción de enfoques de colaboración en la esfera de la evaluación, incluidas las evaluaciones conjuntas”.

Las razones de las carencias que presenta la función de la evaluación están vinculadas a los siguientes factores organizativos.

- La demanda de evaluaciones surge casi exclusivamente de los niveles de oficina de país y de suboficinas, que tienden a centrarse de forma más limitada en proyectos y programas. El desfase en la demanda de evaluaciones a nivel de políticas y programas de país está relacionado con los vínculos desiguales, y que a menudo no se utilizan a su plena capacidad, entre las oficinas regionales y de país en la iniciación, definición de prioridades/coordinación y gestión de las evaluaciones.
- Asociar la evaluación con un modelo de desarrollo que exija un largo proceso de gestación, una estrecha alianza con el gobierno y la existencia de condiciones estables, pone trabas a la evaluación en contextos humanitarios y de transición.
- Hay una falta constante de instrumentos de evaluación nuevos, rápidos y flexibles en contextos humanitarios. Además, los instrumentos para la evaluación de importantes aspectos de la respuesta humanitaria, como la protección, la infancia en los conflictos armados, la prevención de la explotación sexual y la promoción de derechos no están suficientemente desarrollados o se encuentran todavía en sus primeras etapas.

Las deficiencias y puntos de tensión descubiertos en este estudio no son exclusivos de UNICEF ni tampoco reflejan necesariamente patologías profundamente enraizadas en la organización que resultan especialmente difíciles de superar. Sin embargo, sugieren la necesidad de establecer nuevos mecanismos para aumentar la demanda, capacidad y seguimiento de las evaluaciones que

examinan el enfoque a nivel estratégico de la organización y la política y el posicionamiento de sus programas. A este respecto, el estudio analizó el papel potencial y el valor añadido de la Evaluación del Programa de Cooperación –un marco para la evaluación que analiza ampliamente el rendimiento del Programa de Cooperación de UNICEF en su conjunto y sirve de base para las decisiones estratégicas– a fin de que sirva de impulso para evaluar la política y el posicionamiento de la acción humanitaria de UNICEF, y un mecanismo adaptable y flexible para hacerlo en situaciones donde las condiciones se encuentran en evolución.

## **Recomendaciones**

### ***Medidas organizativas para abordar las carencias estratégicas en la evaluación (Sede y Oficina Regional)***

1. Sistematizar y regularizar las evaluaciones a nivel de programa de cooperación que examinan la acción humanitaria de UNICEF desde un punto de vista estratégico y de políticas, especialmente en relación con la función de la organización en la respuesta humanitaria más amplia
2. Fortalecer la respuesta y la capacidad de las Oficinas Regionales para iniciar, coordinar y gestionar el apoyo a estas evaluaciones
3. Establecer pautas de orientación y criterios con el fin de seleccionar la metodología apropiada para realizar evaluaciones a nivel estratégico según el contexto
4. Considerar políticas que podrían aconsejar la utilización de Evaluaciones en Tiempo Real (ETR) durante la fase aguda de la situación de emergencia y la EPC durante las fases de las situaciones de emergencia a mayor largo plazo y de transición
5. Definir y programar recursos complementarios para aumentar la dotación de personal destinado a tareas de seguimiento y evaluación a nivel regional y de país

### ***Cuestiones relacionadas con la rendición de cuentas, supervisión y apoyo (Sede y Oficina Regional)***

6. Mejorar, por medio del mecanismo de auditoría, la transparencia y la rendición de cuentas de las oficinas de país para el cumplimiento de recomendaciones aceptadas y de lecciones aprendidas, y ampliar el proceso de presentación de evaluaciones para incluir planes/medidas tomadas para asegurar dicho cumplimiento. (Oficina de evaluación)
7. Establecer y mantener vínculos con gobiernos, universidades, grupos de expertos, organizaciones no gubernamentales y otras fuentes apropiadas a fin de establecer la capacidad necesaria para proporcionar a las oficinas de país actualizaciones y sugerencias destinadas a establecer puestos para posibles operaciones de evaluación. (Personal de seguimiento y evaluación de la Oficina Regional)

### ***Cuestiones técnicas y de gestión (Oficina de país)***

8. Incorporar todas las evaluaciones y estudios importantes de calidad aceptable a la base de datos de evaluación, gestionada a nivel central
9. Alentar a los equipos de evaluación para que incluyan el examen previo de evaluaciones y estudios que resulten pertinentes para el proyecto, programa o asunto temático que se esté evaluando, como parte del enfoque y la metodología de la evaluación
10. Asegurar que todos los consultores de evaluación comprendan su responsabilidad para cumplir con las normas de preparación de informes sobre evaluación de UNICEF. (Personal de seguimiento y evaluación)



# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Context and Aim of Review

In April 2005 the UNICEF Evaluation Office commissioned this external review of UNICEF's evaluation practices in the humanitarian sector (Terms of Reference attached as Annex 1). The review is intended to support and inform the Country Programme Evaluation (CPE) Methodology and Guidance Development Project in the area of humanitarian action. The goal of the CPE Methodology and Guidance Project, launched by the Evaluation Office under a grant from DFID, is "to strengthen and systematize evaluation of country programmes in line with UNICEF's Medium Term Strategic Plan and recommendations of the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities of the United Nations System."

A number of activities have been undertaken to date under the project, including a meta-evaluation<sup>1</sup> that assessed the evaluation function in UNICEF, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) capacities at the field and Headquarters levels. The current review aims to complement this work by examining evaluation in the humanitarian sector in particular, recognizing the additional considerations and distinct challenges of M&E in humanitarian response. The review's findings of this review are expected to feed into the CPE Methodology and Guidance Project, now in the second half of its final year.

## 1.2 Methodology

The research for the review consisted of the following components:

### Survey of evaluations<sup>2</sup>

In preparation for the review, the Evaluation Office compiled all humanitarian-related evaluation documents that had been received from the field during the period from 2000 to spring 2005. The documents pertained to both programming in emergency or transitional countries, or emergency interventions in otherwise development-oriented country programmes. They consisted of evaluations (58); assessments/surveys (11); background research/issue reports, and other documents including published articles and seminar reports (13). These documents were reviewed together with, when applicable, their Evaluation Office reviews and ratings.

### Document review<sup>3</sup>

The document review covered UNICEF policies and prior studies on the evaluation function, as well as relevant literature on evaluation in humanitarian contexts, the state of debate the field, and guidelines on best practice.

### Key informant interviews<sup>4</sup>

Nearly all UNICEF country offices and regional offices dealing with current or recent emergency or transitional interventions were invited to take part in telephone interviews. Those staff members that were able to participate during the timeframe of the review comprised 16 programme and M&E personnel in Angola, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Ethiopia, India, Lao PDR, Liberia, Mozambique, ROSA, and NYHQ.

## 1.3 Definition of terms

To avoid confusion, the following definitions are provided for the terms CPE, "country office-level", and "country-level programming" as they are used in the review:

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<sup>1</sup> UNICEF, "The Quality of Evaluations Supported by UNICEF Country Offices 2000-2001," June 2003.

<sup>2</sup> Review matrix attached as Annex 2

<sup>3</sup> Source list attached as Annex 3

<sup>4</sup> Interview list attached as Annex 4

*Country Programme Evaluation (CPE)* refers to a specific framework and approach for an evaluation of the UNICEF Country Programme. It is not the only formula that can be used for evaluations at this level, but one that “is broad in scope focusing on information needed for strategic decision-making and improving overall Country Programme performance.” Its purpose is to address and inform strategic policy issues for the organization as it positions its programming in the given country within the broader constellation of actors and stakeholders. The precise principles and methodology for the CPE tool are currently under development in UNICEF’s Evaluation Office under a grant from DFID.

*Country Office level* is used by this reviewer to connote the subsidiary management or administrative level within the UNICEF organizational structure (as related to Headquarters or Regional Office levels), such as, for instance, the responsibility to initiate evaluations.

*Country-level*, where it is used in this review, generally refers to programming as opposed to management aspects. CPE is a specific type of country-level evaluation.

## 1.4 Caveats

### ***Interviews***

Regarding the interviewing portion of the review, tight timeframes and busy schedules produced fewer respondents than hoped. This resulted, on the one hand, in missed opportunities to get the perspective of field staff currently contending with some of the more challenging and complex crisis situations occurring today, such as DRC, Iraq, Sudan, and Uganda. On the other hand, since the respondents essentially self-selected, the findings may be skewed toward the perspective of those staff members and offices that tend to be more highly engaged and enthusiastic about improving evaluation.

### ***Review of documents***

It remains a somewhat open question whether the documents compiled by the Evaluation Office for this review represent the total picture of humanitarian-related evaluation activity in UNICEF 2000-2005. The evaluation database relies on country and Regional Office staff to submit their evaluation documents as per the Programme Policy and Procedure Manual (PPPM) and the mandates of the evaluation focal points, and it is certainly possible that not all made their way to New York. Moreover, the Evaluation Office staff report more “filtering” by country offices of evaluation reports that are deemed too low in quality to share outside the Country Office. Given the poor quality of some reviews that *were* received at HQ, however, and the impressions gleaned from interviews with HQ and Country Office staff, it is unlikely that *significant* numbers of evaluation of humanitarian actions exist (especially high quality evaluations) that have not been reflected in this compilation and that would alter the main findings of this review.

### ***Challenges related to decentralization***

At the central level UNICEF has recently taken policy decisions that raise its aims and expectations regarding the evaluation function, which function takes place on a largely — and deliberately — *decentralized* basis. In such circumstances there is an arguably unavoidable lag that occurs between the setting of standards in headquarters and meeting them in the field. As one particular example, the agency-members of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) have in recent months jointly released a new set of norms and standards<sup>5</sup>, to which UNICEF has actively contributed and which the organization will use henceforth. Although the evaluations examined for this review cannot in fairness be held to standards that did not exist at the time they were written, the standards are useful to measure the distance from the current output to where the organization’s ultimate expectations reside.

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<sup>5</sup> United Nations Evaluation Group, “Standards for Evaluation in the UN System” and “Norms for Evaluation in the UN System,” New York: UNEG, 29 April 2005.

***Procedures vs. substance***

In a later section the review discusses the risk of evaluation turning into a mere “ticking-of the-box” exercise, where an overload of procedural standard requirements can potentially lead to superficial form being emphasized over substance. By the same token it need be remembered that a review of evaluations like this one can potentially fall into a similar trap by surveying a large number of documents and simply checking for the presence or absence of certain criteria. The reviewer, therefore, attempted where possible to factor in where there was *implicit* reference to the criteria in question, and where they may not have been especially applicable given the country context.



## **2. CONTEXT**

### **2.1 Current policy and operational environment**

#### **2.1.1 UN reform and the integration movement**

The concepts of strategic coordination, harmonization/rationalization, and closer integration of operations form the core of the UN reform agenda. An ethos of system-wide coherence of operations and unity of stance underpins the Secretary-General's reform packages of 1997 and the more recent Triennial Comprehensive Policy Reviews of Operational Activities of the United Nations System. In the area of UN assistance operations, the creation of inter-agency bodies like the UN Development Group, the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs, and the earlier-established Inter-Agency Standing Committee on humanitarian affairs have sought to bring together the various actors in order to minimize costly duplication and fill gaps. In addition, the trend toward integrated missions seeks to harmonize assistance with the activities of political and peacekeeping actors, particularly in post-conflict transitions. The 2004 Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review calls for "system-wide collaboration on evaluation, in particular harmonization and simplification of methodologies, norms, standards and cycles of evaluation"<sup>6</sup> (paragraph 69).

UNICEF's Medium-Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) 2002-2005 cites both an "operational and catalytic" role for UNICEF to play in its relief and development work. In humanitarian response the catalytic role has been important in coordination - facilitating and contributing to the wider systemic effort. The mechanisms for integration are undoubtedly stronger on the development side (e.g. CCAs, UNDAFs, and SWAPs). Nonetheless, UNICEF has proven to be comparatively more active as a catalyst for coordination in the humanitarian sphere.<sup>7</sup> In the past several years UNICEF has largely reversed its image as a loner or showboat that put its own organizational priorities above the overall UN effort, and has played a major facilitating role in many inter-agency and UN country team contexts.

Within its own agency, UNICEF has mirrored the demand for less fragmented, more strategic approaches to programming. Regarding evaluation, the MTSP stipulated that "evaluation will focus more on the country programme level (lessons learned) and on strategic governance of the organization as a whole as opposed to on the level of individual projects and programmes. This course of action was reconfirmed in UNICEF's 2002 "Report on the evaluation function in the context of the medium-term strategic plan,"<sup>8</sup> and Executive Board Decision 2002/9:"Evaluation function."<sup>9</sup>

#### **2.1.2 UNICEF in humanitarian response and transitions**

With nearly half of its programme countries in emergency or transitional status, UNICEF has taken a series of actions since the late 1990s to strengthen its own response capacity, while simultaneously stepping up its active coordination with others to enhance the system as a whole. The Martigny Consultation of September 1998 tackled the need to enhance UNICEF's flexibility, predictability, and timeliness in responding to humanitarian crises. The partnership with DFID, begun in January 2000, provided additional funds to meet UNICEF's goals in expanding its humanitarian response capacity, particularly as regards protecting children affected by conflict and strengthening UNICEF's role in interagency coordination. In May 2000 UNICEF adopted its Core Corporate Commitments (CCCs), which commit the organization to meet humanitarian needs in six core areas during the first 6-8 weeks of a crisis. The Martigny II meeting, held in Copenhagen in June 2003, refined the CCCs and provided the

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<sup>6</sup> United Nations, "Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities of the United Nations System," General Assembly resolution 59/250, adopted 17 December 2004, para 69.

<sup>7</sup> Abby Stoddard, "Assessment of UNICEF's contribution to UN Reform and its impact on UNICEF in the humanitarian sector" New York: UNICEF Evaluation Office, September 2004.

<sup>8</sup> Executive Board Document E/ICEF/2002/10

<sup>9</sup> UNICEF Executive Board Decision 2002/9: "Evaluation function"

operational support for their implementation. The updated CCCs – renamed the Core Commitments for Children – were adopted in June 2004.

Within the CCCs, monitoring and evaluation are included as integral components to UNICEF's operating approach: "implement a valid and reliable system to monitor, regularly report on and publicize the needs of children and evaluate the impact of the response... Develop and implement a minimal Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan to support management of the medium-term response with key indicators on implementation and output (e.g., inputs delivered and coverage of therapeutic feeding)."<sup>10</sup>

In unstable transition situations, including both post-conflict transitions and transitions into conflict, the issue of integration takes on particular urgency within the system, as humanitarian, development and political actors attempt to harmonize their operations under a broader effort aimed first and foremost at "consolidating peace"<sup>11</sup> and enhancing the capacity and legitimacy of national actors toward this end UNICEF has signaled its intention to play an active and prominent role in transitional contexts, and as co-chair for the UNDG-ECHA Roundtable of Transitions, in fact helped codify the thinking around transitions and UN integrated missions therein.

The 2003 evaluation of UNICEF-ECHO cooperation in Somalia and Burundi cites UNICEF's particular role in transitions generally: "the Convention of the Rights of the Child, which has been signed by nearly all UN member states, including every EU country, supports an integrated approach by UNICEF from emergency relief to development (sustainability through infrastructures, national capacity building and standards). This approach is illustrated in UNICEF priorities of Core Corporate Commitments (CCC) and Medium Term Strategic Plan (MTSP). It is therefore highly relevant for the Commission as a whole, in particular to the current efforts to bridge the transition gap; UNICEF should actually be considered as an LRRD (linking relief to rehabilitation and development) partner."<sup>12</sup>

### **2.1.3 Demand for joint evaluations**

In recent years the interagency humanitarian community has promoted the goal of increased common evaluations and lessons learning in humanitarian action. Most notably, the "Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda" (JEEAR) in 1996 produced lessons that lead a number of follow-on joint initiatives including the Sphere project and the DAC/OECD project on evaluations 'Identifying and Disseminating Best Practice in the Evaluation of Humanitarian Assistance Programmes.' The Triennial Review and UNICEF's MTSP also stress partnering in evaluation. The UNDG ECHA report on transitions does not address evaluations per se in much detail, but does call for common needs assessments, adding a note on M&E: "The assessment of needs should be evidence-based, prioritized and regularly re-validated through systems for joint monitoring and evaluation, using a common and agreed set of indicators to measure progress towards identified results."<sup>13</sup>

However, since the seminal JEEAR study, while other joint evaluations have taken place, often at the behest of a mutual donor, most continue to be undertaken on an individual agency basis.

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<sup>10</sup> UNICEF, "Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies," (CCCs)

<sup>11</sup> United Nations Development Group and Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs, "Report of the UNDG/ECHA Working Group on Transition Issues," New York: UNDG/ECHA, 2004.

<sup>12</sup> ECHO Evaluation of ECHO's co-operation with UNICEF and UNICEF activities funded by ECHO, Burundi Report, 4.

<sup>13</sup> UNDG/ECHA, "Report of the UNDG/ECHA Working Group on Transition Issues," 29.

## 2.2 Trends and challenges in evaluation of humanitarian action

### 2.2.1 Learning and accountability issues

Humanitarian assistance traditionally has not placed a great deal of emphasis on evaluations. Considered part of the “normal” project cycle that can and should be done in development contexts, evaluation was typically viewed as a luxury to be dispensed with when disaster struck. When it has been employed in humanitarian programming, evaluation is often seen as “add-on” to the program, rather than a fundamental part of it.<sup>14</sup>

The body of literature that has grown up around evaluation, therefore, continues to be rooted in the development sphere, though evaluation of humanitarian action has developed into a branch of its own, particularly after the 1994 Rwandan genocide and refugee emergency that led to the highly influential Joint Evaluation on Emergency Assistance to Rwanda (JEEAR). In aid generally, impact measurement became the watchword due to widely perceived failures of development and inefficiencies in humanitarian response. Evaluation in international aid is used both for accountability and for lessons learning, and took its cue from a wider accountability movement in western governments that spawned the results-based management movement, which many agencies, including UNICEF have adopted.<sup>15</sup> Recent years have also seen a growing emphasis on the implementation of lessons learned and change management.

Recent years have seen somewhat of a backlash to the evaluation movement develop, with some arguing that humanitarian actors’ new obsession with developing systems of accountability has led the field astray by focusing “primarily on the logistics of aid”<sup>16</sup> thereby discounting the its intangible impact, including implicit political and human rights messages. Others have made the point that some severe crisis cases, where there is the least clarity on what it is international humanitarian actors can or want to do, are precisely the places they most need to be.<sup>17</sup> In such cases focusing overmuch on accountability can inhibit bold and necessary action. Finally, some theorists argue that humanitarian accountability has lost the forest for the trees: by evaluating on discrete outputs one becomes blind to unintended consequences of humanitarian aid as well as the bigger picture of systemic improvement. These problems affect not only the assistance community, but are endemic to evaluation in general. “We are all familiar with the tyranny of measurement – where what is measurable rather than what should be measured drives the system. Second...a focus on outputs, disconnected from the larger context, can distort behavior in serious ways.”<sup>18</sup>

The preceding can be taken as an important note of caution that, as ALNAP’s John Mitchell points out, a growing segment of the humanitarian community feels strongly that “the aims of humanitarian action are not reducible to meeting set targets and following prescribed procedures enshrined in quality frameworks and impact indicators.”<sup>19</sup> Most in the field consider evaluation an important tool that aids, though maybe does not capture the complete picture, of humanitarian response. Moreover, it can reasonably be assumed that a capable manager will not let generic standards override his or her good judgment. Rather, standards and minima exist for the instances when judgment is lacking. Caveats aside, the mainstream view, shared by UNICEF, maintains that results-based management tools do not inherently

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<sup>14</sup> Alistair Hallam, *Evaluating Humanitarian Assistance Programmes in Complex Emergencies*, Relief and Rehabilitation Network, Good Practice Review, Edited by John Borton, Laura Gibbons and Sarah Longford, Overseas Development Institute, September 1998.

<sup>15</sup> HPG, Fritz guide

<sup>16</sup> Mary Anderson, “Accountability Beyond Counting: What is Humanitarian Aid Responsible For?” Paper prepared for SSRC Seminar series “The Transformations of Humanitarian Action” May, 2005.

<sup>17</sup> James Darcy and Charles Antoine-Hoffman, *According to Need? Needs assessment and Decision-Making in the Humanitarian Sector*, Humanitarian Policy Group Report 15, London: ODI, September, 2003.

<sup>18</sup> Janice Gross Stein, “Accountability and Humanitarian Organizations” Paper prepared for SSRC Seminar series “The Transformations of Humanitarian Action,” May 2005.

<sup>19</sup> John Mitchell, “Accountability: The Three-Lane Highway”

reduce evaluations to numbers and logistical issues, but can in fact support substantive and holistic evaluations by focusing on outcomes vis-à-vis institutional, behavioral, and attitudinal changes and the concrete impacts on lives and livelihoods.

## 2.2.2 Inherent obstacles to evaluation in emergency humanitarian action

Apart from the above conceptual and strategic debates, a number of challenges or gaps hinder evaluation in humanitarian settings:

- **Time** - As is the nature of crisis response, it is often extremely difficult to step back and evaluate ones actions, let alone absorb lessons and self-correct.
- **Capacity** – Program and M&E staff are stretched thin or double-hatting in many Country Offices. In addition, qualified external evaluators, preferred to in-house staff for independence purposes, can be difficult to recruit in some countries.
- **Infrastructure** - In many humanitarian scenarios there is no country authority with which to harmonize priorities, strategies and actions, and normal national accountability mechanisms (such as judiciary, press, and legal oversight) may be weakened or altogether absent.<sup>20</sup>
- **Information** - Lack of information is a common problem, both baseline data (the previous baseline having been rendered invalid by the crisis in the country) and key indicators.
- **Coordination** – A sudden influx of many additional actors can make it difficult to coordinate and standardize data collection. Humanitarian action lacks a consensus template for strategizing such as provided in MDG, and the CAP/CHAP mechanisms, while improved, remain uneven and generally weak compared to UNDAF and CCAs.
- **Consistent methodology** – Until very recently the field has lacked a shared set of guidelines with which to approach evaluation of humanitarian action. As the OECD/DAC put it, “the widely varying quality, scope and depth of (humanitarian assistance) evaluations may be likened to a “methodological anarchy.”<sup>21</sup>
- **Operational space** - Constraints to humanitarian access are common in the most severe complex emergencies and can frustrate M&E.
- **Culture** – Unlike in the development sector, the “culture of evaluation” is new and not well engrained in the tradition of humanitarian assistance.
- **Coherence** - The complexity of modern humanitarian emergencies provides another type of obstacle to evaluation – a realistic impact measurement of a single agency or project becomes very difficult. No direct causal line. Overall humanitarian policy becomes more important.
- **Track record and knowledge base** – Many subjects of interventions in complex humanitarian emergencies are new to agencies from an operational standpoint, and while they may be conceptually integrated into policy and mandates, they remain difficult to realize in practice and essentially untested in terms of their effectiveness. These newer and/or more difficult programme areas include human rights promotion and the HRBAP generally, protection, and humanitarian advocacy.
- **Institutional memory** - The high staff turn-over in emergency response situations and in humanitarian organizations generally creates obstacles to tracking the impact and follow up of previous findings and recommendations.

The same factors that make it difficult to monitor and evaluate humanitarian assistance make it all the more crucial - the fluidity of the situation, the insecurity and need for protection of victims and aid workers, the life-or-death import of actions and decisions, and the potential for serious negative side effects of aid.

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<sup>20</sup> OECD/DAC, *Evaluation and Aid Effectiveness: Guidance for Evaluating Humanitarian Assistance in Complex Emergencies*, OECD, 1999, 7.

<sup>21</sup> OECD/DAC, *Evaluation and Aid Effectiveness*, 2.

### 2.2.3 Towards consensus on need, role, and best practices of evaluation

If anarchy still reigns over the policies, systems, and approaches to evaluations within the humanitarian community, there is at least a solid consensus that evaluation of humanitarian action is important to improve performance and strengthen accountability, while taking forward lessons to aid in strategic planning: "The fundamental idea that humanitarian aid should be monitored and evaluated has gained general acceptance...Agencies increasingly start to consider the issue from a more systematic and professional point of view."<sup>22</sup>

As mentioned above, consensus has also developed around the need for broadening the focus from the project level to system-wide evaluations, to identify strategic and mandate gaps and counterproductive overlaps.<sup>23</sup> The ALNAP-network, OECD DAC, and several other inter-agency working groups on evaluations have contributed to the development and dissemination of best practices in evaluation of humanitarian action.

In humanitarian assistance evaluation it is generally agreed that the standard traditional criteria - relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability – need to be supplemented by the additional criteria of coverage, coherence, and coordination<sup>24</sup> to address the overall context issues and gauge the extent to which populations in need are being accessed appropriately and impartially. Evaluation specialists have also added protection measures to and ethical delivery of assistance to the yardstick by which humanitarian assistance should ideally be evaluated.

The danger, of course, is that by tacking on additional criteria to the some would say already daunting task of evaluation in humanitarian contexts, the process becomes onerous and clumsy.

Despite the perception of many managers in the field that evaluation is a time and labor intensive task that requires long range timeframes for planning and execution, current thinking on humanitarian intervention strongly promotes the idea of a faster track, and the value of evaluating programme activities while they are still ongoing or very shortly after. In this way the evaluation function conforms to the rapidly changing nature of the emergency and post-emergency context. It also allows for the key actors and informants, including project staff and beneficiaries as well as other stakeholders, to participate in the evaluation before their collective memory dissipates due to staff turnover, population shifts, and the general passage of time.

Regarding interviews with beneficiaries, some analysts argue strongly that these should be mandatory in evaluations, as these individuals will have important differences in perception regarding the project's success or agencies' performance.<sup>25</sup> In addition, it is considered good practice to hold a workshop or conference at the end of the evaluation to present the main findings to stakeholders, and to institute a systematic means for taking the accepted recommendations forward, preventing valuable lessons from falling through the cracks as staff members move on and focus shifts to the next programme activity.

### 2.2.4 The strategic policy gap in evaluation of humanitarian action

In evaluating humanitarian response, the appropriateness of the traditional, "rational project cycle" approach orthodoxy has been questioned by some on the grounds that it examines the response apart from the context - disregarding policy and institutional environment - assumes a single reality and causal line, and takes a managerial, rather than participatory approach. Humanitarian policy in this instance is taken as a given, and not a subject for evaluation itself.<sup>26</sup> Collective wisdom now holds that evaluation of

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<sup>22</sup> Georg Frerks and Dorothea Hilhorst, "Evaluation of Humanitarian Assistance in Emergency Situations," UNHCR *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Working Paper No. 56, February 2002, 4.

<sup>23</sup> Hallam, 12.

<sup>24</sup> (DAC/OECD, 1999:21-22

<sup>25</sup> Hallam and OECD DAC

<sup>26</sup> OECD (1999:11), Frerks and Hilhorst, 7

humanitarian action requires a stronger focus on policy evaluation as well as an examination of the strategic context, i.e. the interrelation of actors and activities in the broader system (including beneficiaries and their coping strategies).

This strategic policy gap that has been identified in humanitarian-related evaluation generally, along with the other issues, trends, and challenges described above, can be seen mirrored in UNICEF's own experience in developing its evaluation function.

### 3. THE EVALUATION FUNCTION IN UNICEF POLICY

Since the early 1990s UNICEF has placed serious weight on evaluation as an organizational tool for applied learning, decision-making, effectiveness, and accountability. In addition, though it is perhaps less explicit in policy documents, evaluation is valued in UNICEF for its potential to strengthen advocacy.

In 1990 the Executive Board called for evaluation plans to be incorporated in every country programme (E/ICEF/1990/13), and in decision 1992/24 decided that “in addition to being a project-focused effort, evaluation at the country programme level should increasingly address programme-level activities” and called for the establishment of a central evaluation database to monitor implementation and share results. The NY HQ Evaluation Office to support and guide these initiatives was created under Executive Directive of June 1993 (CF/EXD/1993-006).<sup>27</sup> The use of evaluation as a strategic tool at the Country Programme level was therefore envisioned over a decade ago, and is a theme that continues to be sounded today. In 2003 the Martigny II conference on UNICEF’s humanitarian response capacity again noted “the need to strengthen the use of evaluation...UNICEF is defining and will soon implement a more strategic approach to evaluation.”

Strengthening evaluation is an important component of the current and upcoming Medium-Term Strategic Plans. As the 2002-2005 MTSP states, “Evaluation will focus more on the country programme level (lessons learned) and on strategic governance of the organization as a whole. It will look at the rationale, effectiveness and administrative efficiency and economy of all activities undertaken or supported by UNICEF. UNICEF will thus enhance accountability and performance in terms of managing for results for children.”<sup>28</sup> Evaluation is seen as central for fulfilling the organizational commitments for UNICEF has set for itself.

However, despite the emphasis on evaluation in policy, one finds both the internal and external perception that M&E is not where it should be in UNICEF humanitarian response. An evaluation of the UNICEF-ECHO partnership noted that “monitoring and evaluation (M&E) has been recognized as a ‘slow starter’”<sup>29</sup> particularly as regarded staff and training on the field level, and that “results-oriented monitoring at field level and subsequent effective reporting of outcomes and impact by UNICEF are still key weaknesses of the agency, even though these have been identified and corrective measures and tools are reportedly being developed.”<sup>30</sup> The Martigny process also identified evaluation as a particular weakness, with one report stating quite candidly that that “no significant change in country office M&E capacity has come about. The organization has no practice of or system for assessing humanitarian response to crisis. There are critical support functions for which the organization cannot easily take a measure of performance. There is little or no guidance on monitoring and evaluation of humanitarian response programmes in many of the newer programming areas.”<sup>31</sup> And most recently, the July 2005 evaluation of the DFID-UNICEF partnership to strengthen UNICEF’s humanitarian response reported that

“Organisational learning through practice through practice is weak and there is not yet a culture of learning. Monitoring and evaluation systems are weak in most countries... Overall, there are relatively few evaluations of CO level performance.”<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Report on the evaluation function in the context of the medium-term strategic plan, Exec board annual session E/ICEF/2002/10 (11 April 2002)

<sup>28</sup> UNICEF, “Medium-Term Strategic Plan, 2002-2005,” Paragraph 172.

<sup>29</sup> ECHO, 4.

<sup>30</sup> ECHO, 36.

<sup>31</sup> UNICEF, “Martigny II — Where Are We Now? A Review of UNICEF Humanitarian Response Capacity” UNICEF Evaluation Office (May 2003)

<sup>32</sup> Valid International, “Evaluation of DFID-UNICEF Programme of Cooperation to Strengthen UNICEF Programming as it Applies to Humanitarian Response, 2000-2005,” New York: UNICEF, paragraph 37.

It bears noting that the obstacles to progress in evaluation facing UNICEF are in no way unique to that organization. It is a frustrating truism in humanitarian response, as observed in a recent: ALNAP review that “evaluations of humanitarian action continue to evidence a repeated and unacceptable failure by the Humanitarian Sector to learn and implement lessons from past experience.”<sup>33</sup>

### 3.1 Policy directives; past and current initiatives for improving evaluation

Executive Board decision 2004/9 reaffirmed UNICEF’s emphasis on strengthening evaluation as an organizational priority, specifically:

- “Improving the efficiency and strategic value of the evaluation function by focusing on fewer, high-quality studies, with a strong emphasis on analyzing effectiveness and results;...
- Identifying best practices from evaluations for achieving the targets and objectives of the UNICEF medium- term strategic plan (MTSP), and
- Ensuring that procedures are implemented to enable the findings from evaluations to be systematically fed into the organization to secure organizational learning;”

Furthermore, UNICEF has clearly expressed its intention to hold humanitarian response operations to the same evaluative test. For instance, evaluation is included in the second operating principle of the CCCs: “Implement a valid and reliable system to monitor, regularly report on and publicize the needs of children and evaluate the impact of the response.”

Ongoing initiatives to strengthen UNICEF’s M&E related to humanitarian action have been facilitated by Phase II of the UNICEF-DFID capacity building partnership, and include adapting evaluation management tools such as the IMEP and M&E training course, and promoting the use of quick review methods and real time evaluation during the first three months of a major crisis, followed by an evaluation at the country programme level within 12 months.<sup>34</sup> In addition, EMOPS is developing performance indicators for humanitarian response based on the Core Commitments for Children to be tested in the tsunami aftermath response.

While seeking to strengthen and standardize evaluations across the organization, UNICEF policy directives at the same time make clear the need to retain the field-based, decentralized nature of its evaluation function, with evaluations driven by Country and Regional Offices rather than HQ.

### 3.2 Standards

UNICEF’s current Evaluation Standards, formalized and in use since September 2004, draw from a set of overlapping and cross-referencing standards, principles, and best practices in the field.<sup>35</sup> Prior to the development of its own standards, in 1990 UNICEF adopted the OECD-DAC Evaluation Criteria as an explicit reference in evaluations. These mainstream evaluation criteria - Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact, and Sustainability – are referred throughout this review as the main or standard OECD DAC criteria. For humanitarian programming, the UNICEF Standards have taken up OECD-DAC guidance to include the following additional criteria: Coverage, Coordination, Coherence, and Protection.

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<sup>33</sup> ALNAP, 22.

<sup>34</sup> UNICEF Evaluation Office internal document, “The IMEP in crisis and unstable contexts — How is it adapted?”

<sup>35</sup> These include the American Evaluation Association, African Evaluation Association Guidelines, Swiss Evaluation Society Standards, OECD DAC Principles for Evaluation, and ALNAP Quality Proforma, as well as UNICEF’s own past materials, e.g. *A UNICEF Guide for Monitoring and Evaluation: Making a Difference?* (1991), meta-evaluations, and UNICEF M&E Training Resource (UNICEF Evaluation Report Standards, UNICEF Evaluation Office, September 2004.)

Until 2005 the United Nations system lacked any common, comprehensive norms and standards for evaluation. With UNICEF chairing the Working Group on Norms and Standards, the inter-agency United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) produced a consensus document on evaluation norms and standards for use within the United Nations system. UNICEF has officially adopted and will henceforth use these norms and standards. Many of the UNEG standards directly parallel UNICEF's prior set, some even verbatim, while others go beyond UNICEF current practice. Although the evaluations examined for this review cannot fairly be held to standards that did not exist when they were written, it is nevertheless useful to view them in light of the newly adopted benchmarks to gauge the distance between the current state of practice and the model aspired to by the organization. For explanatory purposes in this review, the evaluation standards have been grouped into three major categories, as illustrated in the table below:

Goal	Standard	UNICEF*	UNEG **
<b>Completeness of key information and evaluation accountability</b>	Contains complete title and opening pages, including country, date, and table of contents	1	4.1
	Identifies commissioner of evaluation	1	4.1
	Includes names, affiliations and contact information for authors	1	4.1
	Includes Executive Summary	2	4.2
	Lists and includes all relevant annexes, including datasets and Terms of Reference	22	4.18
	Describes stakeholder involvement in project and (UNICEF's) specific role	4	4.4
	Describes and gives rationale for degree of stakeholder participation in evaluation.	12-13	4.10
	Stakeholders to be consulted in the planning, design, conduct, and follow-up of evaluations		3.11
<b>Evaluation quality, soundness, comprehensiveness and ethicality</b>	Clarity of program description and expected results chain	3	3.4, 4.3
	Describes and justifies criteria used (Uses OECD/DAC criteria or explains why not)	6	4.6
	Sets "SMART" objectives	7	3.5
	Describes if/how HRBAP and gender analysis employed	8	4.8
	Considers project's incorporation of RBM	9	3.9
	Clearly describes methodology	10	4.9
	Uses appropriate methodology vis-à-vis the evaluation objectives	11	3.7 (also mentions rigor)
	Identifies outcomes/impacts as well as outputs	15	4.12
	Includes cost analysis to extent feasible	16	3.8
	Shows relative contributions of stakeholders	17	4.13
	Identifies favorable or constraining factors for success	18	4.14
	Presents conclusions that follow logically from evidence	19	3.16, 4.15
	Evaluation conducted in ethical manner	14	3.15
	Well-qualified, gender balanced and geographically diverse teams	(New)	3.13, 3.14

	Clearly structured and readable final report	(New, but already implicit)	3.16
<b>Strategic value</b>	Explains purpose, context and rationale for timing of evaluation	5	3.1-3.3, 4.7
	Provides prioritized recommendations that are relevant, feasible, and based on the evidence presented	20	4.16
	Extracts lessons that are generalizable to a wider context	21 (when applicable)	4.17
	Peer review or reference group encouraged	(New)	3.12

\*UNICEF Evaluation Standards (incorporating standard criteria and guidance on best practice from OECD/DAC and ALNAP)

\*\* UNEG Standards for Evaluation in the UN System, re conducting evaluations and evaluation reports (3&4)

In its recently revised Evaluation Standards, UNICEF has managed to draw from the “cacophony” of methods and approaches in the field, a set of guidelines that are achievable and in line with current thinking on best practice. The PPPM guidelines on using the Standards and the Standards themselves are clear and accessible. While some may argue they are overstuffed and overly ambitious, they are not accused of being unsound or irrelevant to the humanitarian context. The policy framework and technical understanding necessary for strengthened and enhanced evaluation of humanitarian action can be said to be well developed at UNICEF, at least at the central level. The question then becomes whether UNICEF has successfully translated these goals into practice.

## 4. EVALUATION IN PRACTICE: REVIEW OF UNICEF EVALUATIONS IN THE HUMANITARIAN SECTOR

### 4.1 Background and criteria for assessment

The centerpiece for this study, as per the terms of reference, was a document review to assess the **context, quality, and follow-up** of “approximately 80 evaluations related to humanitarian action in unstable contexts and emergencies that are available in UNICEF’s Evaluation Database.” For this purpose, the Evaluation Office compiled all documents that it had received from the field for inclusion in the Evaluation Database since 2000 that were either thematically related to humanitarian action or took place in emergency or countries.

The objective of the review of evaluations is twofold: first, to form a clearer picture of the strategic context of the evaluations, i.e. the demand for them (who initiated them, why then, and for what purpose?) and their impact/end use (how were their lessons learned and recommendations taken forward?); second, to assess their technical quality and determine how close they come to meeting the standards that UNICEF has set for itself in evaluation.

Country Offices are responsible for submitting completed evaluations to the central data base via the Evaluation Reports Submission Website. Evaluation Office staff in headquarters will normally follow-up on missing/late evaluations with the country office, based on the country office’s Annual Reports and evaluation plans. The Evaluation Office normally reviews each incoming evaluation document and assigns it a quality rating based on the Evaluation Standards, which is then shared with the Country Office and placed on the database. This review noted the Evaluation Office quality ratings, when present, in the findings matrix (attached, Annex 2). In addition, for both rated and un-rated documents the review measured the evaluations against criteria specific to humanitarian contexts, i.e. discussion of the DAC criteria of coverage, coordination, coherence and protection; factors especially relevant to the follow-up and strategic use of the evaluations such as clear authorship and stakeholder participation; indications of the demand-driver origin; and discussion of plans or field level mechanisms for carrying the findings forward.

A third of the documents compiled in the review were not formal evaluations but other types of reports such as needs assessments, background/issue studies. These types of documents can also yield important information and lessons for programming, and as such are reasonable additions to a centralized database, but cannot be assessed in the same way as evaluations proper. Since most of the evaluation quality criteria are not applicable to these documents, these reports were not given a formal rating.<sup>36</sup> They have been included in this document review, but mainly with an eye toward the first and third categories of assessment, context and follow-up, rather than the specific criteria pertaining to evaluation quality.

### 4.2 Summary findings and analysis

The below findings were drawn from the document review of evaluations and evaluation-related documents, and augmented by interviews with relevant UNICEF personnel. For each sub-section an analysis follows, discussing potential explanations and contributing factors to the findings. A full matrix of the documents reviewed is attached as Annex 2.

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<sup>36</sup> Some formal evaluations also have no recorded Evaluation Office rating; some because they were not submitted in English, and some likely because they have only recently been submitted to the Evaluation Office.

## 4.2.1 Contents of the evaluations

### Findings: Relatively low evaluation activity

For the purposes of this review, the Evaluation Office compiled 82 separate evaluation documents related to humanitarian assistance, dating back to 2000. Of these, 58 were formal evaluations (including two MTRs), while 11 were assessments/surveys, and 13 were background/issues studies. Given the large numbers of acute and chronic emergencies that have occurred in the developing world over the past five years, UNICEF's prominent role as a humanitarian actor, and its repeated promotion of evaluations as a critical and integral part of programming, the total of 58 humanitarian-related evaluations would seem strikingly low.

Between 50 and 60 UNICEF countries of operation were deemed "acutely unstable or with pockets of instability and emergencies" during the period 2000-2005,<sup>37</sup> and were the recipients of an estimated 45 percent of UNICEF resources.<sup>38</sup> During that same period there were 114 CAPs or flash appeals issued for 41 countries or regions in which UNICEF was programming.<sup>39</sup> In the face of this overall level of humanitarian activity, using the number of evaluations that were submitted to the Evaluation Office averages out to only roughly 0.2 humanitarian-related evaluations per emergency country per year. There is no ideal number to strive for in evaluations, and although some organizations have a set policy, for instance "any operation lasting longer than 12 months should be evaluated"<sup>40</sup> UNICEF may decide that it is not feasible or necessarily desirable for every project activity to undergo formal evaluation. Indeed, UNICEF's overall goal in evaluation is to produce fewer evaluations of higher quality and greater significance vis-à-vis decision making, and some of the Country Office staff interviewed their preference in many cases for conducting verbal "reviews" that have been effective and less burdensome than formal evaluation.

There are some indications that the number of documents the Evaluation Office has received may not fully account for the lessons-learning activity in the field. Although most country offices interviewed for this study confirmed that the Evaluation Office database reflects the sum total of their evaluations, one let it be known that at least a few peer reviews (a more informal evaluative process) were held that produced documents containing recommendations and lessons learned. These documents were shared at the country level, but not more broadly across UNICEF via the regional office or HQ. Peer reviews are not equivalent to evaluations, and by virtue of their not being shared more broadly would not contribute to broader strategic use, hence this would not alter the finding presented here. Additionally, the 2005 evaluation of UNICEF's capacity in humanitarian response which comprised field level country case studies concluded from its sample that "there is not an established practice of concise and focused lessons learned workshops or after-action-reviews."<sup>41</sup> In other words, if informal reviews are undertaken, it is happening on an ad hoc and infrequent basis. It should be acknowledged, however, that a type of lessons-learning exercise may be occurring in some places the field that is not being captured.

Such uncertainties are a natural by-product of a decentralized evaluation system, requiring that more effort be taken to insure the sharing of evaluations so they may be useful across countries and emergencies. A complete and comprehensive evaluations database is more than just a UNICEF good - as of this year it will be an agency commitment under UNEG norm number 10 regarding "Transparency and Consultations," which stipulates that "Evaluation Terms of Reference and reports should be available to major stakeholders and be public documents."

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<sup>37</sup> "UNICEF's role in humanitarian situations," <[http://www.unicef.org/emerg/index\\_role.html](http://www.unicef.org/emerg/index_role.html)>

<sup>38</sup> UNICEF estimates that between 25-30 percent of its funding is spent in countries experiencing emergencies. When including core resources spent on programs in countries that are experiencing crisis, the figure rises to 45 percent. ("MTSP and Emergencies," UNICEF internal issues paper, 8 March 2004).

<sup>39</sup> Development Initiatives, *Global Humanitarian Assistance Update 2004-2005*, London: Development Initiatives, 2005, 19.

<sup>40</sup> WFP Evaluation Policy

<sup>41</sup> Valid International, "Evaluation of DFID-UNICEF Programme of Cooperation to Strengthen UNICEF Programming as it Applies to Humanitarian Response, 2000-2005," New York: UNICEF, paragraph 37.

## **Analysis: Capacity and “cultural” obstacles?**

The interviews with UNICEF staff members in the field raised questions about whether evaluation activity is low because of a genuine lack of capacity, or more because of a perceived lack of capacity owing to an organizational culture that continues to think of evaluations along the development model and necessarily long-range in planning, time consuming, and burdensome.

While many Country Office staff interviewed noted that more M&E staff would be helpful, most did not explicitly cite insufficient evaluation resources as the primary obstacle. Rather it was a more intangible lack of *time* within programming that was seen to be the chief obstacle. In rapidly changing or emergency situations the pressure is naturally to perform the work of programming and there is little perceived “thinking time” for reflection and analysis. As one respondent put it, despite UNICEF’s rhetorical support for organizational learning and critical self-analysis, in many places M&E is not prioritized, especially during emergencies. One could argue, however, that additional M&E personnel would help provide both the impetus and the extra capacity required to raise the level of priority.

One staff member observed that now that UNICEF is taking on more coordinating roles in the field, the time for evaluation – already scarce - is now even more stretched. Many expressed a preference for quick, informal reviews and assessments rather than formal evaluations to determine whether a programme or project is on track and to inform the decision making process.

The interviews suggest that many UNICEF staff members still think of evaluation in the development context, a model that centers on the UNICEF partnership with the host government for baseline data gathering and implementation of evaluation activities, is typically undertaken at the end of a project cycle, and planned for many months in advance. Of course, in emergencies the link with government may be strained or lost completely, and timeframes and project cycles are drastically shortened. The consensus in the field holds that in such contexts evaluation must be done differently, not put off until the situation stabilizes and the development model can once again be employed. While a Country Programme or Sectoral-level evaluation may indeed take more lead-time and resources to implement adequately (especially if the work of multiple agencies must be coordinated for the purpose), in general evaluation in the humanitarian context can be of good quality and valuable to decision making without the level of burden with which it is associated in development.<sup>42</sup>

Regarding evaluation planning and management, some staff expressed frustration with the UNICEF planning cycle and five-year IMEP tool which is too long range to realistically foresee and plan evaluation activities. While the one-year IMEP is generally seen to be helpful, the five-year often amounts to “a nice piece of paper” that takes time to produce and generally does not accurately reflect the eventual reality.

Finally, one very real capacity issue for many Country Offices is the scarcity of qualified external consultants available for local hire. Those country offices that reported the least amount of problems finding qualified consultants were the ones that had the benefit of rosters of consultants compiled nationally and regionally. In emergency scenarios or countries where qualified consultants are scarce, the Regional Office can provide a highly valuable service of identifying consultants from other countries in the region, perhaps through establishing new and increased linkages with universities, regional organizations, NGOs, and research institutes.

## **4.2.2 Comprehensiveness of reports**

### **Findings: A dearth of basic information**

A great many evaluations are missing certain basic information regarding authorship and commissioning body/officer, which becomes problematic for tracking follow-up and other strategic concerns (see more below under “Impact”). For nearly a quarter of the documents (24%) it is not possible to find either the name or the affiliation of the author. Of the remaining documents that do include the author’s name, 32%

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<sup>42</sup> Hallam

lack any indication of the individual's qualifications (professional experience or educational degree) that would signal his or her fitness to undertake the evaluation. This particular deficiency stands to get more critical attention with the recent adoption of the UNEG norms and standards, which stipulate that evaluators should have specific training and prior experience in evaluations. Only five documents (6%) provided an address or other contact information for the consultant, suggesting that many of these individuals may be lost to follow-up.

**Analysis: More systematic sharing of standards and quality checks needed**

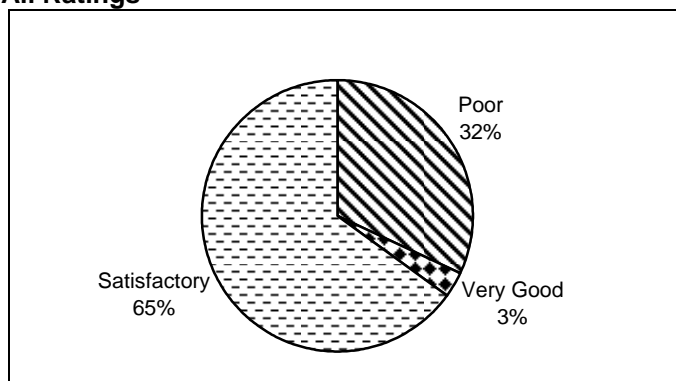
All of the Country Offices interviewed noted that it has not been standard practice to in the past share the UNICEF Evaluation Office Standards with consultants, and many did not realize it was expected (and most also indicated that this will now be done going forward). This particular shortcoming would seem to be easily correctable by the staff responsible for overseeing the evaluation. The M&E staff at the country office and regional office levels, even if they are not directly involved in commissioning or overseeing the evaluations, should be able to scan for these basic omissions and have them addressed before the document is finalized.

**4.2.3 Quality of evaluations**

**Findings: Evaluation quality uneven, with majority at the lower end of the scale**

The December 2004 Evaluation Report Quality Review, a meta-evaluation of all UNICEF supported evaluation reports prepared by the Evaluation Office, found that most of the evaluations (65%) received a rating of "satisfactory," with 32% in the "poor" range and only 3% deemed "very good."

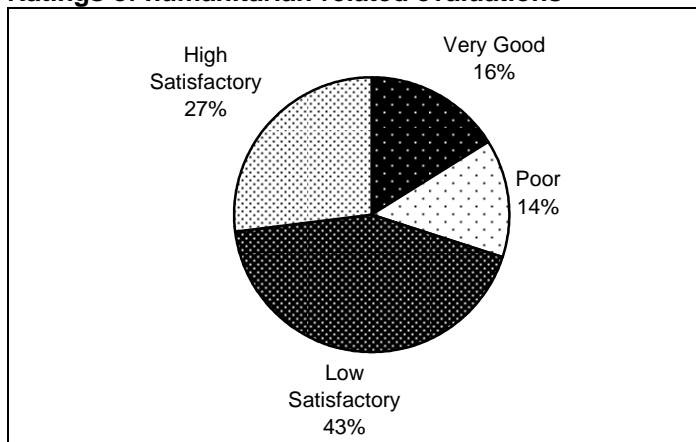
**All Ratings**



Rating System	
1 – 1.99	Poor
2 – 2.99	Satisfactory
3 – 3.99	Very Good
4 – 5	Excellent, Model Evaluation

Source: UNICEF Evaluation Office, "Evaluation Report Quality Review" December 2004, 13.

**Ratings of humanitarian-related evaluations**



This review of humanitarian-related evaluations in specific shows a slightly better distribution of quality ratings (see below chart), with a higher percentage falling in the “very good” range than was seen in the overall ratings, though still skewing toward the lower end of the quality scale. The majority of the UNICEF-supported evaluations in this review that had received an Evaluation Office rating (60%) were deemed satisfactory. Sixteen percent received a rating of “very good” (3 or higher.) The final fourteen percent were rated “poor.” When disaggregated further, the satisfactory ratings tend to be concentrated more at the lower end, with 37% falling between 2.0 and 2.5 (Satisfactory – Poor) compared to 23% that fall within the range of 2.5-2.99 (Satisfactory-Good).

The review examined the level of adherence to UNICEF-adopted evaluative criteria (the OECD DAC mainstream criteria of Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact, and Sustainability; as the additional humanitarian-related criteria of Coverage, Coordination, Coherence, and Protection.) Evaluations were assessed in terms of whether they included discussion of these criteria or if not, provided a rationale for why alternate criteria were used. In addition, it determined whether the evaluations had assessed the project/programme’s adherence to UNICEF’s principles of the Human-Rights Based Approach to Programming (HRBAP) and Results-based Management (RBM). Finally, it assessed whether the standard of ethical delivery of assistance had been discussed in the evaluation. It found that the universal feature of the evaluations rated poor or low-satisfactory was that the above standards for evaluative criteria were either missing completely or only partly met.

In all, the review found only four percent of the documents (i.e. the formal evaluations in which these criteria were applicable) had “well-met” these standards. Twenty-two percent received the second highest assignation of “partly-met/well met,” meaning most of the main criteria had been referenced in the evaluation. In the majority of evaluations (51%) these criteria were partly (or poorly) met, meaning only one or two of the criteria were explicitly referenced, and 22% were lacking them entirely.

Interviewees were candid about past quality problems in evaluations, but overall expressed the sense that the level of quality has begun to improve, and some marked the beginning of the upswing as recently this year. One Country Office staff member attributed the problem to too many evaluations having been implemented which made it difficult to provide adequate levels of supervision and guidance.

### **Analysis: While “culture of evaluation” grows, good practice continues to lag**

It may be too early for the upward trend signaled by interview respondents in the field to be reflected in a review of documents, but the candor with which it is discussed and the determination expressed by staff to continue the improvement bodes well for the goal of strengthening M&E at the field level. One is less encouraged, however, upon revisiting past critiques of evaluation of humanitarian action from reviews of years past (such as the “Martigny II: Where are We Now?” paper and the ECHO-UNICEF partnership evaluation report), and concluding that this review cannot provide any empirical evidence that quality has demonstrably improved.

There is little doubt that in many country offices – though by no means all – the quality of consultants available for hire constitutes a major problem. For purposes of ensuring independence, UNICEF aims to use external consultants whenever possible, and for purposes of local capacity-building as well as utilizing regional expertise and cultural familiarity, local or regional consultants are preferred to internationals. In cases of humanitarian crisis or instability, moreover, the scarcity of qualified individuals to recruit for these consultancies becomes more pronounced. Nearly every interviewee could recall a case where the office settled for second best (or worse) to get the work underway. (In some cases, one respondent noted, qualified individuals are in enormous demand and tend to accept multiple overlapping assignments, so even if they are capable of the highest quality work, they may not have time to do each evaluation justice.) UNICEF and other agencies commonly use government workers or university professionals for evaluation consultants. However, as one UNICEF staff member pointed out, a good academic researcher does not necessarily make a good evaluator. The methodological and management aspect of evaluation, and presenting the findings clearly in a way that facilitates decision making, require a special set of skills, and some interviewees admitted to frequent disappointment with the ultimate product.

UNICEF could partly ameliorate this particular problem with stronger evaluation management and oversight, and some would suggest that this is precisely the role of M&E staff. A good evaluation, it scarcely needs mentioning, begins with a well designed Terms of Reference. The TORs in all instances must themselves meet and make reference to the accepted standards, be detailed and thorough, go through an iterative process between the initiator and the evaluator(s) that ultimately reflects the shared understanding and direct input of the evaluator(s), and be attached to the final product. The TOR will be especially important in fleshing out the scope and focus of the evaluation in a case where the project/programme itself has been hastily planned and implemented, perhaps with ill-defined objectives, or otherwise falling short of RBM requirements. Finally regarding UNICEF's evaluation management, one respondent estimated that quality would improve significantly if UNICEF made clear and rigorously applied a policy of refusing to pay for substandard work.

While most interviewees expressed satisfaction with the Evaluation Standards and found them of good practical use, at least one respondent complained that they have become "overstuffed" to the point where it becomes overwhelming and confusing to the consultants. In this country office the M&E staff prefer to boil down the standards in the TOR, lest the exercise become less of a substantive and analytical evaluation and more a superficial, pro forma process of due diligence ("ticking boxes" in the staff member's words) to ensure everything is covered.

It bears mentioning that assessments of evaluations will naturally differ between the Evaluation Office in HQ and the Country Offices. While technical quality and methodological soundness will be emphasized by the Evaluation Office, for managers at the country level the bottom line of the value of an evaluation will be the usefulness of recommendations in future programming. This explains why in two cases found in this review, evaluations that received a "low-satisfactory" rating on grounds of quality criteria were nonetheless reported by the country office as having been highly useful.

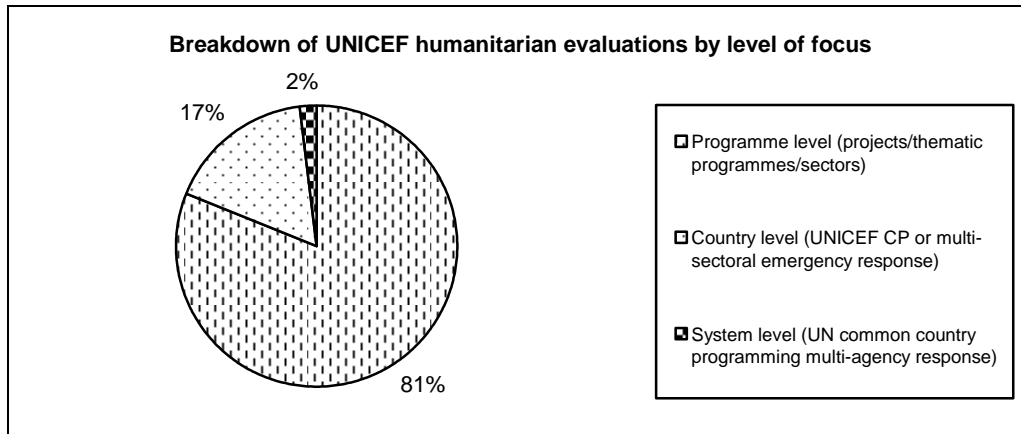
Of all the evaluation criteria included in the Standards, the one most universally lacking and least likely to effect overall quality of the evaluation was the ethics standard. This may be explained in part because it is new, but likely also to be seen as vague and taken as a given by evaluators and programme officers alike.

[NB: It may not be useful to emphasize the fact that no evaluations received the rating on "excellent/model evaluation," as this represents not so much a hard benchmark as an ideal to strive toward. Evaluation Office staff report that no evaluation — humanitarian or otherwise — has yet received this rating.]

#### **4.2.4 Scope and subject matter**

##### **Findings: Majority of the evaluations focused on the level of projects/programmes, and did not fully reflect organizational priorities**

The great majority (81%) of evaluations reviewed (excluding assessments and background reports) took a narrow focus, examining a particular UNICEF-supported project, thematic programme, or sector within a country. A much smaller portion (17%) dealt with UNICEF's programming or general emergency response at a countrywide level (examples include the Somalia CPE of 2002, and the evaluations of UNICEF's responses to the emergencies in Darfur, Iraq, and Liberia), only one document (2%) took as its focus the broadest, or system-wide, level that evaluates the international humanitarian response to a particular humanitarian crisis as a whole, and was prepared as joint inter-agency effort. This was the Evaluation of the Response to the 2002-03 Emergency in Ethiopia, to which UNICEF contributed background evaluations and other input.



One may conclude from these findings that UNICEF’s organizational goals of greater focus on strategic, country-level evaluations (MTSP 2002-2005) and increased participation “in joint thematic evaluations with United Nations and other partners” (2006-2009) are not yet reflected in practice.

In addition, the review found that the proportional representation of evaluation subjects did not correspond with certain UNICEF programming priorities in emergencies. Specifically, the area of child protection - one of the five Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies as well as one of the five MTSP priority areas – was under-represented. The majority of documents (including evaluations, assessments and background reports) consisted of straightforward operational issues in mine risk education, WES, health and psychosocial support. Only two thematic evaluations<sup>43</sup> focused specifically on protection or on Children Affected by Armed Conflict, which includes emphasis on protection and rights.

Staff seemed to express the sense that the newer programming areas of CAAC, child protection and rights lacked sufficient methodological tools and know-how to produce an effective evaluation, but could not give definitive reasons for why more of these types of activities were not represented in the evaluation database. Priorities for choosing evaluation subjects, though intended to be guided by the MTSP priorities, in reality seem to have more to do with path dependence and project cycles (staff tend to plan evaluations at the end of longer-running projects in order to re-direct activities, renew funding, or close out) and perceived “doability.”

Finally, none of the humanitarian-related evaluations supported by UNICEF focused specifically on the efficacy of strategies for humanitarian advocacy (as opposed to the narrower realm of communications and media relations).

### **Analysis: weak demand driver for strategic evaluations**

The OECD/DAC defines the possible of levels of evaluations as follows:

- System-wide – whole system response to particular emergency
- Partial System – sectoral or thematically-focused evaluation of system response
- Single agency - overall response of one agency
- Single project

<sup>43</sup> These were the 2002 joint DFID/SIDA/UNICEF Review of the UNICEF Children Affected by Armed Conflict Programme in Sri Lanka, and the 2003 evaluation of UNICEF-Supported Child Protection Bodies (LPAs) in Indonesia. Seven other non-evaluations (assessments and background papers) centered on CAAC and protection as well

UNICEF policy and planning documents, following in the spirit of UN reform efforts, have repeatedly emphasized the widest of the lenses – country and system – as a priority for the focus of future evaluations. It is particularly important in the context of humanitarian response to major emergencies, in that effective coordination of the numerous humanitarian actors on the scene is vital for achieving positive outcomes. Humanitarian practitioners have also identified the need for increased and regular system-wide evaluations, to identify mandate gaps, and counterproductive overlaps. No significant progress toward realizing this goal in evaluation practice is evidenced by the evaluation of humanitarian action portfolio at UNICEF to date.

The few evaluations reviewed here that did take a broader focus were driven by central level (HQ) initiatives, in strong partnership with (or at the specific request of) a major donor. As the decentralized system of evaluation in UNICEF normally functions, evaluation is driven by country office and sub-country office interests, most typically by programme officers who wish to take stock of past efforts in a specific project or programming area in order to inform upcoming plans, and/or to use as an advocacy tool with governments. As such, the level of focus will naturally – and appropriately - tend toward the narrow and project based, as opposed to broad and strategic. Increased demand for strategic level evaluations, it would seem, would therefore need to be driven from a higher level, a strategic function perhaps best situated at the Regional Office level.

#### **4.2.5 Impact and strategic use**

##### **Findings: Follow-up uneven in many cases, unknown in others**

The UNEG norm regarding intentionality calls for the evaluating agency to demonstrate “clear intent to use evaluation findings,” and the standard on follow-up states “there should be systematic follow-up on the implementation of the evaluations recommendations that have been accepted.” UNICEF management has also taken on board the recommendations of the meta-evaluation report to systematize follow-up, as stated in the September 2004 Plan of Action to Strengthen Evaluation, which calls for “clear accountabilities for the country office response to evaluations,” as well as a stronger Regional Management Team role in articulating the demand for, prioritizing, and managing the response to evaluations.<sup>44</sup>

Most Country Office staff interviewed reported good results for follow-up when stakeholders’ meetings were held around the evaluations’ findings to decide which recommendations would be carried forward and who will be responsible. Even in the aftermath of a poor quality evaluation, as one staff member reported, a stakeholders’ meeting can be a useful forum for discussing the key issues of a program (and in terms of improving the evaluation process.) While clearly useful, ad hoc stakeholders’ meetings are not a sufficient means to ensure follow-through.

The review found serious weaknesses in the follow-up to evaluation, beginning within the evaluation documents themselves. As mentioned above, nearly a quarter of the evaluations were unclear as to the author’s name and/or affiliation, making it difficult to ascertain whether it was an external consultant, an implementing partner, or staff member that prepared the document. Rarer still (to non-existent) was contact information for the manager or point person for the evaluation at UNICEF. Only a few documents contained the quite helpful addition of the name and/or title of the evaluation’s primary initiator, which not only makes transparent the demand and plans for the undertaking, but also signifies the fact of someone taking responsibility for the product and its follow-through. Unfortunately most of the documents displayed the customary lack of subject and active verbs that characterizes so many official reports, particularly when describing the origins (e.g. “it was felt that an evaluation would be beneficial.”) This type of language gives the impression that evaluations emerge organically among various stakeholders, and no driver can be determined.

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<sup>44</sup> UNICEF, “Plan of Action to Strengthen Evaluation,” Evaluation Committee, September 2004, 2.

Another weakly met standard in the evaluation was found in the purpose, context and timing - the “why, why now, and how” the evaluation is intended to be used. Over half of the evaluations (48) did not include the original terms of reference either within the document or as an appendix. Moreover, the summary of evaluation objectives, if included, was generally too vague to meet the standard of explaining why it was deemed important that the evaluation take place at that time, and what the envisaged use of the findings would be. Interviews seldom produced clear answers to questions about strategic intent and ultimate impact of past evaluations, since, as one staff member said, staff turnover is such that “if the evaluation is a few years old chances are no one will be around who had any part in it.”

### **Analysis: Systems lacking for follow-up**

Needless to say, performing a good quality evaluation is only the first step. The lessons then have to be absorbed, taken forward, and implemented in practice before organizational learning can be said to have occurred. As mentioned previously, the humanitarian sector in general has a poor track record of translating lessons learned into policy and practice in a timely fashion. The process of evaluation itself can help in this area, by first taking stock of past evaluations and their outcome: “evaluations play an invaluable monitoring role in revealing where past lessons have or have not over time been translated into changed practice.”<sup>45</sup>

An ALNAP study entitled *Follow-up to Evaluation of Humanitarian Action* found that effective follow-up to evaluations was facilitated in those organizations that promoted ownership over outcomes and established procedures for follow-up; where the demand for evaluations followed a strategic logic that identified and exploited windows of opportunity in terms of timing and choice of subject; where senior leadership explicitly supports and tracks the process, and where the findings of the evaluation are disseminated in innovative and diverse ways.<sup>46</sup> UNICEF evaluation could stand to improve in each of these areas. In general, Country Office staff members observe that the emphasis at UNICEF is considerably more weighted towards planning activities than to follow-up. A recent review commissioned jointly by UNICEF’s Division of Policy and Planning and the Evaluation Office found that “past achievements and lessons were not specifically linked to the new programme or used in advocacy for improving legislation or facilitating policy formulation.”<sup>47</sup> The area of senior leadership engagement or “ownership” again suggests a potentially stronger role for the Regional Office. Currently evaluations flow up through regional office, but the level of leadership engagement seems dependent on personalities. In one region, the regional office has stepped in very actively to improve and strategize around evaluations to very positive effect, according to one country office in the region.

When institutional memory is lacking, as witnessed in country offices with high turnover, tracking systems become especially important. Evaluations that focus on strategic level issues with generalizable lessons learned will be relevant for a longer time than project-specific analyses, yet without a mechanism for retaining and following through on them, the same lessons - as often happens throughout the humanitarian sector - will need to be relearned again and again. The UNICEF Evaluation Office is developing a system to track follow-up to recommendations in evaluations and other reports as per the Plan of Action endorsed by the Evaluation Committee. UNICEF internal audits and country office self-assessments could be used to monitor and facilitate compliance with follow-up responsibilities and test the efficiency of the mechanisms for doing so.

In addition to holding country offices and regional offices accountable for evaluation response, it would be beneficial to establish as part of this system an “evaluation history” to be provided to evaluators at the start of their assignments. This would amount to an ongoing compilation of past findings/recommendations and subsequent decisions on a particular evaluation subject. Evaluators would remain completely free to conduct their own research and reach their own conclusions, but this tool would ensure

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<sup>45</sup> ALNAP 2002 Annual Review.

<sup>46</sup> Van de Putte, *Follow-up to Evaluation of Humanitarian Action* ALNAP 2001, 15.

<sup>47</sup> Miguel Salas, “Improving the Quality of Programme Planning Process for Results,” New York: UNICEF Division of Policy and Planning, June 2005, 19.

that they would not be starting from a blank slate when it came to recommending the strategic follow-through.

At the Country Office level, UNICEF staff members seem to associate successful follow-up most directly with the level of engagement of stakeholders. As one reported, sometimes stakeholder participation is reduced to just a formal committee that meets once or twice, yet this is still preferable to the evaluations that proceed in “splendid isolation.” UNICEF evaluation managers in the field have an important responsibility to actively seek out partners and commentators for the evaluation, as this is not something that is within the specific scope of work or general inclination of the evaluators themselves.

As a final observation, several staff members noted the tendency (by no means unique to UNICEF) of stronger follow-up to and dissemination of positive evaluations, while negative findings were given a much lower profile. Interviewees suggested that a good system of follow-up will entail the means for examining and acting on the “hard truths.” This too echoes the DPP report, which observed, “From reading the lessons learned listed, we may be inclined to infer that no major problems were faced during past programme implementation, which is very unlikely to be the case. Negative lessons were properly reported in very few instances.”<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION OF THE POSSIBLE ROLE OF CPE IN EVALUATION OF HUMANITARIAN ACTION**

### **5.1 Overview of evaluation of humanitarian action in UNICEF**

The above findings point to certain areas of weakness in the evaluation function, particularly as concerns programming in the emergency or unstable contexts. UNICEF's key strengths in evaluation of humanitarian action include the consistently demonstrated commitment by senior leadership to promote a culture of evaluation and learning, the willingness to invest organizational resources to meet this goal, and the widespread acceptance and growing determination of field staff to strengthen the evaluation function.

This commitment is further demonstrated in several ongoing initiatives to strengthen monitoring and evaluation of UNICEF programming in situations of humanitarian crisis and instability. These include adapting existing tools for evaluation planning (IMEP) and training courses; strengthening the practice and utilization of real-time evaluations, and establishing indicators for measuring performance against the CCCs. These initiatives, once fully implemented, stand to significantly enhance UNICEF evaluation of humanitarian action by directly addressing some of the critical gaps discussed in this review. Adapting mainstream mechanisms to the exigencies of humanitarian contexts and increasing numbers of real-time evaluations will help provide the means to break out of the mindset that has hindered evaluation in unstable contexts (the notion of evaluations requiring long lead times, government partners, and general stability). The CCC indicators, which will formally integrate or at least make explicit reference to the Sphere standards, provide an important set of tools with which will improve the prioritization of and capacity for evaluations on issues crucial to humanitarian action. They will also include a clear set of indicators to assess programming that is central to UNICEF's mandate but is not much evaluated, such as protection for children against violence and exploitation.

None of the above initiatives, however, directly addresses another critical gap, namely the limited evaluation activity at the strategic and policy level (though the use of RTE in acute emergency phases could assist in this regard). While the CCC indicators are poised to improve the comprehensiveness and relevance of evaluations, they too will center mainly on project/programme level outcomes and will not address UNICEF programming as a whole, and where it fits in with the efforts of other key humanitarian actors.

The sub-country programme focus of most UNICEF evaluations has partly to do with the organization's approach that vests responsibility for evaluations at the country office level, as opposed to many organizations that centralize the function at headquarters. UNICEF values the decentralized nature of its evaluation function as it stands better able to serve the needs of decision makers in the field. It is possible to keep the "country demand driven" approach and still achieve the goals of strategic level evaluations by injecting additional demand and management responsibility at the next level upward. The principle of subsidiarity would hold that the Regional Office level - if this link could be strengthened - would be the best situated to more actively prompt and guide strategic level evaluations at the country level, apart from conducting thematic evaluations across countries related to their regional strategies. In this regard this review echoes the conclusions of the meta-evaluation, Executive Board decisions, and statements of the Evaluation Committee, all of which have called for a stronger, more proactive role for the regional office in evaluation.

### **5.2 Potential value-added of CPE in evaluation of humanitarian action**

In an elaboration of the original terms of reference for this review, the reviewer was asked to "define the potential role of CPE in the context of UNICEF's emerging system of evaluation of the humanitarian system." This section discusses how the CPE tool could potentially add value at the levels of the organization and the UN system as a whole with regard to filling the gaps identified in UNICEF's evaluation of humanitarian action.

CPE has been seen in UNICEF as an important value-added since at least the early 1990s<sup>49</sup> but has not been systematized and fully integrated into programming. Since 2000, UNICEF's PPPM has recommended that an externally facilitated Country Programme level evaluation be undertaken following a major humanitarian crisis that would examine, among other things, the appropriateness of the overall UNICEF response in the country and UNICEF's facilitation of and engagement in interagency coordination. In 2003 an Executive Board renewed its call for CPE. The decision noted the preponderance of project-level and the relative lack of strategic-level evaluations, and the accountability deficit that resulted for UNICEF in terms of demonstrating the broader impacts of its country programming on the lives of children and women.

The ongoing CPE Methodology and Guidance Project is developing tools and piloting CPE exercises in selected country offices. As the project goes forward it may consider some particular areas of humanitarian relevance that CPE might address. For instance, the PPPM and the Evaluation Committee's Action Plan both note that CPE can be used to inform the priority questions of decision-makers. The PPPM identifies some of the principal questions that CPE can help inform, two of which are paraphrased below:

- At the broadest level, is the CP focusing on the right issues? Specifically, the key issues for children's and women's rights?"
- Is the positioning of UNICEF support appropriate, in relation to the support from other partners addressing similar issues?

As regards the first question, certain issues arise or take on new urgency in humanitarian relief and transitional contexts. These include child protection, prevention of sexual exploitation, CAAC, and juvenile justice. These issues speak directly to UNICEF's mandate for taking a rights-based approach to programming to address the most critical issues affecting children, as reflected in the CCCs, MTSP, and elsewhere. Acknowledging that tools for evaluating these types of programs still need to be further developed, and staff provided with technical guidance, the under-representation of this programming in evaluation signals the need to bring these areas more sharply into focus. CPE could potentially serve this role at the policy level. A final question relates to advocacy and human rights promotion efforts— an area that has been flagged repeatedly as needing increased strength and clarity. Additionally, evaluations can and are used as advocacy tools vis-à-vis political actors, but cannot advocacy efforts themselves be evaluated to help inform more effective strategy? Such a question pertains directly to policy strategy and would inherently need to be taken up at the country-wide level. As such, it is another potential area where CPE could provide the impetus and the mechanism for examining what is now an under-examined component of UNICEF's work.

The second question has particular salience for the humanitarian context, where effective coordination between assistance actors is especially vital, and potential mandate gaps can have dire consequences. An evaluation looking at systemic features of the response can help UNICEF identify those gaps where it might then step in to fill unmet needs.

The third question, regarding the sustainability and replicability of successful models emerging from the Country Programme, highlights the potential usefulness of CPE in facilitating a longer-term strategic view of the value of UNICEF programming as the country in question transitions between emergency and recovery phases, and an assessment of its relevance in other country scenarios. A January 2005 report by Ted Freeman entitled "Country Programme Evaluation in an Era of Change" posited that CPE could be especially useful as an additional tool for evaluation when there has been a significant change in the country of operation – a policy development or other change in conditions affecting children, a change in available resources that creates new opportunities or challenges, or a new opportunity for organizational learning. A number of the conclusions of the Freeman report can apply to humanitarian and transitional contexts. In these scenarios the "change" is more dramatic – a sudden disaster, say, or a political

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<sup>49</sup> E/ICEF/1993/14

transition from peace to war or vice-versa. The report also emphasized CPE as a potentially effective way of more strategically advancing the human rights based approach to programming.

The following are potential ways in which a systematic use of CPE could enhance the strategic direction, accountability, and organizational learning of UNICEF humanitarian programming.

### 5.2.1 Organizational level

- **Injecting demand and providing leadership for strategic-level evaluations** – Structural responsibility at the regional level is an important component of the Country Programme Evaluation methodology currently under development. Because CPE is “externally facilitated,” i.e. supported and partly led from above the Country Office level, and because it is strategically focused, it would essentially boost the now limited demand for programme level evaluations. A CPE mechanism would create the driver for ensuring the country office addresses strategic level issues. As well as regional office or RMT initiation and management responsibility, CPE would likely in many cases bring technical and management support from HQ. In this way, it both strengthens the link between the regional and country offices and facilitates the senior leadership engagement that past studies (both of UNICEF and generally) have deemed so crucial for follow-through on organizational learning.

### 5.2.2 Inter-agency/humanitarian community

- **Assessing UNICEF’s performance in coordination with partners, filling mandate gaps, and exploiting its comparative advantage** - In recent years UNICEF has been an active facilitator of interagency coordination in humanitarian response and on many occasions has stepped forward to fill critical operational and mandate gaps – even in areas for which it is not traditionally associated (e.g. security, civil administration support). A country programme level evaluation could contribute to this role by assessing the relevance of UNICEF programming vis-à-vis the other parts of the system, and gauging the organization’s success in positioning its work to the optimal benefit of the beneficiary population.
- **Bringing rights issues forward** - UNICEF’s policy commitment in humanitarian and transitional scenarios to protecting children and advancing their rights has proven among the most difficult to achieve in practice. The Freeman report argues that CPE would be useful in assessing human rights based approaches of itself and other agencies and potentially strengthening strategic thinking related to the human rights promotion. As one of the major operational agencies engaged in humanitarian response, UNICEF also has a broad cross-cutting mandate for protecting the rights of the victims of wars and disasters through its assistance programming, therefore finds itself in the position to take on this leading role.

### 5.2.3 UN-wide context

- **Working effectively within integrated missions while preserving humanitarian imperative and space** – Increasingly, the UN response to transitional/post-conflict situations will be in the form of integrated missions, where the UN humanitarian, political, and peacekeeping actors will be expected to closely coordinate their operations under a single coherent strategy. Many humanitarian practitioners, in particular NGOs, have raised serious concerns about the integrated mission framework, warning that it threatens to subordinate vital humanitarian concerns to political agendas. A CPE approach that looks at broad strategic and coordination questions could potentially flag these issues and help ensure that humanitarian priorities are not compromised.

## 5.2.4 Other issues to consider

- **Partners:** In the non-emergency model, evaluation protocol calls for full participation of national governmental authorities. In complex humanitarian emergencies there often are no formal government figures with which to partner. In post-conflict transitions the fledgling or recovering government is typically stretched beyond the capacity to participate fully in such exercises. The development frame of thinking about evaluation that is still evident in conversations with many field staff members. It has hindered evaluation in emergencies or rapidly changing contexts because staff feel there is inadequate time or stability to perform an evaluation in the traditional sense. Just as UNICEF must shift its program orientation when crisis strikes (especially complex political emergencies) its modes of evaluation need to change as well. The heavy planning and reporting (though not always analytical and evaluative) tasks of a UNICEF country office in a stable country may need to give way in emergencies, but evaluation should not be put off. Moreover in these situations the CPE model must be able to adapt to the local of governmental partners and shift instead to their partners such as other UN agencies and IFIs.
- **Resources:** Strengthening evaluation, particularly in the key shortfall area of strategic policy, will unavoidably require the infusion of additional staff resources – always a difficult decision when weighed against necessary programming inputs. M&E capacity at the country office and particularly the regional office level would need to be increased in order to systematically institute County Programme Evaluation. Additional M&E staff, moreover, should not be read as simply more people, but more experienced and trained M&E personnel, ideally with both program and evaluation in their background.
- **CPE vs. RTE:** The consensus among specialists in evaluation of humanitarian action is that staff should ideally be equipped to undertake evaluation in the midst of a response to an emergency. Rapid onset emergencies such as the South Asian tsunami are rare, but the first days, weeks, and months are vital, and the types of interventions performed during that acute phase are necessarily different from longer-term humanitarian relief and transitional aid, and warrant evaluation on their own terms. In establishing institutional criteria for deciding which methodology to use, it may make sense to favor RTE for acute emergency relief and CPE for longer-term humanitarian relief and transitional contexts. The CPE methodology, however, will still require the flexibility to compress evaluation timeframes and account for rapid changes.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

To and inform the ongoing CPE Methodology Development and Guidance Project, the review offers the following recommendations:

### ***Organizational action to address strategic shortcomings in evaluation (Headquarters and Regional Office)***

1. Systematize and regularize evaluations at the country programme level that examine UNICEF humanitarian action from a strategic and policy standpoint, particularly vis-à-vis the organization's role in the broader humanitarian response.
2. Strengthen the responsibility and capacity of Regional Offices to initiate, coordinate, and manage support for these evaluations.
3. Establish guidance and criteria for selecting the appropriate methodology for strategic level evaluations according to the context.
4. Consider policies that would counsel the use of real time evaluation during the acute emergency phase and CPE during longer-term emergency and transitional phases
5. Identify and programme additional resources to increase M&E staffing at both regional and country levels.

### ***Accountability, oversight, and support issues (Headquarters and Regional Office)***

6. Enhance the transparency and accountability of country offices for follow-through of accepted recommendations and lessons-learned through the audit mechanism and expand the evaluation submission process to include plans/steps taken for follow-through. (Evaluation office).
7. Establish and maintain links with government, universities, think tanks, non-governmental organizations and other appropriate sources in order to be able to provide country offices with updates and suggestions for staffing potential evaluation assignments. (Regional Office Monitoring & Evaluation staff)

### ***Technical and management issues (Country Office)***

8. Feed all major evaluations and studies of acceptable quality into the centrally managed Evaluation Database
9. Encourage evaluation teams to include the review of previous evaluations and studies that are relevant for the project, programme or thematic subject to be evaluated as part of the evaluation approach and methodology
10. Ensure all evaluation consultants are provided with and understand their responsibility for meeting UNICEF's Evaluation Report Standards. (Monitoring & Evaluation staff)

# ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE

## CPE METHODOLOGY AND GUIDANCE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT — DOCUMENT REVIEW EVALUATION OF HUMANITARIAN ACTION

### 1. Background and context of the CPE Project

Since February 2003, the Evaluation Office in NYHQ has implemented the Country Programme Evaluation (CPE) Methodology and Guidance Development Project, which will in principle come to an end in January 2006. The purpose of the project was *to strengthen and systematize evaluation of country programmes in line with UNICEF's Medium Term Strategic Plan and recommendations of the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities of the United Nations System*. The project document describes the project as follows: *The project will serve UNICEF's goal stated in the Medium Term Strategic Plan (2002-2005) to make Country Programmes of Cooperation more effective in terms of focus, implementation strategies and coordination within UNDAF and with other development partners. Well-designed and well-coordinated country programmes will be based on principles of management excellence (human rights based approach to programming approach and results-based management) and equipped with adequate project / programme development, monitoring and evaluation tools (Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan – IMEP).*

The project has so far followed a two-pronged strategy, the results of which will eventually feed into CPE methodology and guidance development during the second half of 2005:

- At the field level, several pilot CPEs have been conducted in close cooperation with Regional Offices. In addition to CPE exercises conducted by the Evaluation Office before the start of the project (Pacific Island Countries and Mauritius), such evaluations have so far been implemented in Peru, Morocco, Cambodia and Afghanistan. The project also made an active contribution to the design of the Joint Strategy Review Tanzania, which was entirely an initiative of the Government of Tanzania and the United Nations Country Team. The main focus of the exercise was the assessment of the UN's contribution to the PRSP. Another CPE is presently scheduled to take place in Cote d'Ivoire.
- At HQ level, a comprehensive document and website review was conducted of country programme level evaluation activities of all major external support agencies (bilateral donors, international financial institutions, UN funds, programmes and agencies, UNICEF itself and possibly major NGOs). A major activity was research as to how to evaluate the Human Rights Based Approach to Programming (HRBAP) within CPE. Insights into the integration of HRBAP and evaluation and the possible place of CPE in wider contexts (UNDAF, PRSP etc.) were drawn together in one major staff working paper on "CPE as part of HRBAP: an effective strategy in an era of change", which is ready for publication. In 2004, the Evaluation Office hosted a Global meeting of M&E Officers, during which a whole day was dedicated to CPE. The Evaluation Office is presently preparing a follow-up project to strengthen M&E capacities at regional and country levels.

The project has largely followed a field based "learning by doing" approach. Among all pilot CPE, two cases (Afghanistan and the forthcoming exercise in Cote d'Ivoire) specifically focus on humanitarian action scenarios. Like all other pilot CPEs they are monitored by specific lessons learned exercises. There is, however, also a need to situate CPE as a potential evaluation strategy in the total picture of Monitoring and Evaluation of Humanitarian Action in UNICEF, for which it is proposed to conduct a comprehensive document review.

### 2. Strengthening M&E related to humanitarian action

At present, there are already several initiatives to strengthen M&E related to humanitarian action in unstable contexts and emergencies. These include:

- Adaptation of mainstream tools (e.g. IMEP, M&E training course, RBM in EPRP tools and training);
- Performance indicators and benchmarks for response following from the Core Corporate Commitments (Tsunami and more general);
- Development of Real-Time Evaluations under the second phase of the DFID funded Capacity-Building Project.

Country and Regional Offices as well as New York Headquarters have also conducted a series of evaluations of humanitarian action, either on specific aspects (e.g. landmines, psychosocial support, child soldiers) or on a more general level (e.g. Iraq, Darfur, Liberia, Iran, inter-agency cooperation).

### **3. Objectives of a document review of existing evaluations**

As part of the exploration of a possible role for Country Programme Evaluations, it is useful to undertake a document review concerning existing evaluations on humanitarian action. The specific objectives of the present document review as a preparatory exercise for CPE methodology and guidance development are to:

- Assess context of approximately 80 existing evaluations on humanitarian action conducted by Country and Regional Offices as well as by New York Headquarters, i.e. identify where the demand for respective evaluations came from and what they were expected to achieve as well as involvement of external stakeholders, including national partners;
- Assess quality of these evaluations against Evaluation Standards of the American Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (AJCSEE) and UNICEF's Evaluation Report Standards
- To the extent possible, assess follow-up to the evaluations and the use of findings and recommendations in decision-making by UNICEF and other stakeholders, especially in respective Country Programmes of Cooperation.

The review should allow identification of good practices of strategic evaluations that were actually used in Mid-Term Reviews of Country Programmes of Cooperation and/or the preparation of new Country Programmes. The exercise may also result in the identification of gaps and short-comings that a CPE approach could address.

### **4. Key issues to be addressed by the review**

The document review will assess approximately 80 evaluations related to humanitarian action in unstable contexts and emergencies that are available in UNICEF's Evaluation Database. Key issues that will be considered in the review are, for example:

- Who initiated the evaluation and how was its purpose defined? To what extent were national stakeholders (government, NGOs, civil society) involved in the initiative and design? What was the involvement of other UN agencies and / or of other external aid agencies?
- To what extent and in what ways are AJCSEE standards respected and adhered to in the evaluations (utility, feasibility, propriety, accuracy)?
- How do the evaluations compare to UNICEF's Evaluation Report Standards?
- What references are there in the evaluations to the Country Programme Process, notably MTR and strategy development? What evidence is there that decisions related to on-going or new Country Programmes were informed by or based on the evaluations?

- How are UNICEF's Core Corporate Commitments and its Human-Rights Based Approach to Programming reflected in the evaluations? To what extent and in what ways do the evaluations address basic principles of Results-Based Management (e.g. identification of outputs, outcomes and impact, logical framework approaches etc.)
- To what extent do the evaluations represent examples of good evaluation practice that is well-adapted to performance improvement of humanitarian action? What are possible gaps and shortcomings?
- Given the potential of CPE based on experiences so far, to what extent and in what ways could CPE complete the current evaluation practice and strengthen M&E related to humanitarian action in unstable contexts and emergencies?

The above-mentioned issues are illustrative, rather than exhaustive. In the course of the review, it may be decided through consultations that some issues receive more attention than others or that additional issues should be considered.

## **5. Proposed methods**

The main method will be the systematic perusal of the documents against a checklist that will be designed at the start of the exercise.

The review may be completed by a survey by e-mail to key stakeholders (respective Country and/or Regional Offices, NYHQ Divisions, external agencies and partners) and/or telephone interviews.

The review will result in a comprehensive report, a draft of which will be reviewed by the Evaluation Office before its finalization.

## **6. Organization and management**

The review will be conducted by a senior consultant who will work under the supervision of a Senior Programme Officer in the Evaluation Office of New York Headquarters. Regular consultations will take place between the Evaluation Office and EMOPS during the assignment.

The senior consultant should have the following qualifications:

- A solid research background in the social sciences with a strong emphasis on humanitarian action.
- Familiarity with the UN supported humanitarian action programmes
- Preferably some experience with UNICEF programming processes, especially at the country and regional levels.
- Excellent writing skills in English.

The duration of the assignment will be three months as from 25 April 2005.

LB 15 April 2005.

## ANNEX 2: EVALUATION SURVEY MATRIX

Background, Context and Scope							Quality Factors				Strategic factors (demand and follow-up)				
Country	Date/ Seq. and Title	Sector/ Theme of activity studied	Level	Time-frame: Real time Ongoing Retro Assess Background	Context of activity:	Author/ Org QL- Qualific. listed CI - Contact info	EO Rating: Missing, Poor, Low Satisf., Highly Satisf., Good, Not Rated		Adherence to UNICEF-adopted standard criteria** Rating: Well Met = WM Missing = M Partly Met = PM NA = Not applied		Initiator, purpose, and timing made clear Yes/No	Well supported and actionable Recs for specific project, policy, or plan? Yes/No	Generalized lessons learned Yes/No	Outcome: useful? Recs taken forward? Yes/No / Unknown	Other comments
Afghanistan	2001/001 Review of the Former Soviet Embassy Compound IDP Camp Psychosocial Support Activities	Psycho-social	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Emergency	Partner INGO: SC/US (QL)	2.89	HS	NA	Objectives/ criteria missing because of lost pages	No (vague on why now and what for)	No (recs are mostly general lessons learned)	Yes	Unknown	Project design itself flawed. Lacked ongoing monitoring, and benchmarks/ outcome objectives were identified only when evaluation was undertaken.
Afghanistan	2001/002 Enhancing the role of UNICEF in Landmine Awareness Education in Afghanistan	Mine action	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Background	Emergency	External consultant		NR	NA		Yes (CO)	Yes	No (specific to Afghanistan mine action)	Unknown	Not evaluation but background research. A review of the current (Taliban era) mine awareness activities undertaken by various actors in Afghanistan, gaps, and recommendations for where UNICEF might usefully play a role.
Afghanistan	2003/801 Evaluation of Emergency Supplementary Feeding Programmes	Nutrition	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Emergency	External consultant - Tufts U.	2.51	HS	PM	Missing DAC humanitarian criteria, ethics and HRBAP discussion	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	No author(s) named. Document appears to be a draft, with comments, questions, and concerns

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															inserted by a reviewer or author. Final meant to be completed 1/04?
Afghanistan	2003/802 Evaluation of Therapeutic Feeding Centers	Nutrition	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Assess	Transition	Partner NGO: Care of Afghan Families	NR	P	NA		Yes	No	No	Unknown	Background states: "This is not an emergency programme, but a capacity development programme"
Afghanistan	2003/803 An Epidemic of Scurvy in Afghanistan: Assessment and Response	Health/ Disease control	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Transition	UNICEF, MOH and ACF co-authored article (QL)	2.23	LS	NA		No (article)	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Journal article, not evaluation document. Contains recommendations on micronutrient deficiency early warning system and vitamin C distribution
Angola	2000/001 Mine Awareness Evaluation (Summary of missing longer report)	Mine action	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Emergency	External consultant: CIET for UNICEF, DFAIT		NR	NA	Not in summary- may be reference in longer report	No (*)	No (*)	No(*)	Unknown	
Angola	2000/003 Evaluation of Teacher Emergency Package (TEP) in Angola	Education	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Emergency	External consultant hired by partner (NRC) with UNICEF participation		NR		M	No (except called for by NRC and UNICEF)	Yes	No	Unknown	Questions "emergency" nature of the TEP program - most beneficiaries have lived in are for years. Maybe why humanitarian criteria are unfair in this case.

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															Interview revealed little institutional memory in how these recs were taken forward. CO was unsatisfied because it did not include key data on how many teachers hired or learning achievements of children - too organizational and management focused.
Angola*	2004 RELATÓRIO DO SEMINÁRIO NACIONAL SOBRE A PROTECÇÃO DA CRIANÇA		NA	Background		Unclear (notes from seminar) - Document in Portuguese		NR		N/A					Appears to be write-up of a seminar
Azerbaijan	2000/010 The report about the trainings " Help to children with stress and trauma " conducted by the psychologists with the teachers and tutors working with children - orphans and deprived of parental care	Psycho-social	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Emergency	Missing - Local NGO?	1.26	P	M		No	No	No	No	Four page report without title, author, or any standard evaluation contents
Azerbaijan	2002/003 An External Review of the UNICEF-ANAMA Mine Risk Education Project in Azerbaijan	Mine action	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro		External consultant	2.24	LS	M		No	Yes	No	Unknown	Would not consider this satisfactory
Bosnia	2000/006 External Evaluation of the	Psycho-social	Sector/ Prog. /	Ongoing	Transition	External consultants	1.84	P	M		No	0.5	No	Unknown	Country Office could not

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	Project "Psychosocial Care in Paediatric Wards" of Hospitals in Bosnia and Herzegovina July 1998-September 2000		Proj.			(QL)								report what follow-up there was - staff involved had moved on.	
Bosnia	2000 /008 External Evaluation of the Project Primary Mental Health Care for Children 1996-2000	Psycho-social	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Transition	Unclear (local NGO implementers?)	1.79	P	PM	Missing most of DAC criteria, HRBAP	No	0.5	Yes (though nothing new)	Unknown	Written in the form of a trip report
Bosnia	2000 /009 Evaluation of Program Efficacy: UNICEF School-based Psychosocial Program for War Exposed Adolescents as Implemented During the 1999-2000 School Year	Psycho-social	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Transition	External consultants: UCLA and Brigham Young U. (QL)	2.23	LS	M		No	Yes	No	Unknown	Probably pre-dates practice of requiring DAC criteria
Bosnia	2000/014 Progress Report on Mine Awareness Activities Sponsored by UNICEF	Mine action	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Transition	External consultant	2.15	LS	PM	Only DAC main 4, but perhaps NA, missing discussion of HRBAP and RBM and ethics	.5 (purpose clear, not timing and context)	Yes	No	Unknown	Recs prioritized
Bosnia	2001/001 Evaluation of Psychosocial Project in Primary and Secondary Schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1992-1998	Psycho-social	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Emergency-Transition	External consultants: Center for Crisis Psychology, Oslo (QL, CI)	2.77	HS	PM	Part of DAC main 4 only, discussion of ethics, but HRBAP, RBM not mentioned	No	Yes	No	Unknown	Recs included and sound, but not clearly separated out in text

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Bosnia	2002/008 Evaluation of the UNICEF School-Based Psychosocial Program for War-Exposed Adolescents as Implemented During the 2000-2001 School Year	Psycho-social	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Transition	External consultants: UCLA and Brigham Young U. (QL)	2.49	LS	PM	DAC criteria not explicitly discussed in body of evaluation - no HBRAP, RBM or ethics discussion	.5 (purpose clear, not timing and context)	Yes	Yes	Unknown	
Cambodia	2000/001 UNICEF External Evaluation of Supported Mine Action Projects	Mine action	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Transition	External consultants-affiliation?	3.16	G	WM		No	Yes	No	Yes	Considered very useful by CO. Taken at end of five-year programme during planning for new one. Validated priorities and "helped the project to clarify its goals."
Cambodia	2000/801 Mine and UXO Casualties in Cambodia	Mine action	NA	Background	Transition	Partner (I) NGOs: Handicap I. and Camb. RC (QL)	Not in DB	NR	NA		Yes	NA	NA	Yes	Considered fairly useful but "too extensive for yearly review"
Cambodia	2002/019 External Evaluation of the Pilot Project of Community Based Mine Risk Reduction (CBMRR)	Mine action	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Ongoing	Transition	Partner (I)NGOs: Handicap I. and CMAC	2.43	LS	PM	Main DAC criteria referenced, no HRBAP, RBM, ethics	0.5	Yes	No	No	CO was disappointed in this evaluation and attributes it to evaluators' lack of experience in the field

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Cambodia	2003/011 Child Rights in Post Conflict Areas (Access to Health, Water and Sanitation), Anlong Veang (AV) and Trapeang Prasat (TP) Districts, Otdar Meanchey Province, Cambodia: End of Project Evaluation	CAAC /child rights /protection	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Isolated Crisis	Unclear	1.89	P	PM	Explicit discussion of effectiveness, sustainability and child rights	No (just end-of-project)	Yes (but not prioritized)	No	Unknown	Still in draft form
Chile*	2001/002 Protocolo Facultativo de la Convención sobre Derechos del Niño Relativo a la Participación de Niños en Conflictos Armados y su Eventual Suscripción por el Estado de Chile (Background report and in Spanish)	CAAC /child rights /protection	NA	Background	Disaster	External consultant (QL)		NR	NA						Issues report on the Optional Protocol of the Convention on Rights of the Child relating to the participation of children in armed conflicts and its eventual subscription by the State of Chile
Colombia*	2002/008 La Niñez en el Conflicto Armado (Background report and in Spanish)	CAAC /child rights /protection	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Background	Emergency	Unclear (CO?)		NR	NA						CO publication "Bulletin"
Congo-Brazzaville*	2002 Assistance medicale, nutritionnelle et psychologique aux déplacés du pool a Brazzaville	Psycho-social	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Emergency	Partner NGO: Médecins d'Afrique		NR							

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DR Congo*	2000/804 Utilisation de huit indicateurs de qualite dans le cadre des journees nationales de vaccination contre la polio en rdc, edition 2000	Health	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	retro	Emergency	Unclear: cites joint effort of "PEV-LMTE, UNICEF, OMS, et BASICS."		NR							
DR Congo*	2002/007 Etude exploratoire du niveau de developpement des competences psychosociales chez les jeunes de kinshasa et de mbuji-mayi.	Psycho-social	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Background	Emergency	Unclear: External consultant or MOE official		NR							
DR Congo*	2002/009 File conversion problem - unreadable Leçons apprises de la première expérience de démobilisation des enfants soldats des forces armées gouvernementales à Kinshasa.	Not rated / reviewed as in French	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Background				NR							
DR Congo*	2004/006 Etude sur les alternatives de réunification familiale	Reunification	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Background	Emergency	Unclear: missing title page		NR							
DR Congo	2003/006 Child Recruitment Policy And Practice Within The Armed Forces Of The Mouvement De Libération Du Congo (MIC)	CAAC /child rights /protection	NA	Background	Emergency	External consultant (QL, CI)		NR	NA		0.5	(NI)	(NI)	Unknown	Not clear how UNICEF viewed this assignment strategically vis-à-vis its programme
Ethiopia	2002/019 Overview of Protection and Reintegration Issues in Post-Conflict Environment	Protection Re-integration	NA	Background	Transition	External consultant		NR	NA		Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	

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Ethiopia	2003/042 RADO MRE Project Evaluation	Mine awareness	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Transition	Internal evaluation of partner project	2.26	LS	PM	Main DAC criteria and RBM referenced, no HRBAP, ethics	1	Yes	No		
Ethiopia	2003/010 Woreda Based Emergency Water Supply And Environmental Health Situation Assessment In Afar Region	WES	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Assess	Isolated Crisis	Unclear (UNICEF and MOWR)		NR							
Ethiopia	2003/011 Emergency Water Supply and Environmental Health Situation Assessment in Amhara Region	WES	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Assess	Isolated Crisis	Unclear (UNICEF and MOWR)		NR							
Ethiopia	2003/012 Assessment - Oromiya Region	WES	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Assess	Isolated Crisis	Unclear (UNICEF and MOWR)		NR	NA						
Ethiopia	2003/13 Assessment - SNNP Region	WES	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Assess	Isolated Crisis	Unclear (UNICEF and MOWR)		NR	NA						
Ethiopia	2003/28 Rapid Assessment on emergency education	Education	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Assess	Isolated Crisis	Unclear (appears to be external consultant)		NR	NA		No (who imitated?)				
Ethiopia	2004/003 Mine Risk Education Needs assessment survey	Mine awareness	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Assess		External consultants		NR	NA		1				
Ethiopia	2004/009 Evaluation of the response to the 2002-03 Emergency in Ethiopia	Emergency Responses	Systemic	Retro	Isolated Crisis	External consultants: Joint govt and agency evaluations (QL)	0.61	NR	PM-WM	Not explicitly referenced as evaluation criteria but mostly covered in text	No (donor-driven, but this is not made clear)	Yes		Yes	Held up as model by CO "Quality of that evaluation was rare. Participation of all regions, ministries, NGOs. Recommendations we're bold and clear. It was

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															obvious which ones were specific to UNICEF to carry forward. Funded by Canada and US. Doesn't happen every day."
Ethiopia	2004/011 UNICEF Emergency Response in Ethiopia 2003: Support of a participatory learning process	Emergency Responses	CP level or Country-wide Emerg. Response	Retro	Isolated Crisis	External consultants: Tufts, Columbia, CDC		NR	NA		Yes	Yes		Yes	Report of 3-day workshop that fed into larger evaluation - all fed into MTR
Ethiopia	2004/28 Ethiopia - Review of emergency preparedness and response for MTR	Emergency Preparedness & Response	CP level or Country-wide Emerg. Response	Retro	Isolated Crisis	Unclear: CO?		NR	NA						Summary report of larger evaluation for lessons specific to UNICEF
Guinea	2002 Report of DFID/UNICEF Joint Field Review with Special Focus on Preparedness Planning	Emergency Preparedness	CP level or Countrywide Emerg. Response	Retro	Emergency	Joint DFID UNICEF team	Not in DB	M	NA	Not evaluation (but humanitarian considerations covered)	Yes	Yes	NA	Unknown	Report of field visit
Guinea*	2002/003 Etude des consequences des conflits armes sur les conditions de vie des femmes et des enfants	CAAC/ child rights/ protection	NA	Background	Emergency	Unclear: CO?		NR	NA						
Haiti*	2004 Rapid Assessment of impact of political crisis on children (Fr.)	CAAC/child rights /protection	CP level or Country-wide Emerg. Respondr	Assess	Emergency	Unclear: CO?		NR	NA						In french, no title page/author

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Honduras*	2002/801 Mecanismos de Adaptación y Respuesta de las Familias en Comunidades Afectadas por las Sequias Recurrentes en la zona sur del Honduras	Needs assessment/ baseline study	CP level or Country-wide Emerg. Response	Assess	Isolated Crisis	Unclear		NR	NA						
India	2002/800 Report on Appreciative Assessment of Psychosocial Interventions in Gujarat	Psycho-social	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Isolated Crisis	External consultants (QL)	2.49	LS	PM	Missing discussion of HRBAP, most DAC criteria	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	CO is quite happy with this evaluation and has made use of it. Lessons carried over to tsunami response
Indonesia	2002/006 Evaluation Report Program Pendidikan Damai (Peace Education Program)	Peace-building	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Ongoing	Emergency	External consultant	2.31	LS	PM	Nearly everything covered, not explicitly or rationale for what not used, no ethics discussion	No	Yes (but not prioritized)	No	Unknown	
Indonesia	2003/008 Psychosocial Interventions: Evaluation of UNICEF-Supported Projects	Psycho-social	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Emergency	External consultant	2.78	HS	PM-WM		No	0.5	Yes	Unknown	
Indonesia	2003/023 Ext Evaluation of UNICEF-Supported Child Protection Bodies LPAs	CAAC /child rights /protection	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Ongoing	Emergency	External consultant:	2.6	HS	PM	Covers main DAC criteria but weak on humanitarian issues and HR for this topic	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	
Iraq	2004/800 Evaluation of UNICEF Emerg. Preparedness and Early Response in Iraq (September 2001-June 2003)	Emergency Preparedness &Response	CP level or Country-wide Emerg. Response	Retro	Emergency	Internal (CI - EO)	3.2	G	WM	But no discussion of ethics	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	

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Jamaica	2002/002 GOJ/UNICEF Child-friendly Disaster Response Assessment	Emergency Responses	NA	Assess	Isolated Crisis	External consultant (CI)		NR	NA						
Kenya	2005/800 Hygiene and sanitation promotion, water filter distribution	WES	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Isolated Crisis	Internal (CO)		NR	M		No	Yes	No	Unknown	
Kosovo	2001/800 UNICEF Preparedness and Response in the 1999 Kosovo Refugee Emergency	Emergency Preparedness & Response	CP level or Country-wide Emerg. Response	Retro	Emergency	Joint DFID UNICEF team	2.44	LS	PM-WM	No HRBAP or ethics	No (but TOR included)	Yes	Yes	Unknown	
Lao PDR	2000/004 UXO Awareness Education Activities Supported by UNICEF in the Lao P.D.R.	Mine action	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Isolated Crisis (leftover landmines and UXO)	External consultant	2.13	LS	PM	Most of main DAC criteria, not efficiency or humanit. criteria, limited on rights, no disc of ethics	Yes	Yes (but not prioritized)	No	Unknown	Consultant not given standards or any guidance on criteria.
Lao PDR	2004 Life after the bomb: A psychosocial study of child survivors of UXO accidents	Psycho-social	NA	Background	Isolated Crisis (leftover landmines and UXO)	External consultant (QL) for UNICEF, Handicap Int'l, Lao Youth Union		NR	NA						
Liberia	2004/805 Rapid Review of UNICEF WES Response	WES	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Ongoing	Emergency	External consultant (QL, CI)		NR	PM	No reference to use of DAC or alternate criteria - between survey and evaluation	Yes	Yes	No	Unknown	EO notes "something of an objective statement. No methodology."
Liberia	2004/800 Pilot Real-time Evaluation of UNICEF Support in Liberia May 2003-March 2004	Emergency Responses	CP level or Country-wide Emerg. Response	RT	Emergency	Internal (EO)	3.58	G	WM	No discussion of ethics	Yes	Yes (but not prioritized)	No	Unknown	
Liberia	2004/803 Sanitary survey report	WES	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Assess	Emergency	External consultant		NR	NA						

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Mozambique	1999/020 Evaluation of National Programme of Landmine Education and Awareness ( Evaluation of Programa de Educacao papa a Prevencao de Acidentes por Mines (PEPAM))	Mine action	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Isolated Crisis	External consultant (QL)	Not in DB	M	PM	Effectiveness only - probably predates DAC criterial standard	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Mozambique	2000/001 Mozambique Flood Relief	Emergency Responses	CP level or Country-wide Emerg. Response	Retro	Isolated Crisis	Unclear	2.41	LS	PM		Yes	Yes	Yes		
Mozambique	2000/802 The Flooding Emergency in Gaza Province, 2000: Distribution of ITNs and Participatory Processes for Malaria Prevention and Control	Emergency Responses	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Isolated Crisis	Unclear	0.17	NR	M		No	No	No		Interesting data provided from which conclusions can be drawn and recommendati ons made, but not clearly presented here.
Mozambique	2001/806 KAP survey to evaluate success of post-flooding distribution of ITNs in Gaza Province	Emergency Responses	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Isolated Crisis	Unclear (CO?)	0.17	NR	NA	KAP methodology used	No	No	0.5		
Mozambique	2004/007 Evaluation of Integrated Supplementary Feeding Programme	Nutrition	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Isolated Crisis	Joint: UNICEF, WFP, MOH	0.17	NR	PM	Humanitarian criteria missing	Yes	0.5	0.5		Recommendati ons not prioritized or put forward clearly
Occupied Palestinian Territory	2001/800 Evaluation of Psycho-social Interventions Supported by UNICEF in West Bank and Gaza Oct 2000 - Oct 2001	Psycho-social	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Emergency	External consultant?	1.84	P	PM		No	0.5	No		

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Peru / Ecuador	2004/006 Promotion of sustainable human development on the Rio Santiago, Peru and Ecuador	Development	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Ongoing	NA	External consultant		NR	NA		Yes				
Rwanda	2000/004 Evaluation of the Government of Rwanda - UNICEF Water and Environmental Sanitation Programme	WES	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Transition	External consultants (QL)	2.82	HS	PM		No	Yes	No		
Rwanda*	2002/002 Evaluation of Protégez-moi project	CAAC /child rights /protection	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Transition	External consultant		NR							
Senegal*	2004/801 Enquete sur le programme humanitaire d'urgence de L'Unicef en Casamance - Les Cantines Scolaires	Emergency Responses	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Isolated Crisis	Unclear External consultant ?		NR							
Somalia	2000/004 UNICEF Health and Nutrition Programmes in Somalia	Health and Nutrition	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Emergency	External consultants for UNICEF and USAID	3.07	G	PM-WM	DAC but no HRBAP=	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Somalia	2002/006 Clean Delivery Kit Assessment Report	Health	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Emergency	External consultant	1.74	P	M		0.5 (purpose but not timing)	No	No		Conclusions and a lot of survey data attached, but no recommendations
Somalia	2002/013 Evaluation of UNICEF's Country Programme in Somalia	CPE	CP level or Country-wide Emerg. Response	Ongoing	Transition	UNICEF with external team	2.92	HS	WM	Tho no ethics	Yes	Yes	Yes		See comment under "T" High S, almost G. More extensive review notes than other documents. More geared to change

Background, Context and Scope							Quality Factors				Strategic factors (demand and follow-up)				Other comments
Country	Date/ Seq. and Title	Sector/ Theme of activity studied	Level	Time-frame: Real time Ongoing Retro Assess Background	Context of activity:	Author/ Org QL- Qualific. listed CI - Contact info	EO Rating: Missing, Poor, Low Satisf., Highly Satisf., Good, Not Rated		Adherence to UNICEF-adopted standard criteria** Rating: Well Met = WM Missing = M Partly Met = PM NA = Not applied	Initiator, purpose, and timing made clear Yes/No	Well supported and actionable Recs for specific project, policy, or plan? Yes/No	Generalized lessons learned Yes/No	Outcome: useful? Recs taken forward? Yes/No / Unknown		
Sri Lanka	2002/003 Evaluation of UNICEF-Sri Lanka Psychosocial Program	Psycho-social	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Transition	External consultant (QL)	2.19	LS	M	M	No	0.5	0.5	"Fails standard 19 - conclusions"	
Sri Lanka	2002/005 Joint DFID/SIDA/UNICEF Review of UNICEF Children Affected by Armed Conflict Programme in Sri Lanka	CAAC /child rights /protection	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Ongoing	Transition	External consultants and UNICEF staff (QL)	2.1	LS	M	M	No	Yes (but not prioritized)	No		
Sri Lanka	2004/800 Mine Risk Education (MRE) Project of UNICEF: A Formative Evaluation	Mine action	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Ongoing	Transition	External consultants (QL)	3.51	G	PM-WM		Yes	Yes	No		
Sudan	2001/800 The ECHO/UNICEF Drought Emergency Response Project - Kordofan Region	Emergency Responses	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Emergency/Isolated Crisis	External consultant	2.51	LS	PM		No	Yes	No	Context clear, but not purpose and how will be used	
Sudan	2004/006 Evaluation Grassroots peace-building project, RPPB section, UNICEF Sudan	Peace-building	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Ongoing	Emergency	Internal CO	2.95	HS	PM	No ethics discussion	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Sudan	2004/009 Joint UNICEF-DFID Evaluation of Early Responses to the Darfur Emergency	Emergency Response	CP level or Country-wide Emerg. Response	Retro	Emergency	External consultants for UNICEF/DFID	3.26	G	PM-WM	Protection and rights included as well as DAC criteria	Yes	Yes	No	"Great how it is clearly stated how the evaluation will be used; excellent would do a tad more on why now - how does this tie in to the timing of the Strategy Paper or other decisions? or was it tied to the timing of the emergency?"	

Background, Context and Scope							Quality Factors				Strategic factors (demand and follow-up)				Other comments
Country	Date/ Seq. and Title	Sector/ Theme of activity studied	Level	Time-frame: Real time Ongoing Retro Assess Background	Context of activity:	Author/ Org QL- Qualific. listed CI - Contact info	EO Rating: Missing, Poor, Low Satisf., Highly Satisf., Good, Not Rated		Adherence to UNICEF-adopted standard criteria**	Initiator, purpose, and timing made clear Yes/No	Well supported and actionable Recs for specific project, policy, or plan? Yes/No	Generalized lessons learned Yes/No	Outcome: useful? Recs taken forward? Yes/No / Unknown		
Tanzania	2004/001 WFP/UNHCR Joint Assessment mission	Needs assessment/ baseline study	Systemic	Assess	Isolated Crisis	Joint - interagency		NR	NA						
Uganda	2004/008 Baseline Study of home-based care for children in IDP camps	Needs assessment/ baseline study	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Background	Emergency	Joint: UNICEF and MOH		NR	NA						
Vietnam	2003/026 MTR of UNICEF Emergency Programmes	Emergency Responses	CP level or Country-wide Emerg. Response	Ongoing	Emergency	Internal (MTR)	2.25	LS	NA	MTR	Yes			"Evaluation objectives not stated..very weak description of methodology"	
Zambia	2000/001 Support to the Zambian National Rollback Malaria Program	Health	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Disaster	External consultant (QL)	2.37	LS	PM	No HRBAP, or ethics, criteria not clearly listed	Yes	Yes	No		
ESARO Regional	2000/800 UNICEF's Education Response to Emergencies in Four African Countries	Emergency Responses	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Retro	Emergency	External consultant	2.81	HS	PM	Alternate criteria used with explanation - but not in main text	Yes	Yes	No	Unknown	
ESARO	2000 Progress in Implementation of Capacity Building Projects in E. and S. Africa	Capacity building	Sector/ Prog. / Proj.	Ongoing		Joint DFID-UNICEF Review mission	Not in DB	M	PM		Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	
CEE/CIS Multi-country	2003/803 Study of UNICEF Northern Caucasus Emergency Programme Nov 1999 to Dec 2002	Emergency Responses	CP level or Country-wide Emerg. Response	Retro	Emergency	External consultant (QL)	3.25	G	PM-WM	All OECD DAC criteria, rights, not ethics	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	

\* Indicates non-English reports

\*\* particularly humanitarian response: coverage, coordination, coherence, protection.

Shaded rows indicate non-evaluation documents (reports, studies, surveys)



## **ANNEX 3: LIST OF INTERVIEWS**

### **UNICEF Angola**

Jonathan Cauldwell, Planning and Field Operations

### **UNICEF Azerbaijan**

Siraj Mahmudov, APO, Programme Planning

### **UNICEF Cambodia**

Michel Le Pechoux, Seth Koma (Child Rights) Officer  
Asako Saegusa, M&E Officer

### **UNICEF Ethiopia**

Marc Rubin, Project Officer Emergency

### **UNICEF Lao PDR**

Amy Delneuville, OIC Child Protection

### **UNICEF Liberia**

Keith Wright

### **UNICEF Mozambique**

Christiane Rudert, Project Officer Nutrition and Health  
Jean Dupraz, M&E Officer

### **UNICEF India**

Vinod Menon, Emergency Officer  
Tejinder Sandhu, Strategic Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Section  
Ann Hasselbalch, Deputy Director (Operations)  
Satya Umasree, Education Officer  
Yogendra Mathur, State Representative of Gujarat at the time of the Gujarat earthquake

### **UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia**

Luc Chauvin, Regional Planning Officer (Emergency)

### **UNICEF Senegal**

Dr. Paul Quarles van Ufford, Chargé de Planification et d'Evaluation

### **UNICEF NYHQ**

Elizabeth Santucci, Evaluation Officer



## ANNEX 4: LIST OF SOURCE LITERATURE

### UNICEF Policy and Planning Documents

- Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies
- Evaluation Report Standards
- Evaluation of ECHO's Cooperation with UNICEF and UNICEF activities funded by ECHO, 2003
- Evaluation Technical Note No. 1: Children Participating in Research, Monitoring And Evaluation (M&E) — Ethics and Your Responsibilities as a Manager
- Executive Board Decision on the Evaluation function (June 2004)
- Martigny II -- Where are we now? A review of UNICEF Humanitarian Response Capacity 2003
- Medium Term Strategic Plan: 2002-2005 (2001)
- Medium Term Strategic Plan: 2006-2009 (2005)
- Executive Board decision on the evaluation function (June 2002)
- Plan of Action to Strengthen Evaluation (September 2004)
- Programme Evaluation Standards
- Programme Policy and Procedure Manual 2005
- Progress report on the evaluation function in UNICEF (April 2004)
- Report on the evaluation function in the context of the medium-term strategic plan (April 2002)
- "Guidelines for Human-Rights Based Approach to Programming" CF/EXD-1998-004
- "A Statement of Common Understanding", Interagency Workshop on a Human Rights based Approach in the context of UN Reform, 3-5 May, 2003: Outcome Document, Second Global Consultation on HRBAP Quito, 21-24 September 2003
- "Country Programme Evaluation as part of UNICEF's Human Rights Based Approach to Programming: An Effective Strategy in an Era of Change," New York: UNICEF, 2005.
- Meta-evaluation of the quality of evaluations supported by UNICEF Country Offices 2004
- Freeman, Jim, "Desk Review on UNICEF Humanitarian Response Capacity," New York: UNICEF, 2001.
- Country Programme Evaluation as part of UNICEF's Human Rights Based Approach to Programming. An Effective Strategy in an Era of Change. (by Ted Freeman) 2005
- Desk Review of Real-Time Evaluation Experience (by Peta Sandison) 2003
- Stoddard, Abby "Assessment of UNICEF's contribution to UN Reform and its impact on UNICEF in the humanitarian sector," New York: UNICEF Evaluation Office, September 2004.

### UN Policy and Planning Documents

- Frerks, Georg and Dorothea Hilhorst, "Evaluation of Humanitarian Assistance in Emergency Situations," UNHCR *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Working Paper No. 56, February 2002
- OECD Development Assistance Committee, "Guidance for Evaluating Humanitarian Assistance in Complex Emergencies," OECD 1999.
- United Nations "Report of the UNDG/ECHA Working Group on Transition Issues," New York: UNDG/ECHA, 2004.
- United Nations, "Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities of the United Nations System," General Assembly resolution 59/250, adopted 17 December 2004.
- United Nations Development Group and Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs "Report of the UNDG/ECHA Working Group on Transition Issues," New York: UNDG/ECHA, 2004.
- United Nations Evaluation Group, "Standards for Evaluation in the UN System" and "Norms for Evaluation in the UN System," New York: UNEG, 29 April 2005.

