

## UNICEF'S STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

A summary of key internal and external institutional  
reviews and evaluations conducted from 1992-2004



**EVALUATION  
WORKING PAPER**

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## **FOREWORD**

This paper aims to provide a summary of UNICEF's strengths and weaknesses as described in key internal and external institutional reviews and evaluations conducted since 1992.

It tallies the findings from these documents without assessing the current situation or recording the status of the issues raised and takes the evaluation findings at face value without critiquing methodologies. The paper aims to provide a composite presentation, which will serve as a baseline for further work on UNICEF's strengths and weaknesses to be undertaken in the context of the preparation of the Medium-Term Strategic Plan of 2006-2009.

I hope that you find this report useful.

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Director  
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## ACRONYMS

AIDAB	Australia International Development Assistance Board
AIDS	Acquired immune deficiency syndrome
CAAC	Children Affected by Armed Conflict
CAP	Consolidated Appeal Process
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CCCs	Core Corporate Commitments/ Core Commitments for Children
CD-ROM	Compact Disk Read Only Memory
ChildInfo	UNICEF software to manage database on Children situation
CIDA	Canadian International development Agency
CO	Country Office
COAR	Country Office Annual Report
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DANIDA	Denmark International Development Assistance
DevInfo	UNICEF ChildInfo adapted for broader use
DfID	Department for International Development (UK)
ECHO	EU Humanitarian Aid Office
EMOPS	UNICEF Office of Emergency Programmes
EPF	Emergency Programme Fund
EPRP	Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GAVI	Global Alliance for Vaccination and Immunization
GFATM	Global Fund to fight against Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria
GOBI	Growth monitoring, Oral rehydration, Breastfeeding and Immunisation
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
HQ	Headquarters
HR	Human Resources
HRBAP	Human rights based approach to programming
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IECD	Integrated Early Childhood Development
JIU	UN Joint Inspection Unit
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MEP	Management Excellence Programme
MICS	Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey
MOPAN	Multilateral Organisations Performance Assessment Network
MOSS	Minimum Operating Security Standards
MTR	Mid-Term Review
MTSP	Medium Term Strategic Plan
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NPA	National Action Plan
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OPSCEN	Operations Centre
ProMS	UNICEF Programme Information System
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RC	Resident Coordinator
RO	Regional Office
RR	UNICEF Regular financial resources
SDC	Swiss Development and Cooperation

UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
US	United States of America
VSAT	Very Small Aperture Terminal, satellite communications terminal
WHO	World Health Organisation





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This desk review aims to provide an overview of UNICEF's strengths and weaknesses as described in key internal and external institutional reviews and evaluations conducted since 1992. Taking the findings from the eighteen documents together, the following conclusions can be drawn about UNICEF's strengths and weaknesses:

### ***UNICEF's continuing strengths include:***

- Long-term in-country presence
- Programmes tailored to local situations
- Pragmatic, action-oriented approach
- Close working relations with governments
- Still a leader in supporting immunisation programmes
- Seen to be a leading agency for emergency and humanitarian action and playing a key role in inter-agency processes.
- Effective fund-raising, with a growing total income from multiple sources of different types
- Multiple partnerships with governments, NGOs and civil society
- Strong, trusted, world-wide brand image
- Important opinion leader

### ***Improvements made by UNICEF over the past decade include:***

- UNICEF has demonstrated that it can make significant changes in strategy and practice, albeit slowly.
- UNICEF has become an authority on Girls Education, has growing competence in Child Protection and HIV/AIDS, and is an increasingly powerful advocate in these areas.
- Programme policy and guidance has improved.
- UNICEF has successfully made the shift from a needs-based, vertical sector programme to a rights-based approach rooted in the Convention on the Right of the Child, although greater clarity on the implementation of rights-based programming at country level is still required.
- Emergency response is now widely accepted as a core part of the UNICEF mandate and preparedness and response planning has improved.
- Gender sensitive programming has been strengthened, though still patchy.
- External communications and advocacy have expanded and become more consistent across the organisation.
- The MTP and the MTSP have sharpened and focused communications messages.
- The role of regional offices has been clarified and their performance as a support function is improving.
- Financial responsibilities have been clarified and accounting and control systems have improved, although they are still too laborious.
- Internal Audit and Monitoring and Evaluation have been strengthened.
- Business information systems and technology have improved.
- Security standards have been introduced and security capacity and communications networks strengthened.
- There has been a marked improvement in the supply function.

***On-Going Concerns over UNICEF weaknesses include:***

- **Self-Image.** UNICEF has become far more active in, and sometimes the leader of, inter-agency processes, in which UNICEF now sees itself as a key player. Yet the image of UNICEF as an agency that 'keeps its distance' prevails.
- **Partnership.** There has been a rapid diversification and expansion of partnerships with civil society. At the same time, UNICEF priorities and strategies for partnerships are limiting the scope for partnership.
- **Criticising Government.** While UNICEF's close strong relationships with government departments is praised, UNICEF is perceived as reluctant to tackle government partners on their policy and practice with regard to children.
- **Bureaucracy and Complexity.** UNICEF is seen, and sees itself, as overly bureaucratic. Staff resources (i.e. time plus skill) are being wasted on overly complex internal processes and there seems to be no concerted organisational push to deal with this.
- **Results-based management.** Programming is becoming more results-oriented but this is far from 'managing by results'. Management by inputs is still the dominant management model.
- **Reporting.** Business information solutions have greatly improved but still do not focus adequately on results and are not easily aligned with donor reporting requirements.
- **Accountability** is hampered by a weak performance management regime. Managers are not yet accountable for results or being rewarded for achieving them. UNICEF is not the only UN agency affected by a more general UN malaise with regard to management responsibility for results.
- **Human Resources.** Human Resource Management was a cause of concern, including continuing problems with timely recruitment, gaps in technical competencies, and increasing occurrence of staff "burn-out". Weaknesses in RO support to country programme remain but are being addressed gradually.
- **Regular Resources.** After a dip in the mid 90's, total income has been growing since 1997. However, RR has been flat from 1997-2003 in real terms<sup>1</sup>. It is now projected to grow from \$1,441m for biennium 2002-3 to \$1,584m for 2004-5.

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<sup>1</sup>, if adjusted for US inflation of 31% for 1997-2003. US inflation does not necessarily represent changes in UNICEF's spending power globally

## RESUME ANALYTIQUE

Cet examen administratif vise à donner une vue générale des forces et des faiblesses de l'UNICEF décrites dans les principaux examens et évaluations internes et externes menés depuis 1992. Les constatations tirées des 18 documents groupés nous conduisent aux conclusions suivantes sur les forces et les faiblesses de l'UNICEF :

### ***Les forces permanentes de l'UNICEF's sont les suivantes :***

- Une présence à long terme dans les pays.
- Des programmes adaptés aux situations locales.
- Une approche pragmatique orientée sur l'action.
- Des relations de travail étroites avec les gouvernements.
- Un rôle constant de chef de file dans le soutien aux programmes de vaccination.
- Organisme perçu comme un chef de file des mesures d'urgence et de l'action humanitaire, qui joue un rôle fondamental dans les processus interinstitutions.
- Des collectes de fonds efficaces, avec un revenu total en augmentation, provenant de multiples sources et de différents types.
- Des partenariats multiples avec les gouvernements, les ONG et la société civile.
- Une image de marque forte, fiable et d'envergure mondiale.
- Un important « faiseur d'opinion ».

### ***Les améliorations réalisées par l'UNICEF au cours de la décennie sont les suivantes :***

- L'UNICEF a démontré qu'il était capable d'effectuer des changements significatifs, encore que lents, dans sa stratégie et sa pratique.
- L'UNICEF fait désormais autorité dans le secteur de l'éducation des filles, a une compétence accrue dans la protection de l'enfance et la lutte contre le VIH/SIDA, et plaide ces causes avec une force de plus en plus grande.
- Sa politique et ses consignes de programmation se sont améliorées.
- L'UNICEF a opéré avec succès une mutation qui l'a fait passer de programme sectoriel vertical axé sur les besoins à une approche fondée sur les droits enracinée dans la Convention relative aux droits de l'enfant, bien qu'une plus grande clarté soit encore requise, au niveau des pays, sur la mise en œuvre d'une programmation fondée sur les droits.
- L'intervention d'urgence est maintenant largement acceptée comme un volet fondamental du mandat de l'UNICEF, et la planification de l'état de préparation et de la réaction humanitaire s'est améliorée.
- La programmation qui tient compte de la spécificité des sexes, bien qu'encore inégale, a été renforcée.
- La communication externe et le plaidoyer se sont élargis et sont devenus plus constants dans toute l'organisation.
- Le Plan à moyen terme et le Plan stratégique à moyen terme contiennent des messages de communication plus pointus et plus ciblés.
- Le rôle des bureaux régionaux a été clarifié et leur performance dans leur fonction de soutien est en voie d'amélioration.
- Les responsabilités financières ont été clarifiées et les systèmes de comptabilité et de contrôle, bien qu'encore trop laborieux, se sont améliorés.
- La vérification interne et le suivi-évaluation ont été renforcés.
- Les systèmes institutionnels d'information et la technologie se sont améliorés.

- Des normes de sécurité ont été introduites, et les capacités en matière de sécurité ont été renforcées, de même que les réseaux de communication.
- Une amélioration notable a eu lieu dans la fonction d'approvisionnement.

***Les préoccupations actuelles sur les faiblesses de l'UNICEF sont les suivantes :***

- **L'image que l'UNICEF a de lui-même** : l'UNICEF est devenu bien plus actif, quelquefois jusqu'à en devenir un chef de file, dans les processus interinstitutions, où il se considère désormais comme un intervenant clé. Pourtant, l'image qui prévaut est celle d'un organisme qui « garde ses distances ».
- **Les partenariats** : une diversification rapide des partenariats avec la société civile s'est opérée. En même temps, les priorités de l'UNICEF et ses stratégies de partenariat limitent l'éventail des partenaires possibles.
- **La critique des gouvernements** : bien que l'on loue les relations fortes et étroites qu'entretient l'UNICEF avec les agences gouvernementales, on perçoit l'UNICEF comme une organisation qui hésite à confronter ses partenaires gouvernementaux sur la politique et la pratique qui est la leur à l'égard des enfants.
- **La bureaucratie et la complexité** : l'UNICEF est perçu et se perçoit lui-même comme excessivement bureaucratique. Les ressources en personnel (temps plus compétences) sont gâchées dans des procédures internes par trop complexes, et il ne semble pas y avoir de mouvement organisationnel concerté pour traiter de ce problème.
- **La gestion axée sur les résultats** : la programmation devient de plus en plus axée sur les résultats, mais on est encore loin de la « gestion par les résultats ». La gestion par les ressources est encore le modèle dominant.
- **La soumission de rapports** : les solutions en matière d'informations institutionnelles se sont considérablement améliorées mais ne sont toujours pas suffisamment axées sur les conditions requises dans les rapports aux donateurs.
- **La responsabilisation** est entravée par la faiblesse du régime de gestion des performances. L'administration n'est toujours pas tenue responsable des résultats obtenus, ou récompensée si ceux-ci sont bons. L'UNICEF n'est pas le seul organisme touché par le malaise général des Nations Unies sur la responsabilité de l'administration dans les résultats.
- **Les ressources humaines** : la gestion des ressources humaines a été une cause de préoccupation : problème permanent des recrutements inopportuns, lacunes dans les compétences techniques et exemples de plus en plus nombreux d'épuisement professionnel (« burn-out ») dans le personnel. Les faiblesses constatées dans le soutien apporté aux programmes de pays par les bureaux régionaux persistent, mais sont abordées progressivement.
- **Les Ressources ordinaires** : après une chute au milieu des années 1990, le total des revenus est en augmentation constante depuis 1997. Toutefois, les Ressources ordinaires, en termes réels<sup>2</sup>, sont demeurées stables. La projection actuelle fait état d'une augmentation biennale, de 1 441 millions de dollars pour 2002-2003 à 1 584 millions pour 2004-2005.

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<sup>2</sup>, avec un réajustement de 31% pour l'inflation de 1997 à 2003. L'inflation aux Etats-Unis ne représente pas nécessairement des changements du pouvoir d'achat de l'UNICEF au niveau mondial.

## RESUMEN EJECUTIVO

Este examen de la documentación se propone ofrecer una panorámica de los puntos fuertes y débiles del UNICEF según figuran descritos en exámenes y evaluaciones de primer orden, tanto internos como externos, realizados desde 1992. Basándose en las conclusiones de los 18 documentos en su conjunto, pueden sacarse las siguientes deducciones sobre los puntos fuertes y débiles del UNICEF:

### ***Entre los puntos en los que el UNICEF sigue siendo fuerte están:***

- Su dilatada presencia en los países
- Los programas diseñados a la medida de las situaciones locales
- Un enfoque pragmático, orientado a la adopción de medidas
- Unas relaciones de trabajo estrechas con los Gobiernos
- Seguir manteniendo una posición rectora en cuanto al apoyo de programas de inmunización
- Ser percibido como un organismo directivo en las actividades de emergencia y humanitarias, y desempeñar una función clave en los procesos interorganismos
- Ser un efectivo captador de fondos, y contar con unos ingresos totales al alza, procedentes de múltiples fuentes de diferentes tipos
- Contar con múltiples alianzas con los Gobiernos, las ONG y la sociedad civil
- Tener una imagen de marca fuerte, que genera confianza a nivel mundial
- Ser un importante líder de opinión

### ***Las mejoras realizadas por el UNICEF durante el último decenio son:***

- El UNICEF ha demostrado que puede generar importantes cambios en términos de estrategia y prácticas, si bien con lentitud.
- El UNICEF ha pasado a ser una autoridad sobre Educación de las Niñas, tiene competencia cada vez mayor en materia de Protección del Niño y VIH/SIDA y es un promotor cada vez más contundente en estas esferas.
- La política y orientación en materia de programas han mejorado.
- El UNICEF ha conseguido hacer la transición de una programación sectorial basada en las necesidades a otro enfoque basado en los derechos y firmemente anclado en la Convención de los Derechos del Niño, si bien se necesita todavía una mayor claridad en la aplicación de la programación basada en los derechos a nivel de los países.
- Hoy se acepta de forma generalizada que la respuesta en situaciones de emergencia es una parte esencial del mandato del UNICEF y la planificación de la preparación y la respuesta ha mejorado.
- La programación que tiene en cuenta el género ha sido reforzada, si bien de forma algo irregular.
- Las comunicaciones externas y la promoción se han difundido y han pasado a ser más coherentes a lo largo y ancho de la organización.
- El Plan de Mediano Plazo y el Plan Estratégico de Mediano Plazo han hecho que los mensajes que se desean comunicar sean más incisivos y estén mejor centrados.
- La función de las oficinas regionales se ha aclarado y su desempeño en cuanto a su función de apoyo está mejorando.
- Las responsabilidades financieras se han aclarado y los sistemas de contabilidad y de control han mejorado, si bien siguen siendo todavía muy laboriosos.
- La Auditoría y Supervisión Internas y la Evaluación se han reforzado.

- Los sistemas y la tecnología sobre información de la gestión administrativa han mejorado.
- Se han introducido criterios estandarizados en materia de seguridad y la capacidad sobre seguridad y las redes de comunicaciones se han reforzado.
- Ha habido una señalada mejoría en la función de suministro.

***Inquietudes que persisten en relación con los puntos débiles del UNICEF:***

- **La propia imagen.** El UNICEF ha pasado a ser mucho más activo en los procesos interorganismos, incluso asumiendo el liderazgo en ocasiones, procesos en los que el UNICEF se considera a sí mismo un agente clave. Sin embargo, la imagen del UNICEF como organismo que “guarda las distancias” todavía persiste.
- **Alianzas.** Ha habido una rápida diversificación y expansión de las alianzas con la sociedad civil. Al mismo tiempo, las estrategias y prioridades del UNICEF en materia de alianzas limitan el alcance de las alianzas.
- **Las críticas a los Gobiernos.** A pesar de que se alaban las relaciones estrechas que el UNICEF mantiene con los departamentos gubernamentales, se percibe que el UNICEF es reacio a enfrentarse a los copartícipes gubernamentales con motivo de sus políticas y prácticas en relación con la infancia.
- **Burocracia y complejidad.** El UNICEF es considerado, y se considera a sí mismo, excesivamente burocrático. Los recursos del personal (es decir, tiempo más conocimientos especializados) se desperdician en procesos internos excesivamente complejos y no parece existir un esfuerzo concertado a nivel de la organización para abordar la cuestión.
- **Gestión basada en los resultados.** La programación está cada vez más orientada a los resultados, pero esto no equivale a “gestionar ateniéndose a los resultados” ni mucho menos. La gestión mediante insumos es todavía el modelo de gestión dominante.
- **Presentación de informes.** Las soluciones administrativas en materia de información han mejorado enormemente, pero todavía no se centran adecuadamente en los resultados ni se adaptan fácilmente a las necesidades de los donantes en materia de presentación de informes.
- **La rendición de cuentas** se ve obstaculizada por un régimen de gestión de escaso rendimiento. Los gestores todavía no deben responder de los resultados, ni son premiados por lograrlos. El UNICEF no es el único organismo de las Naciones Unidas afectado por la desazón generalizada que existe en todas las Naciones Unidas en relación con la responsabilidad de los gestores por los resultados.
- **Recursos humanos.** La gestión de los recursos humanos era motivo de preocupación, inclusive los persistentes problemas relativos a la contratación oportuna, los desfases en cuanto a competencias técnicas y la creciente frecuencia con la que el personal “se desgasta”. El apoyo de la Oficina Regional a los programas para los países sigue siendo débil, pero la cuestión se está abordando poco a poco.
- **Recursos ordinarios.** Tras un descenso en picado a mediados del decenio de 1990, los ingresos totales han ido en aumento desde 1997. No obstante, los ingresos ordinarios han permanecido estancados desde 1997-2003 en términos reales<sup>3</sup>. Se prevé actualmente que crezcan de 1.441 millones de dólares de los EEUU en el bienio 2002-03 a 1.584 millones en 2004-05.

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<sup>3</sup> Si se ajustan a la inflación de los EEUU para 1997-2003, que fue del 31%. La inflación de los EEUU no representa necesariamente cambios en la capacidad de gastos del UNICEF a nivel mundial.

## INTRODUCTION

This desk review aims to provide an overview of UNICEF's strengths and weaknesses as described in key internal and external institutional reviews and evaluations conducted since 1992.

The paper is presented in three parts:

- **Part I** highlights key findings from the reviews and evaluations.
- **Part II** draws brief conclusions about common themes and highlights UNICEF's sustained strengths, the improvements made by the organization, and ongoing concerns.
- **Part III** tabulates in more detail UNICEF strengths and weaknesses drawn from each review or evaluation<sup>4</sup>. Evaluations and reviews are listed in a chronological order.

The source documents are listed in **Appendix 1**.

## 1. KEY FINDINGS FROM REVIEWS AND EVALUATIONS

### 1.1. 1992 — MULTI-DONOR EVALUATION

A multi-donor evaluation<sup>5</sup> of UNICEF was conducted in 1992 “to review the uniqueness of UNICEF as an aid channel, to review its performance, and to contribute to improved planning and implementation”.

The evaluation found that “UNICEF has evolved as an effective, field-oriented and operationally skilled agency for international development”. Within the UN system, UNICEF had exhibited a strong comparative advantage in operational effectiveness. It enjoyed close partnerships with governments but should be prepared to be more critical. UNICEF's multiple funding sources created programming flexibility.

However, UNICEF needed to be more explicit about its strategic choices. UNICEF was not making best use of two of its three basic intervention strategies - capacity building for sustained programme delivery and empowerment of target groups.

UNICEF had been successful in establishing partnerships but had not created the necessary ‘space’ for maximum effectiveness in collaborating with civil society. While UNICEF HQ participated fully in UN inter-agency efforts, this was much less so at country level. Regional offices lacked an agreed model for their responsibilities. Systems for accounting and inputs worked well, but accountability systems for the impacts and effects of UNICEF-supported programmes were lacking.

### 1.2. 1994 — BOOZ ALLEN HAMILTON MANAGEMENT STUDY

In 1994, UNICEF commissioned management consultants Booz Allen Hamilton to undertake a Management Study of UNICEF. The report concluded that UNICEF had reached “new heights in esteem and public regard” based on the following strengths:

- Dynamic, visionary leadership
- Intelligent, dedicated, professionally qualified staff
- Front line empowerment of country representatives

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<sup>4</sup> Note – not all key documents have accompanying tables so section numbers in Part A do not necessarily correspond to the Table number in Part B

<sup>5</sup> commissioning donors were AIDAB, CIDA, DANIDA and SDC

- Accumulated skill in managing country relationships
- Supply capabilities that are relatively unique in the UN structure
- Unique fund raising facility - the Greeting Card Operations
- Notable public and private donor effectiveness
- Successful image and public relations skills

While the management study commended the consistently high performance levels of UNICEF, it found that some of the organisation's business processes had been neglected or did not have adequate resources. The study also found that the traditional UNICEF strength of the decentralized country programme was being undermined by centralized management of the mid-decade goals. The Study highlighted a series of weaknesses, including:

- UNICEF's mandate is weakened by its overlap with other UN agencies
- Partnerships tend to be superficial or patronising and fail to exploit their potential.
- UNICEF's recruitment, career development and performance appraisal systems are inadequate, and sometimes unfair
- Training is not matched to the skills required
- UNICEF lacks expertise in child abuse and exploitation
- UNICEF is not taking intellectual leadership for children's issues
- Programme planning is too long and complex so plans became obsolete too quickly
- Global goals do not fit well with country planning and are set demoralisingly high
- The roles of HQ functions and sectors and regional offices overlap and duplicate
- Monitoring and evaluation holds too low a profile in the organisation structure
- The Supply function is too slow
- Too many country representatives make uncoordinated visits to donors
- Communications groups are poorly coordinated, with a negative impact on PR
- Muddled accounting responsibilities compromise internal controls and accountability
- Programme and administration budgets are not linked and are separately managed
- Information systems require comprehensive review and overhaul.
- UNICEF culture is not promoting accountability and cost-effectiveness

The Booz Allen study remains the last comprehensive management study of UNICEF. The study prompted UNICEF to initiate a substantial change management programme, under the heading of Management Excellence. Project Teams were established for: Structure of Accountability in UNICEF; Building the Capacity for Effective Field Management; Relations with National Committees; Commitments and Conduct; Developing a Human Resources Strategy and Strategic Function; Staff Deployment Process; Human Resources Support System; Communication; and Relations with Government/Intergovernmental/NGO/UN System.

The Management Excellence Programme (MEP)<sup>6</sup> ran from 1995-1999, at which time its various initiatives were considered to have been mainstreamed within UNICEF management. A final report was completed but the MEP was not evaluated<sup>7</sup>. The excellence theme was carried

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<sup>6</sup> The MEP included a number of follow up studies to the Booz Allen Hamilton review on financial systems, supply, information management/technology, fundraising and UNICEF cards and product sales.

<sup>7</sup> However, Terms of Reference for an evaluation were prepared and before disbanding, the Change Management Unit documented 'Key Milestones, Decisions and Actions of the Management Excellence Programme 1995-1999'

forward into the Medium Term Strategic Plan 2002-2005 under the heading of 'programme excellence'<sup>8</sup>.

### **1.3. 1999 — DUTCH REPORT ON THE UN AS A CHANNEL FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION**

A 1999 report by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs 'The Quality of the UN as a channel for Development Cooperation', noted the UN's strengths as a channel for development cooperation: achieving international consensus on sustainable development; its almost universal membership; its neutrality and broad political, economic and social mandate. At the same time, the report identified reasons for the poor performance of UN agencies, including; inconsistent positions adopted by Member States; unrealistic expectations of UN agencies' worldwide mandate; poor management, insufficient or incorrect setting of priorities and inefficient deployment of staff and resources in some agencies; and the effectiveness of multilateral efforts being undermined by inadequate cooperation among UN agencies and between the UN and the World Bank.

In relation to UNICEF, the report noted that, unlike most UN agencies, UNICEF had shifted away from provision of services towards "rights-based" programming, with an emphasis on advocacy, institutional support and capacity building<sup>9</sup>. The report highlighted the strength of the UNICEF brand name; recognised that management and Board were functioning well; and welcomed the extensive decentralisation that allowed country programmes to be developed at country level. The report recognised the value of the Multi-Year Funding Framework, with its emphasis on results based programming. The organisation's implementation of humanitarian aid was said to be poor but training for more effective emergency response was underway.

### **1.4. 1999 — AUSAID REVIEW OF UNICEF FIELD LEVEL PERFORMANCE**

In 1999, Australian Aid commissioned an in-depth review of the field-level performance of UNICEF in the health sector in China and the education sector in Bangladesh and India. The review focused largely on management systems. The review found that:

- UNICEF had effective systems in place for ensuring field activities were consistent with its global mandate
- UNICEF worked closely with government counterparts and had an impressive understanding of country and sector problems.
- UNICEF had a strong advocacy role and prepared well for its public campaigns.
- Regional and Country Office activities were well coordinated.
- Financial controls were adequate and ProMS was seen as a future key to improved financial management.

Reporting systems were said to be inadequate and slow and staff skills in finance were weak. Monitoring was not adequate to assessing UNICEF's contribution to country performance, while projects were planned without any serious risk analysis and often without consideration of how recurrent costs were to be met when projects were complete.

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<sup>8</sup> According to the MTSP, "Programme Excellence in UNICEF combines results-based management with the rights-based approach to programming. The aim is to make optimal use of UNICEF human, financial, information and physical resources to improve the lives of children in a sustained and measurable manner."

<sup>9</sup> Although the report later notes that 80% of UNICEF's work concerns basic social services

## **1.5. 2000 — IRELAND AID CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNDP, UNICEF AND UNFPA**

The Ireland Aid evaluation of its contributions to three UN agencies focused on financial management and controls, internal audit, and monitoring and evaluation. With regard to UNICEF, the evaluation concluded that the Office of Internal Audit was professionally organised and managed, pro-actively assisting management in executing their roles and responsibilities. It also found that ProMS enabled management to maintain an up to date overview of expenditure and commitments. The evaluation function was not found to be sufficiently independent, as it was too close to line management functions in the UNICEF HQ the management structure, and was without an independent evaluation work plan.

## **1.6. 2002 — END-OF-DECADE REVIEW, STRATEGIC LESSONS FOR UNICEF**

This paper prepared by the UNICEF Evaluation Office synthesized lessons learned at the strategic management level for the decade 1990-2000, highlighting those useful to “making a difference”. It does not discuss strengths and weaknesses<sup>10</sup> directly but points the way to new directions and improvements. Key findings were:

- UNICEF can only achieve its goals by expanding its strategic alliances and partnerships to implement integrated multi-sectoral and multidisciplinary rights-based programmes.
- Global policies need to position children’s well-being at the centre as indicator for economic and social progress. Ensuring children’s rights in developing countries requires the full range of macro-economic, social and environmental issues affecting the well being of children to be addressed.
- Patterns of poverty, violence and conflict, discrimination and disease can be broken by giving children the best possible start, a quality basic education and support and guidance in the adolescent years. UNICEF’s role and contribution to world governance cannot be underestimated in making a difference for children.
- UNICEF needs to pay more attention to mainstreaming rights based programming within NPAs and CCA/UNDAF, as well as in economic and social reform processes.
- UNICEF must be rights-based and results driven in its own management at all levels and very clear on who is accountable for achieving what result.
- UNICEF needs to use its research and evaluation functions to understand better the success factors which enable countries to implement effectively their National Plans of Action (NPA)

## **1.7. 2002 — STAFF SURVEY**

Staff perceptions of UNICEF’s strengths and weaknesses were assessed in a July 2000 survey of 100 staff members across the organisation<sup>11</sup>. In the survey, UNICEF was seen as having a unique mandate from governments, and as a powerful international force by way of its UN agency status, present and known everywhere. UNICEF’s strength lay in the commitment, purpose, dedication and work ethic of staff and its intellectual leadership on children’s rights. UNICEF was able to reinvent itself to face new challenges. Other strengths included the rights-based approach, being action-oriented and decentralised. At the same time, UNICEF was seen as old-fashioned, bureaucratic and slow to change. It was prone to being too diplomatic with governments. Communications both internal and external were seen as poor and UNICEF suffered from a general lack of faith in the UN system on the part of governments and the public.

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<sup>10</sup> and therefore there is no table in Part B corresponding to the End of Decade Review

<sup>11</sup> Cited in ‘A Road Map to Change Management’ 2002, conducted in the context of the UNICEF Branding exercise.

## **1.8. 2003 — MOPAN**

In 2003, the Multilateral Organisations Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN)<sup>12</sup> ran a pilot performance assessment of selected multilateral organisations<sup>13</sup>, using questionnaires completed by Officers and country mission reports focused on the Health sector and, in particular, how the World Bank, Regional development Bank, WHO and UNICEF coordinated their local action.

Overall, the assessment found that multilateral organisations were perceived to have become more open and flexible in recent years but were seen to be weak in supporting initiatives to strengthen national and local participation.

The assessment found great discrepancies in how multilateral organisations operated, with personal preferences of agency managers and their personal contacts key in determining how multilateral organisations operate in the field. Country Representatives were seen to have limited room for manoeuvre in their decision making, despite the expressed aim by the multilaterals of increasing decentralisation.

In relation to UNICEF, the MOPAN assessment recognised the opportunity presented by UNICEF's multi-sector mandate for creating inter-sectoral linkages. UNICEF was seen to have broad networks, to be strong in capacity building, able to adjust to local circumstances, and responsive to host countries requests and priorities. UNICEF was praised for its long-term commitment and its ability to cooperate with NGOs. Local missions believed that UNICEF had become more able to take decisions at country level. UNICEF was perceived as an important opinion leader and an active supporter of public health campaigns, well advanced in making its own documents available in local languages and popularised forms.

Concerns included the perception that UNICEF works too much in isolation and with its own agenda. UNICEF's mandate was seen to hinder its participation in basket/pooled funding mechanisms, although UNICEF was seen as one of the most active in new funding mechanisms/global partnerships. UNICEF was not seen to be supportive of the PRSP processes and its participation in local forums on health was limited. UNICEF (and other agencies) were seen as being unwilling to 'lower their flags' (reduce agency profile) because of the need to attract supplementary funding.

## **1.9. 2003 — INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION RESEARCH GROUP**

The International Organisation Research Group 2003 report 'Women or Children First' provided a reminder that recent shifts in UNICEF policy emphasis are not universally welcome. This highly critical report attacked UNICEF for embracing "the ideology of radical feminism" and for allegedly promoting the use of condoms and abortion as a means of birth control.

While this was the more headline-grabbing aspect of the report, it also raised another substantive issue - the claim that "UNICEF's priorities have changed since the tenure of Jim Grant ended in 1995, with UNICEF appearing to embrace programs that do not possess the characteristics of the GOBI formulation: clear goals, inexpensive interventions, tangible results."

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<sup>12</sup> The MOPAN network includes Canada, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK.

<sup>13</sup> WHO, UNICEF, World Bank, African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, Inter-American Development Bank.

Rather than being more 'strategic', the report suggested that UNICEF's newer approach was resulting in fewer concrete outcomes for children.

The report concludes that UNICEF's Executive Board, under the influence of its European member nations, had "embraced the notion that adolescents should retain complete sexual autonomy", and calls for the US congressional hearings into UNICEF spending.

#### **1.10. 2003 — MARTIGNY II**

UNICEF initiated a process to enhance its humanitarian response capacity, following the Martigny Consultation in September 1998. The paper 'Martigny II — Where are we now', gives an internal review of progress up to May 2003. In summary, the paper found that:

- The level of commitment to meeting the Core Corporate Commitments at times of humanitarian crisis had grown.
- UNICEF was present and active in coordination, despite its image as a loner.
- Its policy and guidance for humanitarian response had significantly improved.
- Advocacy on Children Affected by Armed Conflict had increased and HQ and local advocacy positions were better connected, although balancing UNICEF positions with relationships with government was still a challenge. Some Representatives did not see advocacy on CAAC as central to the UNICEF mandate.
- There was a significant increase in emergency preparedness and response planning by country offices, though this was often not put into practice. At the same time, risk analysis and emergency preparedness were not figuring in CCA/UNDAF.
- Training on humanitarian principles, HRBAP and EPRP had become part of the Core Learning Strategy but training workshops only reached a small proportion of staff. Surge capacity for emergency response had been strengthened in at least three ROs. New HR web rosters and skills inventory systems were being introduced but concerns remained about the level of commitment to making these effective. The long-term funding of emergency posts was a concern, especially for ROs.
- On security, a clear policy had been issued, including Minimum Operating Security Standards (MOSS). Concerns remained that the UN security system constrains rather than supports humanitarian assistance.
- The organisation had no system for assessing humanitarian response to crisis and no global leadership on assessing the impact of war and natural disaster on children.
- Improvements in the supply function were recognised. Although country offices in stable countries tended to lack the logistics management capacity to substitute for national partner capacity at times of crisis.
- UNICEF had provided more options for funding emergency response but funding for forgotten emergencies was still a challenge and CAP funding was still too slow and inadequate.

#### **1.11. 2004 — EUROPEAN COMMISSION HUMANITARIAN AID OFFICE (ECHO)**

The 2004 evaluation of ECHO's Cooperation with UNICEF examined ECHO funded UNICEF programmes in Somalia and Burundi, and included visits to the two countries, UNICEF HQ in New York, the Nairobi regional office and the Supply Division in Copenhagen. The objective of the evaluation was to assess the set up and impact of the UNICEF programmes in selected country case studies and to see the part played in them by the ECHO contribution. The two countries were of interest because of their transition status.

The evaluation acknowledged UNICEF's leading role based on its long-term presence and knowledge of the political and social context. UNICEF was seen to be the leading agency for emergency preparedness and as playing a key role in inter-agency processes.

ECHO and UNICEF priorities were seen to be closely aligned, including with regard to child protection. However, some UNICEF and ECHO priorities were potentially in conflict. Other concerns from the evaluation were; there was inadequate policy dialogue between ECHO and UNICEF; UNICEF was over-ambitious in some aspects of its programmes with resources too thinly spread; and further training was required at country level for logistics and procurement.

The report makes frequent reference to weaknesses in UNICEF's monitoring capacity and the mismatch this inevitably creates with ECHO's 'focus on results' performance management approach. Weaknesses in UNICEF's nutrition programming in the two countries and more generally were also highlighted.

### **1.12. 2004 — MTSP MID-TERM REVIEW**

The Medium Term Strategic Plan 2002-2005 (MTSP)<sup>14</sup> was drawn up with the aim of strengthening the definition of UNICEF's "niches of excellence", including within the UN and within the context of the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In reviewing the period 2002-2003, the MTR found that:

- UNICEF is a global authority in Girls' Education, has a strong comparative advantage in supporting immunization programmes, has achieved a much stronger focus on family and community care practices through IECD, and has a clear, strategic framework for engagement in the fight against HIV/AIDS.
- UNICEF has a clear comparative advantage and niche in Child Protection.
- External informants were impressed by UNICEF's support and participation in reform efforts, particularly in the humanitarian sector.
- Quality aspects of education have not been adequately addressed, funding for immunization is inadequate, the IECD concept has been difficult to operationalize, and there is inadequate organizational commitment to maternal health. Community-based programmes have not been replicated at national level, or influenced national policy and budgets. There is a lack of clarity and progress on care and support to children living with HIV and Child Protection needs more focus.
- In line with HRBAP, UNICEF's promotion of participation in the development process has increased. HRBAP is also now understood as relevant for children in emergency situations.
- Gender mainstreaming continues to be uneven.
- The use of RBM in support of programme excellence is growing but concepts and terminology are still a challenge. Operational systems are still too input-based to make RBM effective.
- 75% of offices audited in 2002-2003 had weaknesses in the development of annual project plans. By contrast, there has been a major advance in emergency preparedness and response planning.
- Research and evaluation activity has increased significantly, although some areas of conflict, health, advocacy and communication, human resources and fundraising are not being adequately addressed.

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<sup>14</sup> Synthesis report, Division of Policy and Planning, July 2004. The Mid-Term Review of the MTSP is being finalised at the time of writing.

- Global funding targets have been met or exceeded for all the MTSP priorities but Regular Resources have declined both in real terms and relative to other resources.
- There has been a rapid diversification and expansion of partnerships with civil society. At the same time, UNICEF priorities and strategies for partnerships are limiting the scope for partnership.
- UNICEF offices confirmed the value of data-driven communication and advocacy, (MICS and ChildInfo/ DevInfo). Nevertheless, many communication strategies used by UNICEF are not clearly defined and communication and advocacy strategies do not fully take account of the UNCT, or bilateral or multilateral donors.
- The supply function has contributed to organizational effectiveness and the implementation of the MTSP priorities but many areas still require improvement.
- Human Resource Management was a major cause of concern within the MTR, including continuing problems with timely recruitment, gaps in technical competencies, and increasing occurrence of staff “burn-out”. Weaknesses in RO support to country programme remain but are being addressed gradually.
- Business information solutions have greatly improved but still do not focus adequately on results and are not easily aligned with donor reporting requirements.

### **1.13. 2004 — UN JOINT INSPECTION UNIT REPORT ON RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT**

In this recent report on managing for results in the UN, the JIU Inspectors conclude that reforms to bring about a shift to a results-based management culture have only recently been introduced and it is therefore premature to attempt an evaluation of their impact on the UN. The shift towards RBM in the UN is generally slow.

The report notes positively UNICEF’s Multi-Year Funding Framework, its testing of management indicators at country level, and the provision of training packages in RBM. The underutilisation of the on-line evaluation database is also highlighted.

The Inspectors note that UNFPA/UNDP and UNICEF are striving to achieve a meaningful link between resources and results and to submit results-based budgets at the corporate level. As yet, systems are still too input-focused rather than results-based to provide such information. The report emphasises that a true shift to RBM depends on cultural change, with clear delegation of authority, and improved accountability, and performance management, linked to contractual arrangements. The report sees improved human resource management is as much key to making RBM work as improved programme management systems.

### **1.14. 2004 — UNICEF’S ROLE IN UN REFORM**

This report summarizes and synthesizes the findings of two studies commissioned by UNICEF’s Evaluation Office on UNICEF’s contribution to UN Reform in the UN Development Group and in the Humanitarian Sector, and its impact on UNICEF.

UNICEF has contributed to the achievement of UN reform objectives, including through the UNCT, the CAP/CHAP, CCA, UNDAF and the theme groups. Despite UNICEF’s significant inputs to UN reform, the evaluation expresses concern that UNICEF may be risking its own marginalisation by a poor reading of macroeconomic trends. Although UNICEF is seen as an important contributor to UN reform, some outside observers continue to detect an ambivalent, and at times negative, approach in UNICEF to UN reform. In both the development and humanitarian spheres, interviewees felt that UNICEF could and should provide greater

leadership. UNICEF staff reiterated that UNICEF should not lose its focus on advocacy for the rights of children.

At HQ level, UNICEF has provided significant intellectual support to the mechanics of UN reform-related policies and practices and UNICEF has been the main driver for the adoption of human rights approaches.

UNICEF's engagement and leadership on the humanitarian side has been unparalleled among the UN agencies, according to external informants. UNICEF, while a relatively smaller actor in humanitarian response, has leveraged a coordinating role for itself. UNICEF has contributed to greater coherence and communications between UN agencies, which over time should lead to more joint programming. UNICEF does not have a dedicated resource for underwriting the costs of coordination. That UNICEF is seen as more successful in humanitarian coordination than in its contribution to UNGD processes may be a matter of time.

UNICEF has been proactive in leading reform in the humanitarian sector for some time. The evaluation also suggests that several factors promote humanitarian coordination, for example, donor pressure and a less parochial attitude in humanitarian circles.

UN reform, UNCT and UNICEF related activities have resulted in a heavier workload for staff. To combat staff "coordination fatigue", UNICEF needs to rationalize, not just harmonize, its systems with the interagency systems. Staff see little if any simplification taking place.

There are tensions between retaining UNICEF's brand with achieving broader coherence in UN programming goals, financial systems, procedures, and accountability for results. On the humanitarian side, the evaluation noted further tension between UN reform and UNICEF advocacy for child rights. Observers acknowledged that RCs and RC/HCs are inconsistent in human rights advocacy often because of a reluctance to take up politically controversial issues for fear of jeopardizing working relations with the host government. UNICEF needs to provide better guidance and tools to its own field staff for practical application of human rights principles in programming.

#### **1.15. 2004 — DUBAI GLOBAL CONSULTATION "UNICEF IN A CHANGING WORLD"**

This July 2004 consultation brought together 180 participants from HQ, regional and country offices, plus representatives of National Committees. According to the Summary Report, the consultation identified the following areas requiring improvement<sup>15</sup>:

- UNICEF needs a clearer linkage between the MTSP targets and the Millennium Declaration/Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
- UNICEF needs to deepen its understanding and application of the human rights approach, conveying ideas and approaches simply and effectively, backed by thorough intellectual analysis.
- On girl's education, UNICEF should influence national policy and budgeting processes
- On Immunization, UNICEF needs to outline a new vision, bringing the energy of campaigns to routine immunization, while using funding opportunities provided by the International Financial Facility and GAVI

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<sup>15</sup> The Dubai conference report is not amenable to summarising in a Strengths and Weaknesses Table.

- On Early Childhood Development, the next MTSP should un-bundle ECD to child survival, child development and maternal health/safe motherhood, with water and sanitation receiving higher prominence
- UNICEF is not making adequate financial and human investment in Child Protection. A “Martigny” style process for Child Protection should be considered.
- On HIV/AIDS, global impact is still limited and the response to children is insufficient. More strategic partnerships and alliances to scale-up programmes are required. UNICEF needs to put OVCs higher on the agenda of funds and institutions and give further attention to the “female face” of HIV/AIDS, children born with the virus and sexual violence against girls and women.
- UNICEF’s involvement in Emergencies needs to be better highlighted in the next MTSP. Other UN agencies should be encouraged to undertake a “CCCs exercise” to increase coordination and complementarity. A central trigger mechanism is needed for emergency response. There is a need to continue addressing security as a key constraint and to underline a UN system response while protecting humanitarian access and assistance.
- UNICEF was not prepared for the implications of the adoption of the goals of the World Summit for Children through the MDGs. UNICEF now needs to create strategic partnerships at all levels, recognising the work and contributions of others.
- UNICEF is not currently equipped to engage effectively in policy dialogue that requires macro-economic analysis. UNICEF needs to upgrade training for representatives, build partnerships with centres of excellence and strengthen global policy capacity.
- UNICEF is perceived as a contributor to UN reform but has not used adequately its leadership capacity to push the system to greater levels of coherence and effectiveness. Further simplification of UN programme procedures and practices is required to attain the highest standards of accountability, efficiency and effectiveness.
- UNICEF must push for a more coherent alignment of all UN activities at country level, with an UNDAF that allows transparent UN wide decision-making.
- UNICEF should redouble its advocacy efforts for child rights, making its voice heard in UN other political fora.
- UNICEF needs to significantly enhance its ability to communicate simply and concisely the many dimensions and depth of UNICEF’s vision, targeting governments, donors, multilateral institutions, and IFIs, to ensure that they contribute to the realization of children’s rights.
- Within Human Resource Management, UNICEF should give attention to: Performance Management; National Staff Policy; Multiculturalism; Gender Parity and Recruitment of New Blood.
- UNICEF should improve Management Systems so as to: demand accountability from country offices based on results; strengthen the role of ROs in assisting countries in analysis, partnerships, resource mobilization and research; develop reader-friendly reporting; and introduce knowledge-based management.
- Donor reporting and greater dialogue with donors were seen as key to leveraging financial resources

## **2. CONCLUSIONS**

There does not seem to be any significant difference between the pattern of findings between internal and external reviews. With the caveat that the past decade's key review and evaluation documents do not necessarily provide a comprehensive assessment of UNICEF, taking the documents as a whole, the following conclusions can be drawn about UNICEF's strengths and weaknesses:

### **2.1. CONTINUING STRENGTHS**

- Long-term in-country presence
- Programmes tailored to local situations
- Pragmatic, action-oriented approach
- Close working relations with governments
- Still a leader in supporting immunisation programmes
- Seen to be a leading agency for emergency and humanitarian action and playing a key role in inter-agency processes.
- Effective fund-raising, with a growing total income from multiple sources of different types
- Multiple partnerships with governments, NGOs and civil society
- Strong, trusted, world-wide brand image
- Important opinion leader

### **2.2. IMPROVEMENTS MADE**

- UNICEF has demonstrated that it can make significant changes in strategy and practice, albeit slowly.
- UNICEF has become an authority on Girls Education, has growing competence in Child Protection and HIV/AIDS, and is an increasingly powerful advocate in these areas.
- Programme policy and guidance has improved.
- UNICEF has successfully made the shift from a needs-based, vertical sector programme to a rights-based approach rooted in the Convention on the Right of the Child, although greater clarity on the implementation of rights-based programming at country level is still required.
- Emergency response is now widely accepted as a core part of the UNICEF mandate and preparedness and response planning has improved.
- Gender sensitive programming has been strengthened, though still patchy.
- External communications and advocacy have expanded and become more consistent
- The MTP and the MTSP have sharpened and focused communications messages.
- The role of regional offices has been clarified and their performance as a support function is improving.
- Financial responsibilities have been clarified and accounting and control systems have improved, although they are still too laborious.
- Internal Audit and Monitoring and Evaluation have been strengthened.
- Business information systems and technology have improved.
- Security standards have been introduced and security capacity and communications networks strengthened.
- There has been a marked improvement in the supply function

## **2.3. ON-GOING CONCERNS/WEAKNESSES**

Looking across the various source documents, UNICEF appears to be constrained by a number of continuing institutional weaknesses relating to:

### ***Self-Image and Partnership***

In 1992, the multi-donor evaluation found that “New York HQ and country offices are very concerned that UNICEF retains its operational independence and access to its own sources of financing.” Since then UNICEF has become far more active in, and sometimes the leader of, inter-agency processes, in which UNICEF now sees itself as a key player. Yet the image of UNICEF as an agency that ‘keeps its distance’ prevails.

### ***Partnership***

There has been a rapid diversification and expansion of partnerships with civil society. However, from the earliest to the most recent review, the documents indicate that UNICEF priorities and strategies for partnerships are limiting the scope for partnership

### ***Criticising Government***

While UNICEF’s close strong relationships with government departments is praised, the evaluations and reviews contain repeat references to UNICEF being unwilling to tackle government partners on poor policy and practice with regard to children, including a reluctance to confront abuses of children’s rights.

### ***Bureaucracy and Complexity***

UNICEF is seen, and sees itself, as overly bureaucratic. The reviews and evaluations indicate that staff resources (i.e. time plus skill), perhaps its most precious asset, are being wasted on overly complex internal processes. The documents do not reveal any concerted organisational push to deal with this, even though simplification and reduction of transaction costs are themes of UN reform.

### ***Results-based management***

Programming is becoming more results-oriented but this is far from managing by results, whereby financial resources are directed to initiatives proven to work and where the costs and benefits are known. Information systems do not yet yield information on results. Weaknesses in RBM are compounded by a lack of risk analysis and cost-assessment of how to make programmes sustainable. Management by inputs is still the dominant management model.

### ***Reporting***

Business information solutions have greatly improved but still do not focus adequately on results and are not easily aligned with donor reporting requirements.

### ***Accountability***

Accountability is hampered by a weak performance management regime. Managers are not yet accountable for results or being rewarded for achieving them. The documents do not show signs of the major culture shift that would be required to improve accountability. They do indicate that UNICEF is not the only UN agency affected by a more general UN malaise with regard to management responsibility for results.

### ***Human Resources***

Several areas of human resource management remain a major concern, including recruitment, career development, policy towards national staff, gender balance and staff burn-out, amongst others.

### ***Regular Resources***

After a dip in the mid 90's, total income has been growing since 1997. However, RR has been flat from 1997-2003 in real terms<sup>1</sup>. It is now projected to grow from \$1,441m for biennium 2002-3 to \$1,584m for 2004-5.



### 3. TABULAR SUMMARY OF REVIEWS AND EVALUATIONS

**Table 1 — 1992 Multi-donor evaluation of UNICEF**

Topic	Strengths	Weaknesses
<b>Strategies</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF needs to make more explicit strategic and operational choices at a global, regional and country programme level to ensure proper trade-offs consistent with its mandate and objectives</li> <li>Strategy 2 capacity building and 3 empowerment are underexploited</li> </ul>
<b>Comparative Advantage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Within the UN system, UNICEF has exhibited a strong comparative advantage in operational effectiveness and has achieved important successes in the support of Universal Child Immunization</li> </ul>	
<b>Government Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compared with other multilateral and bilateral agencies, UNICEF enjoys a close partnership with selected government departments</li> <li>Considerable improvement has taken place in the integration into national institutions and the Sustainability of UNICEF-supported service delivery programmes</li> <li>UNICEF is a favoured partner of government because of its effectiveness in supply, financial assistance, and programme advice</li> <li>UNICEF in many countries has been very effective in attracting the attention of the government partners to programmes supported by UNICEF</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF's country programming process has often become too process-oriented to allow a fundamental assessment of the appropriateness of UNICEF's past and current intervention strategy in a given country</li> <li>Integration may lead to distortion of the policy and programme priorities of the national institutions</li> <li>UNICEF should to act also as a critical partner to member states, monitoring and addressing violations of international law and policy</li> <li>UNICEF may tend to package projects in line with the donors' objectives and strategies, which can interfere with UNICEF's ability to develop and fund a comprehensive and integrated programme</li> </ul>
<b>Civil Society Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF cooperates with NGOs to increase the coverage and cost effectiveness of programme delivery and to improve the effectiveness of efforts at social mobilization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF has not used its capabilities to create the necessary space for maximum effectiveness in collaborating with civil society, especially for effective implementation of empowerment strategies</li> </ul>
<b>UN Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New York HQ participates fully in the efforts of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy and other committees to pursue harmonization of programme cycles and a "single voice" for the UN at country level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA and UNDP seldom present a united policy front on the same issues at country level</li> <li>UNICEF does not benefit as much as it could from technical dialogue with other UN agencies (especially WHO)</li> <li>There were few examples of direct programme cooperation in the case study countries</li> </ul>
<b>International</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF plays an advocacy role for children and women with</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF's influence over IFI policies at the country level appears to be limited by the</li> </ul>

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<b>Lending Institution Partnerships</b>	international lending institutions esp. with regard to "(structural) adjustment with a human face".	<p>very large financial programme resources of the IFIs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF has not fully exploited the opportunities for promotion of innovative social programming and the extension of its command over resources</li> </ul>
<b>Empowerment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The impressive staff interest in community participation has resulted in a diversity of community participation efforts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These efforts are spread too thinly to reflect an organizational commitment and strategy.</li> <li>In most of its activities, UNICEF aims at only transfer of information and knowledge and provision of skills rather than facilitation of the target group participation in societal decision-making.</li> </ul>
<b>Funding/ Finance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The multiple sources of funds available to UNICEF for allocation to country programmes provide the country offices with an essential form of programming flexibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The allocation of costs to administration is not based on a clear statement, of what constitutes "administration" at UNICEF. The administrative cost ratios do not reflect all costs which might be considered as administrative.</li> </ul>
<b>Organisational Capacity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF has been able to assemble strong teams of professional staff at country level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited capacity (in-country) in HRD, capacity building programming, community-based programming, sanitation education and gender sensitivity for women in development programming.</li> <li>The role of regional offices remains ambiguous due to lack of access to programmes and an agreed model for their responsibilities. ROs are very small and outside the key lines of functional authority in UNICEF.</li> </ul>
<b>Accountability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF's systems for accounting for the use of funds have been effective.</li> <li>Systems for accounting for UNICEF inputs work well.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF needs to place more emphasis on the quality of programme outputs.</li> <li>There is a gap in UNICEF's accountability systems at the level of accounting for the impacts and effects of UNICEF-supported programmes.</li> </ul>

**Table 2 — 1994 Booz Allen Hamilton Management Study - Weaknesses<sup>16</sup>**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<b>Mandate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF's mandate is weakened by its overlap with other UN agencies</li> </ul>
<b>Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnerships tend to be superficial or patronising and fail to exploit their potential.</li> <li>Relations with National Committees were not adequately managed and their importance was underrated</li> </ul>
<b>Human Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF's recruitment, career development and performance appraisal systems are inadequate, and sometimes unfair.</li> <li>There are too many senior management interventions in hiring and posting.</li> <li>Training is not matched to skills required.</li> <li>Finding staff for major emergencies is a challenge</li> <li>People are not promoted for good management and individual underperformance was not being addressed.</li> </ul>
<b>Technical Expertise</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HQ advisors push their own special interests rather than integrated care for children</li> <li>UNICEF does not have expertise in some core areas of the CRC, especially child abuse and exploitation</li> <li>UNICEF is not taking intellectual leadership for children's issues or advocating sufficiently</li> </ul>
<b>Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programme planning is too long and complex so plans became obsolete too quickly</li> <li>Global goals do not fit well with country planning and are set demoralisingly high</li> </ul>
<b>Decentralisation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The roles of HQ functions and sectors and regional offices overlap and duplicate.</li> <li>Programme Division is, in effect, running countries and regions</li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is an increasing demand for monitoring and evaluation but the organisation is not equipped to respond.</li> <li>M&amp;E holds too low a profile in the organisation structure.</li> </ul>
<b>Supply</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Supply function is too slow, with concerns about cost effectiveness and lack of skills and management interest to increase performance</li> </ul>
<b>Fundraising</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fundraising is becoming more complex, with too many country representatives making uncoordinated visits to donors</li> </ul>
<b>Communications and Advocacy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications groups are poorly coordinated with a negative impact on public relations and disjointed messages.</li> <li>Advocacy is inadequately planned. Publications were not reviewed to ensure consistency of message</li> </ul>
<b>Finance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Muddled accounting responsibilities compromise internal controls and accountability</li> <li>Programme and administration budgets are not linked and are separately managed</li> <li>Cash balances are 40% of total expenditure</li> <li>Field allocations lack transparency and accountability</li> </ul>
<b>Information Systems</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information systems require comprehensive review and overhaul. Major systems developments are not being properly controlled by management.</li> </ul>
<b>Accountability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF culture is not promoting accountability and cost-effectiveness</li> </ul>

<sup>16</sup> Unlike other reports cited in this review, the Booz Allen Hamilton study was structured to briefly acknowledge UNICEF's strengths at the outset, as summarised in 1.2 above, and then to devote most space to an examination of issues and weaknesses. For this reason Table 2 has no 'Strengths' column unlike the remaining tables in Part B.

**Table 3 — 1999 Dutch report on the UN as a channel for Development Cooperation**

(As related to UNICEF)

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<b>Brand</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One of UNICEF's strongest points is its "brand name" and the trust that this generates.</li> </ul>	
<b>Government Partnership</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is not always clear that the agency is independent of recipient governments. In some countries it could take a more critical stance.</li> </ul>
<b>Impact</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The positive impact of projects is still sometimes over-emphasised for fear that negative findings may discourage donors from providing funds.</li> </ul>
<b>Management/ Board</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF's management appears to be functioning well, as does the Executive Board. There is less North-South polarisation within the Executive Board</li> </ul>	
<b>Reporting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The reporting backlog has been largely eliminated in the last few months.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regularity and quality of reporting have been particular problems in recent years.</li> </ul>
<b>Decentralisation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF's programming largely takes place through country programmes drawn up at country level. Bilateral donors are involved at an early stage.</li> <li>Extensive decentralisation is welcomed</li> </ul>	
<b>Funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF has devised a Multi-Year Funding Framework involving systematic result based programming in return for more predictable income. UNICEF has vigorously set about implementing it.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF funding has been slowly decreasing, particularly owing to the fall in donor contributions to general funding.</li> </ul>
<b>Humanitarian Response</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF is currently training its staff to respond to changing circumstances more effectively.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF is still often poor at implementing humanitarian aid programmes.</li> </ul>

**Table 4 — 1999 AusAid review of UNICEF field level performance**

Topic	Strengths	Weaknesses
<b>Relevance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF has a comprehensive and effective system in place for ensuring that field activities are consistent with its global mandate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>
<b>Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF works closely with government counterparts</li> <li>Field visits with counterparts allow invaluable informal feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>
<b>Programmes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF shows an impressive understanding of the problems its projects are designed to solve</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance would have been improved if programmes had been less demanding (stretching resources too thin to allow for proper support and monitoring)</li> <li>The review team saw little evidence of serious risk analysis</li> <li>There was little documentation of the environmental impact of projects</li> </ul>
<b>Funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The availability of off the shelf projects is convenient for donors when choosing projects to support</li> <li>UNICEF is cooperative in providing donors with evaluative information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funds provided donors may sit for several weeks in New York before being transmitted to the country</li> <li>Reports are quite general and do not provide donors enough information to assess or evaluate projects</li> <li>Donor reports can be delayed in New York for up to 5 months</li> </ul>
<b>Finance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(Once functioning properly) ProMS will make a substantial difference to financial and other management systems in UNICEF.</li> <li>Financial controls seem appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF staff appear strong on activities-content but weak in management and finance</li> <li>Lack of skill in financial reporting continues to be a problem and the detail in financial reports is weak</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How recurrent costs could be met after project closure was not addressed</li> </ul>
<b>M&amp;E</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The MTR and other review mechanism do allow feedback into and improvement of UNICEF-supported projects, including the adjustment of objectives</li> <li>The MTR is highly participative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF monitoring does not allow its contribution to country performance to be assessed</li> </ul>
<b>Advocacy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF prepares well for its public awareness campaigns</li> <li>UNICEF has strong advocacy role in getting other donor agencies to support the priorities set out in the Country Program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>
<b>Performance management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reports are weak on how UNICEF management is being improved</li> </ul>
<b>RO/CO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RO/CO activities are well coordinated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>

**Table 5 — 2000 UNICEF Staff Survey**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<b>Mandate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working for children - a focused agenda</li> <li>• Unique mandate from governments, and ability to work directly with them</li> <li>• A powerful international force via UN agency status</li> <li>• No political or religious affiliation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our task/vision is bigger than our capacity to deal with it</li> <li>• Many people don't understand what we do, or the importance of children's rights</li> </ul>
<b>Capacity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being truly global - present everywhere, known everywhere</li> <li>• The commitment, purpose, dedication and work ethic of staff</li> <li>• Intellectual leadership on children's rights</li> <li>• Ability to respond quickly and flexibly/continuous field presence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of developed country presence (children's rights are denied there too)</li> </ul>
<b>Image/ Communications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reputation and track record - "knowledge, credibility, respect"</li> <li>• The UNICEF logo</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of public and government faith in the UN system</li> <li>• Internally, a poor communicator, lacking a shared direction</li> <li>• Externally, a poor communicator, our messages often are too complex and academic to get through</li> <li>• Our "competition" often have clearer, sharper messages and agendas</li> </ul>
<b>Managing Change</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNICEF's ability to reinvent itself to face new challenges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Old-fashioned - aging in style, image, supporter base, staffing, lack of new blood</li> <li>• An "Elephant" - can be slow and inflexible to react</li> </ul>
<b>Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rights-based approach (addressing fundamental, long term causes)</li> <li>• Programme orientation. action not just words</li> <li>• Decentralization, allowing us to respond to diverse needs/audiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bureaucracy</li> <li>• Perceived rift between Headquarters and Field/NatComs</li> <li>• Can be too diplomatic/sensitive to governments</li> </ul>

**Table 6 — 2003 MOPAN assessment of multilaterals (as related to UNICEF)**

Topic	Strengths	Weaknesses
<b>Mandate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF's multi-sector mandate gives it great opportunities for inter-sectoral linkages and knowledge transfer.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concern that UNICEF's mandate does not allow it to participate in basket/pooled funding in the health sector</li> </ul>
<b>Local presence/ experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF has broad networks and experience at district and local level</li> <li>UNICEF ability in building capacity on the ground is viewed as the organisation's great strength.</li> <li>UNICEF is perceived as having wide experience in covering inaccessible areas and as a leader in terms of adjusting its operations to local conditions.</li> <li>UNICEF is moreover praised for its long-term commitment and for being flexible and responsive to host countries requests and priorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF is perceived to be focusing its field staff on getting the job done rather than on building capacity at central levels.</li> </ul>
<b>Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF is praised for its ability to co-operate with local and non-governmental organisations.</li> <li>UNICEF shares its plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF is believed to be working too much in isolation and to have its own agenda</li> <li>Generally, UNICEF is not considered to be a key player in supporting PRSP processes or more general national health policies.</li> <li>UNICEF fails in transferring its lessons learned to other donors, and in working for closer donor coordination at district level.</li> </ul>
<b>Technical Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The quality of technical support is generally regarded as being appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>
<b>Decentralisation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A majority of the respondents believe that local missions of UNICEF have become more able to take decisions without referring back to headquarters.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>
<b>Influencing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF is perceived as an important opinion leader</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF seems to be less involved in policy making and participates less frequently in local forums for discussions on health.</li> </ul>
<b>Public Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF is believed to have been most actively supporting public health campaigns and to be far ahead with regard to making its own documents available in local languages and in popularised forms.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>
<b>Fundraising</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF and WHO were perceived as being most active in new funding mechanisms/global partnerships, such as GAVI (Global Alliance for Vaccines &amp; Immunisation) and GFATM (Global Fund to fight against Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF (and others) were seen as unwilling to 'lower their flags' (reduce own profile) because of the need to attract supplementary funding.</li> </ul>

**Table 7 — 2003 Martigny II — Where are we now?**

Topic	Strengths	Weaknesses
<b>Meeting the CCCs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a growing commitment to respond to humanitarian crises in line with the Core Corporate Commitments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is unclear if all CCCs have to be met in all responses. If so, what are the human resource implications, for e.g. WATSAN, which is not explicitly a CCC?</li> </ul>
<b>Advocacy Role</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The breadth and depth of UNICEF advocacy is expanding.</li> <li>• High-level advocacy on CAAC is increasingly connected to field level positioning.</li> <li>• HQs and ROs have built networks of allies</li> <li>• COs are better equipped and some are actively engaged on difficult issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balancing CO/RO positions with relationships with government continues to be a challenge</li> <li>• Some Representatives perceive advocacy on CAAC issues as a time-costly extra not central to the UNICEF mandate</li> <li>• Many staff equate advocacy with bold statements to the media and confrontation as opposed to quiet behind-closed-doors influencing.</li> </ul>
<b>Emergency Preparedness and Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 75<sup>17</sup> COs, 6 ROs and 10 HQ divisions, units or functions have undertaken at least an initial EPRP</li> <li>• Mainstreaming of preparedness planning has advanced</li> <li>• EPRP has improved clarity on accountability and added to motivation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The implementation of emergency preparedness is constrained because the preparedness plan is often not integrated into the country office work plan</li> <li>• There is uncertainty about when and from where the trigger to shift programming strategy or focus will come.</li> <li>• Hazard/risk analysis and emergency preparedness do not figure in CCA/UNDAF</li> </ul>
<b>Core training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training on humanitarian principles, HRBAP and EPRP have become part of the Core Learning Strategy (mostly through training of trainers<sup>18</sup>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training workshops only reach a small proportion of staff, often the same staff in different training efforts.</li> <li>• There has been no systematic learning needs assessment</li> <li>• Monitoring and evaluation of the effects of training activities is still inconsistent.</li> </ul>
<b>Security</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clear security policy has been issued including Minimum Operating Security Standards (MOSS)</li> <li>• OPSCEN monitors security situations and acts as a 24-hour communications hub</li> <li>• 85 field sites can connect to the UNICEF Global Wide Area Network and another 59 sites have VSAT</li> <li>• A security training CD-ROM is being disseminated to the field</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a concern that the UN security system continues to constrain rather than support humanitarian assistance.</li> <li>• Despite improvements in systems, the real challenge is the knowledge, attitudes and practices of COs</li> </ul>
<b>Human Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surge capacity has been strengthened in 3 ROs, also HQ external communications and logistics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making new systems work for humanitarian response, will require significant work by headquarters divisions and ROs which will need to</li> </ul>

<sup>17</sup> now more than 100

<sup>18</sup> Much of this has been supported by DFID funding and is to be evaluated by the end of 2004

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ROs have pushed ahead with peer and stress counselling</li> <li>• New HR web rosters and skills inventory systems are to be introduced</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be prioritised to bring benefit to humanitarian response capacity any time soon.</li> </ul>
<b>Inter-Agency Coordination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNICEF is present and active in coordination, despite its image as a loner</li> </ul>	
<b>Results based management</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The organisation has no practice of or system for assessing humanitarian response to crisis.</li> </ul>
<b>Gathering Information</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no global leadership on assessing the impact of war and natural disaster on children</li> </ul>
<b>Mainstreaming</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mainstreaming of emergency preparedness and humanitarian response at CO level is accepted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is angst about what mainstreaming will mean for headquarters and RO structures and staffing, including how to regional emergency posts now funded by DFID will be continued</li> </ul>
<b>Policy and Guidance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy and guidance for humanitarian response has improved significantly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HQ and ROs do not coordinate adequately their policy advice on specific countries</li> </ul>
<b>Supply</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The supply function has improved in recent years.</li> <li>• Copenhagen emergency stocks are being increased</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNICEF country offices in stable countries do not typically have any logistics management capacity to substitute for national partner capacity at time of crisis.</li> </ul>
<b>Funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNICEF has increased the number of options for funding emergency response</li> <li>• Financing procedures for humanitarian response have been simplified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding for forgotten emergencies continues to be a challenge.</li> <li>• Flow of funding under the CAP continues to be slow and below need.</li> <li>• COs have to choose between giving staff full 12 month contracts and purchasing supplies.</li> <li>• Reps and COs are still often reluctant to use EPF to cover funding gaps.</li> </ul>

**Table 8 — 2004 ECHO’s Cooperation with UNICEF**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<b>UNICEF and ECHO Mandates and Partnership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most priorities of UNICEF were highly coherent with ECHO’s own objectives.</li> <li>• UNICEF Core Corporate Commitments (CCC) and Medium Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) are highly relevant for the Commission as a whole</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relations should be further enhanced by the recently endorsed Good Humanitarian Donorship principles.</li> <li>• Potentially diverging concerns include; multi-donor actions and more flexible reporting requirements (UN); and “focus on results” and enforced performance measurement (ECHO)</li> </ul>
<b>UNICEF Country Presence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long standing presence, resources and in-depth knowledge of political and social country situations have promoted UNICEF to a leading role in the two countries of reference.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The high-profile of UNICEF creates expectations from stakeholders, which are difficult to fulfil. UNICEF is often trying to do too much in some sectors and sometimes has over-ambitious objectives.</li> </ul>
<b>Coordination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNICEF has developed very proactive efforts to enhance its international co-ordination role e.g. in the IASC</li> <li>• Activities and inputs of the UNICEF Brussels Office are also a crucial part of the strategic co-operation, and bring a significant added value.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some lack of co-ordination was found in the field (with WHO and duplication with ICRC in Somalia)</li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M&amp;E has been recognised as a “slow starter”.</li> <li>• Shortcomings in monitoring capacity should be of particular concern to ECHO results-oriented strategy.</li> <li>• Monitoring is still focused on outputs, not on outcome/results or performance/quality</li> <li>• There is a tendency to over-rely on monitoring by weak implementing partners</li> <li>• There is often a lack of baseline survey before starting a project</li> <li>• ECHO should fund M&amp;E officers, systematic training and advocacy courses in monitoring, capacity building for relevant national government services.</li> </ul>
<b>Policy</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy dialogue between ECHO and UNICEF over policy and partnership issues is too limited</li> </ul>
<b>Emergency Preparedness and Response</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve emergency response, UNICEF has initiated wide-ranging efforts to reform its organisation and procedures.</li> <li>• UNICEF was the leading agency on Emergency Preparedness in the countries visited. UNICEF has emergency stockpiles in Somalia, and it is carrying out contingency planning training with all actors in Burundi</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is difficult for UNICEF in both Somalia and Burundi to attract enough qualified applicants, so UNICEF emergency operations in the field still depend on a limited number of highly qualified and committed staff.</li> </ul>
<b>Programming</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Considering the extremely difficult working conditions, effective projects are mostly long-term and multi-sector</li> <li>• Implementation of focused health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resources are too thinly spread in key sectors. UNICEF needs to take a longer term strategic view</li> <li>• Weaknesses were found at several levels in the nutrition sector, despite its</li> </ul>

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
	projects was mostly satisfactory	recognised fundamental importance on the development of children.
<b>Advocacy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF has recognised the need for "louder and bolder" advocacy against violations of children rights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project activities appeared too strongly influenced by government interest or policy.</li> </ul>
<b>ECHO Funding</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The lack of predictability for further funding in chronic crises still proved a major constraint for the UNICEF mandate and for the results-oriented strategy of ECHO</li> <li>Small ECHO contracts are a constraint to UNICEF, require disproportionate management resources; limit flexibility; and increase recovery costs.</li> </ul>
<b>Supply</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There have been significant improvements at the Supply division in Copenhagen</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some Country Offices still lack some training in procurement and logistics</li> </ul>

**Table 9 — 2004 Mid Term Review of the MTSP 2002-2005**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<b>Girls Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF is a global authority in Girls' Education and benefits from strong donor confidence as a lead agency with capacity to work at both community and policy levels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality aspects of education have not been adequately addressed</li> </ul>
<b>Immunisation Plus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF continues to have a strong comparative advantage in supporting immunization programmes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding is inadequate, with a major gap for the financing of routine immunization activities</li> </ul>
<b>Early Child Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The IECD priority has brought a much stronger focus on family and community care practices in comparison with an increased focus on child development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The IECD concept has been difficult to operationalize.</li> <li>There is inadequate organizational commitment to maternal health.</li> <li>Community-based programmes have not been replicated at national level, or influenced national policy and budgets</li> </ul>
<b>Fighting HIV/AIDS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF has a clear, strategic framework for engagement in the fight against HIV/AIDS and has helped to spur the response to the crisis both by UNICEF and national authorities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a lack of clarity and progress on care and support to children living with HIV.</li> <li>UNICEF resources expended on HIV/AIDS in 2002/2003 were 9% of total budget compared with a target of 14% by 2005</li> </ul>
<b>Child Protection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF has a clear comparative advantage and niche in Child Protection, in which it performing increasingly well, particularly for policy and legal reform.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The priority needs more focus</li> <li>Experience from successful programmes and good practices have not been documented.</li> </ul>
<b>Human Rights based approach to Programming (HRBAP)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There has also been notable growth in UNICEF's promotion of participation in the development process, among families, communities, young people and girls.</li> <li>HRBAP is now understood as relevant for children in emergency situations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Application of HRBAP in UNICEF has been uneven.</li> <li>Gender equality and women's rights are not systematically included as key components of HRBAP.</li> <li>Gender mainstreaming continues to be uneven.</li> </ul>
<b>Results Based Planning and Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RBM as adopted in support of programme excellence is seen as a growing strength.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Challenges continue with the concepts and terminology of RBM and in the formulation of well-defined annual objectives. Operational systems are still too input-based.</li> </ul>
<b>Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There has been a major advance in the development and regular updating of emergency preparedness and response plans.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>75% of offices audited in 2002-2003 continued to have weaknesses in the development of annual project plans.</li> </ul>
<b>Research and Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There has been a significant increase in research and evaluation activity, with 80% related to the MTSP.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There has been a low level of work on emergencies and children in conflict; some areas of health; and programme communication overall; and, at country level,</li> </ul>

Topic	Strengths	Weaknesses
		on advocacy and communication, human resources and fundraising.
<b>Programme Expenditure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programme expenditure rates have remained stable and high at just over 90%.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The tendency remains for expenditures to be “bunched” in the final quarter of the calendar year.</li> </ul>
<b>Resource Mobilisation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At the mid-term, global funding targets have been met or exceeded for all the MTSP priorities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular Resources have declined both in real terms and relative to other resources.</li> </ul>
<b>UN Reform</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External informants were impressed by UNICEF’s support and participation in reform efforts, including in the humanitarian sector.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF has sometimes been reluctant to engage (but engagement is improving).</li> </ul>
<b>Partnership Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>COs reported a rapid diversification and expansion of partnerships with civil society essential for scaling up.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MTSP priorities limit the building of partnership so long as they are seen as being primarily UNICEF’s corporate priorities.</li> <li>Strategies for partnership, communication and advocacy do not fully take account of the UNCT, or bilateral or multilateral donors.</li> </ul>
<b>Communications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF offices noted a greater focus on capacity building with the media and confirmed the usefulness of data-driven communication and advocacy, (MICS and ChildInfo/ DevInfo).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many communication strategies used by UNICEF are not clearly defined or well-researched</li> </ul>
<b>Supply</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A number of aspects in the supply function were identified as having contributed to organizational effectiveness and the implementation of the MTSP priorities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(The MTF contains a longer list of details comments than can be included here)</li> </ul>
<b>Human Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(None listed)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The most common area of concern in the MTR</li> <li>Timely recruitment and deployment for both regular and emergency positions proved the most challenging area for HR management — requires accelerating to meet the 3-month target.</li> <li>There are major gaps in technical competencies, in particular, IECD, Child Protection, HRBAP and RBM.</li> <li>Serious weaknesses in learning needs and impact assessment (of training) remain</li> <li>There was an increasing occurrence of staff “burn-out”.</li> <li>Weaknesses in RO support to country programme implementation and operations are gradually being addressed in 2003-2004.</li> </ul>
<b>Information systems</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ITD has provided innovative, effective, secure and integrated business information solutions and systems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ProMS and COGNOS still focus on expenditures rather than programme results, and are not easily aligned with donor reporting requirements.</li> </ul>

**Table 10 — 2004 UNICEF’s Role in UN Reform**

Topic	Strengths	Weaknesses
<b>Leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNICEF has made strong efforts toward the achievement of UN reform objectives, provided critical leadership, and filled important gaps</li> <li>• UNICEF has acted in a timely and proactive fashion to lead or facilitate interagency processes</li> <li>• UNICEF’s level of engagement and leadership on the development side shows improvement</li> <li>• UNICEF’s level of engagement on the humanitarian side has been consistently high, and unparalleled among the UN agencies.</li> <li>• UNICEF has effectively leveraged its role as facilitator of humanitarian interagency coordination to position itself as a major humanitarian player</li> <li>• The interagency system has come to depend on UNICEF serving a leadership role.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some outside observers continue to detect ambivalence in UNICEF about UN reform — at least in the development sphere — and at times UNICEF has been seen as a negative force.</li> <li>• Internal personnel have reiterated their concern that UNICEF not lose its focus on its advocacy efforts for the rights of children.</li> <li>• UNICEF has been stronger and more proactive in leading reform efforts in the humanitarian sector than in development (various factors drive closer collaboration in the humanitarian sector)</li> </ul>
<b>Process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNICEF has provided significant intellectual support in the development of the mechanics of UN reform–related policies and practices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If UNICEF does not provide its share of leadership and support to help bring about the required changes in the UN system, there is a danger of the UN being further marginalized.</li> </ul>
<b>Workload</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The combined effect of the increased workload related to UN reform, and the requirements of both UNCT and UNICEF work activities has resulted in a heavier workload for staff.</li> </ul>
<b>Brand</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNICEF has cultivated a strong brand identification as an efficient, effective aid organization, focused on the rights and needs of children and women</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balancing UNICEF’s unique identity and visibility with the need to work toward broader UN goals remains a challenge</li> </ul>
<b>Programme focus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNICEF has influenced the “UN agenda” at the country level through the UNCT, the CAP/CHAP, CCA, UNDAF and the theme groups — ensuring greater coherence with other agencies</li> <li>• UNICEF has brought a stronger focus on children, child protection and social issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>Rights based approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNICEF has been a key force in promoting the Human Rights Based Approach to Programming in development and humanitarian contexts, but needs to provide better guidance and tools to its own field staff for practical application of human rights principles in programming.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A number of observers acknowledged the lack of consistency in human rights advocacy by RCs and RC/HCs, who are often reluctant to take up politically controversial issues for fear of jeopardizing working relations with the host government.</li> </ul>

## **APPENDIX 1 — BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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