

**EVALUATION  
REPORT**

**ASSESSMENT OF UNICEF'S  
CONTRIBUTION TO UN REFORM  
AND ITS IMPACT ON UNICEF  
IN THE HUMANITARIAN SECTOR**

**EVALUATION OFFICE  
SEPTEMBER 2004**

**For every child  
Health, Education, Equality, Protection  
ADVANCE HUMANITY**

**unicef** 



**EVALUATION  
REPORT**

**ASSESSMENT OF UNICEF'S  
CONTRIBUTION TO UN REFORM  
AND ITS IMPACT ON UNICEF  
IN THE HUMANITARIAN SECTOR**

**Assessment of UNICEF's Contribution to UN Reform and its Impact on UNICEF in the Humanitarian Sector**

© United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), New York, 2004

UNICEF

3 UN Plaza, NY, NY 10017

September 2004

Evaluation Reports are prepared either by UNICEF staff or by consultants or others supported by UNICEF. Their purpose is to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and perspectives among UNICEF field offices and to propose measures to address the concerns raised. The contents of this report do not necessarily reflect the policies or the views of UNICEF.

The text has not been edited to official publication standards and UNICEF accepts no responsibility for errors.

The designations in this publication do not imply an opinion on legal status of any country or territory, or of its authorities, or the delimitation of frontiers.

For further information, please contact:

Evaluation Office

UNICEF, 3 United Nations Plaza

New York, NY 10017, USA

Tel. (1 212) 824-6748, Fax (1 212) 824-6567



# CONTENTS

<b>Preface</b> .....	<b>vii</b>
<b>Acronyms</b> .....	<b>ix</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Résumé</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Resumen Ejecutivo</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	<b>13</b>
1.1. Overview and objectives .....	13
1.2. Structure of report .....	14
1.3. Methodology .....	14
1.4. Challenges and limitations .....	15
<b>2. UN Reform and Humanitarian Action: UNICEF's Role</b> .....	<b>17</b>
2.1. UNICEF's Role in the Humanitarian and Development Spheres .....	17
2.2. UNICEF in humanitarian response .....	18
2.3. Principled positioning: UNICEF's engagement in humanitarian reform .....	20
2.4. Other stakeholders: UNICEF's relationships with key humanitarian actors .....	23
<b>3. UNICEF investment in, and incorporation of UN reform in the humanitarian sphere</b> ..	<b>31</b>
3.1. Field-based coordination structures and mechanisms .....	31
3.2. Common humanitarian policy and normative frameworks .....	35
3.3. Operational issues .....	42
3.4. Cross-cutting themes .....	43
<b>4. Case Illustrations</b> .....	<b>45</b>
4.1. Afghanistan .....	45
4.2. Iraq .....	48
4.3. Sierra Leone .....	54
4.4. Sudan .....	56
<b>5. Key findings and recommendations</b> .....	<b>61</b>
5.1. General findings .....	61
5.2. Strategic priorities looking forward .....	62
5.3. Recommendations .....	62
<b>Annex 1: Terms of Reference</b> .....	<b>65</b>
<b>Annex 2: Bibliography</b> .....	<b>73</b>
<b>Annex 3: List of Interviews</b> .....	<b>77</b>

## **PREFACE**

This review was commissioned as a separate but linked piece of research to augment the larger study of UNICEF's Contribution to UN Reform and its Impact on UNICEF. The evaluation management team decided to bring in a separate consultant for the humanitarian study in the recognition that the humanitarian sector encompasses a different set of institutional entities and processes, and therefore warrants separate, detailed examination. The main study therefore centres on the issues and instruments related to development and UNDAF countries, while this one takes as its area of focus the CAP countries and cases of post-conflict transition. The findings and recommendations of both studies are synthesized in a chapeau report, produced jointly by the consultants.

The evaluation was conducted by Abby Stoddard, Consultant, under the supervision of Kate Alley in the Evaluation Office, with support and guidance from members of the evaluation management team. Many thanks are due in particular to Kate Alley and Rema Venu, as well as Samuel Bickel and Christian Privat for their early assistance. Above all, the review owes a debt of gratitude to the many willing and helpful interviewees who contributed their time and insights on behalf of UNICEF, other UN agencies and offices, and NGOs.

Jean Serge Quesnel  
Director  
Evaluation Office  
UNICEF, New York



## ACRONYMS

CAP	Consolidated Appeal Process
CERF	Central Emergency Revolving Fund
CHAP	Common Humanitarian Action Plan
CCCs	Core Corporate Commitments/Core Commitments for Children
CEE/CIS	Central and Eastern Europe/Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltics (Regional Office)
COAR	Country Office Annual Report
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DfID	Department for International Development
DHA	Department of Humanitarian Affairs
DPA	Department of Political Affairs
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
ECHA	Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office
EMOPS	Office of Emergency Programmes
ERC	Emergency Relief Coordinator
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
HRBAP	Human Rights Based Approach to Programming
HQ	Headquarters
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICVA	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JLC	Joint Logistics Centre
MENARO	Middle East and North Africa Regional Office
MOSS	Minimum Operating Security Standards
MTSP	Medium Term Strategic Plan
NGO	Non-governmental organizations
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
RBA	Rights based approach
RBM	Results based management
RC	Resident Coordinator
ROSA	Regional Office for South Asia
SG	Secretary-General
SPLM/A	Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary General
TOR	Terms of reference
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNAMSIL	United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WES	Water and environmental sanitation
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) commissioned this review of its engagement in UN reform in the humanitarian sector to provide an assessment of the manner and extent to which UNICEF has contributed to the reform process, and in so doing benefited the larger humanitarian system. The goal of the exercise was to provide a basis for the organization to strategize on how to structure its contributions going forward to best serve the interests of the organization and the broader system to achieve the maximum benefit to children.

Overall, UNICEF’s engagement in the mechanisms and processes of UN reform in the humanitarian sphere and its commitment and contribution to strengthening and harmonizing international humanitarian action can be broadly characterized as follows:

**Consistent** — UNICEF has been a leader and a driver of humanitarian reform going back more than a decade, beginning with resolution 46/182, and has continued in this role within the current process of reform.

**Principled** — Since the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF has made major strides in reconceiving its mission as grounded in and driven by human rights, and has approached system-wide reform with the same emphasis. In advocating for humanitarian principles and promoting the adoption of the rights based approach to programming in humanitarian as well as development contexts, it is a crucial voice (though not yet loud enough) for promoting the rights-based approach within the wider humanitarian and UN system.

**Extensive** — UNICEF has contributed more in terms of staffing, time, and supplementary financial resources to interagency coordination mechanisms at the global level than any other agency. Its contributions at the field level have not been enumerated but include a great many examples of secondments; financial, material, and management support to common systems and facilities, and leadership of interagency processes. It has led, co-led, or made major substantive contributions to the vast majority of policy and field-based coordination instruments developed over the past decade, including but not limited to: the system for Regional and Humanitarian Coordinators; the Consolidated Appeal Process and Common Humanitarian Action Plan; country-team related coordination mechanisms, guidelines for protecting human rights through humanitarian action and for the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse in aid contexts, and frameworks for contingency planning and preparedness.

**Advantageous** — UNICEF has benefited as an organization through its contribution, though the return isn’t always readily apparent. Through its role as facilitator of interagency coordination it has positioned itself as a major humanitarian player alongside agencies with larger humanitarian budgets and programs almost exclusively devoted to humanitarian functions. By most accounts, UNICEF has successfully used its engagement with the broader system to promote its agenda to protect the rights of children and women

UNICEF currently faces a few key challenges to continuing its catalytic and leadership role including:

- Funding constraints, in the absence of a dedicated source for underwriting the financial costs associated with coordination.
- Finite human resources which are reaching the limits of their stretch in terms of secondments and taking on new organizational responsibilities and activities.

- Departure of certain key staff who in their dedication to these processes became synonymous with interagency coordination and humanitarian reform;
- “Coordination fatigue” affecting headquarters staff who have difficulty prioritizing the numerous demands on their time and energy made by interagency mechanisms;
- External pressure towards over-integration/homogenization resulting from new political security environment and from a misreading of the goals of UN reform in humanitarian action by some actors.

Interviews conducted with over 40 UNICEF staff members in headquarters and the field, as well as with individuals representing the senior leadership of other agencies and within the UN secretariat, yielded an overwhelming consensus that its role in UN reform, specifically promoting, driving, and leading humanitarian coordination is vital to UNICEF; that it is fully consistent with or integral to its mandate and it should not be scaled back or allowed to flag in the face of these challenges. They also exhibited unanimous agreement that UNICEF priorities have not suffered from coordination but only stand to gain.

However, as more than one staff member emphasized the fact that UNICEF has done more than others in certain areas, does not mean that it cannot or should not do more. In particular, staff feel UNICEF must use its position in the interagency system to more vigorously promote children’s rights and child protection. UNICEF currently lacks a comprehensive advocacy strategy (as distinct from a communications strategy) including ways to make its voice for children heard louder in the political wings of the United Nations and the Security Council. UNICEF should enable policy staff to interpret the groundwork that has been laid on fundamental rights-based programming principles and take it forward in keeping with goals of UN reform. Policy and advocacy must be able to respond to events quickly, free of cumbersome process constraints or conservative propensities.

An overall theme that emerged was of UNICEF as a bridging organization. Not only does it straddle the spheres of relief and development in its programming, its mandate for children cuts across all sectors, and the underpinning precepts of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law has enabled UNICEF to bridge human rights and humanitarian aid in a more comprehensive and advanced way than many of its counterparts. UNICEF is thus both uniquely well suited to, and well served by, playing a coordinating role. These bridging capacities may also be brought to bear in situations of post-conflict transition, an area where UNICEF has shown leadership potential and stands to play an important role going forward.

In keeping with the overwhelming consensus of staff and external partners, the proposals for framing future strategy presented at the end of this review do not earmark any areas for UNICEF to scale back or de-emphasize its contribution, but rather centre on:

1. Ways for UNICEF to more effectively relate (and promote its agenda) to key actors and mechanisms, specifically the ERC, Special Representatives of the Secretary General, and the RC/HC system, as well as the UN political wing and non-UN actors such as donors and NGOs;
2. Using its influence within coordination systems to push the system to adopt more problem-driven and field relevant approaches, with an eye to minimizing the talk shops and busy work that have hindered interagency coordination and focus on substantive products and results;
3. Carving a leadership role for UNICEF in situations of transition, including fostering new or stronger partnerships with political actors and international financial institutions;

4. Achieving a stronger advocacy voice on child rights and protection, particularly within the context of internally displaced persons;
5. In addition, further developing, clarifying, and promoting its human rights based approach within its own organization, to make more progress in the realization of the concept in field practice;
6. Ensuring that UNICEF's capacity matches its commitment to UN reform in humanitarian response, by: freeing regional offices and country offices from certain organizational management duties to focus on coordination tasks; strengthening water and environmental sanitation (WES) capacity which is lacking at present; enabling secondees to return and continue on a UNICEF career path; and advocating for a system wide examination and action on the current security dilemma as regards UN humanitarian action.



## RÉSUMÉ

Le Fonds des Nations Unies pour l'enfance (UNICEF) a fait établir la présente analyse de sa participation à la réforme de l'ONU dans le secteur humanitaire afin d'évaluer de quelle manière et dans quelle mesure l'UNICEF a contribué au processus de réforme et sa contribution a bénéficié à l'ensemble du système humanitaire. Le but de l'opération était de fournir à l'Organisation une base de réflexion stratégique sur la manière de structurer ses contributions pour qu'elles servent au mieux ses intérêts ainsi que ceux de l'ensemble du système et, partant, ceux des enfants.

D'une manière générale, on peut caractériser comme suit la participation de l'UNICEF aux mécanismes et processus de la réforme de l'ONU dans le secteur humanitaire et son adhésion et sa contribution au renforcement et à l'harmonisation des actions humanitaires :

**Action persévérante**— L'UNICEF anime et impulse la réforme humanitaire depuis plus de 10 ans : poursuivant sur la lancée de la résolution 46/182, il a assumé la même responsabilité dans le cadre du processus de réforme en cours.

**Action fondée sur des principes**— Depuis l'adoption de la Convention relative aux droits de l'enfant, l'UNICEF a bien avancé le travail de reformulation de sa mission, qui repose à présent sur les droits de l'homme, et a abordé dans la même optique la réforme engagée à l'échelle du système. En défendant les principes humanitaires et en favorisant l'adoption d'une approche de la programmation fondée sur les droits dans le cadre de l'action humanitaire et dans celui du développement, il est un porte-parole essentiel (même s'il ne parvient pas encore à se faire entendre suffisamment) de l'approche fondée sur les droits à l'intérieur du système humanitaire et des Nations Unies.

**Action d'envergure**— L'UNICEF a mis à la disposition des mécanismes de coordination interinstitutions à l'échelle mondiale davantage de personnel, de temps et de ressources financières supplémentaires que n'importe quelle autre organisation. Si on avait pu dresser la liste de ses contributions sur le terrain, on y trouverait de nombreux exemples de détachements, d'appui financier, matériel et gestionnaire aux systèmes et bureaux communs, et d'animation de processus interorganisations. Il a piloté, copiloté ou alimenté de contributions importantes l'immense majorité des instruments de coordination des politiques et des activités sur le terrain élaborés au cours de la décennie écoulée, parmi lesquels : le système des coordonnateurs régionaux et humanitaires; la procédure d'appel global et le plan d'action humanitaire commun; les mécanismes de coordination liés aux équipes de pays, les directives concernant la protection des droits de l'homme par le biais de l'action humanitaire et la prévention de l'exploitation et la maltraitance sexuelles dans les contextes de l'aide, et les cadres de préparation et d'intervention d'urgence.

**Action profitable** — L'UNICEF a, en tant qu'organisation, retiré un avantage de sa contribution, encore que le bénéfice ne saute pas aux yeux. Tirant parti de son rôle de facilitateur de la coordination interinstitutions, il s'est présenté comme un acteur humanitaire de premier plan aux côtés d'organisations dotées de budgets humanitaires plus conséquents et dont les programmes étaient presque exclusivement axés sur les fonctions humanitaires. Tout le monde ou presque convient que l'UNICEF a su mettre à profit sa participation à l'ensemble du système pour promouvoir son programme de protection des droits des enfants et des femmes.

À l'heure actuelle, l'UNICEF doit, pour persévérer dans son rôle de catalyseur et de locomotive, surmonter les quelques obstacles suivants :

- Difficultés de financement, en l'absence d'une source spécialisée de financement des coûts de coordination;
- Ressources humaines limitées et qui, au demeurant, sont en passe d'être entièrement mobilisées en ce qui concerne les détachements et la prise de nouvelles responsabilités organisationnelles;
- Départ de certains membres du personnel occupant des postes clés et dont le dévouement à ces processus les a identifiés à la coordination interinstitutions et à la réforme humanitaire;
- "Lassitude face à la coordination" touchant les membres du personnel du siège, qui ont du mal à établir un ordre de priorité entre les nombreuses exigences présentées par les organismes interinstitutions qui se disputent leur temps et leur énergie;
- Pression extérieure tendant à une intégration/homogénéisation excessive découlant d'un nouveau cadre sécuritaire politique et d'une interprétation erronée, par certains acteurs, des buts de la réforme de l'ONU dans le domaine de l'action humanitaire.

En interrogeant plus de 40 fonctionnaires du siège et des bureaux extérieurs de l'UNICEF, ainsi que des représentants de la haute administration d'autres organismes et du Secrétariat de l'ONU, on s'est aperçu qu'une très large majorité d'entre eux pensent que son rôle dans le cadre de la réforme de l'ONU, qui consiste concrètement à promouvoir, impulser et animer la coordination humanitaire, est essentiel pour l'UNICEF; qu'il est pleinement conforme à son mandat, dont il fait partie intégrante, et que l'on ne devrait pas le réduire et que les obstacles susvisés ne justifient pas de le laisser battre de l'aile. Par ailleurs, ils ont été unanimes à considérer que la coordination, loin d'avoir émoussé les priorités de l'UNICEF, ne pouvait que leur être bénéfique.

Cela dit, comme il a été souligné par plus d'un fonctionnaire, le fait que l'UNICEF ait fait davantage que d'autres organismes dans certains domaines ne signifie pas qu'il ne puisse ou ne doive pas faire davantage. En particulier, le personnel estime que l'UNICEF doit utiliser la place qu'il occupe dans le système interinstitutions pour promouvoir plus énergiquement les droits des enfants et la protection de l'enfant. À l'heure actuelle, l'UNICEF n'a pas de stratégie globale de sensibilisation (par opposition à une stratégie de communication) et, notamment, ne dispose pas des moyens de mieux se faire entendre au sujet des enfants dans les instances politiques de l'Organisation des Nations Unies et au Conseil de sécurité. L'UNICEF devrait permettre aux responsables des politiques d'interpréter les travaux préparatoires concernant les principes fondamentaux de la programmation fondée sur les droits et de les faire avancer compte tenu des objectifs de la réforme de l'ONU. La politique et la sensibilisation doivent pouvoir réagir rapidement aux événements, à l'abri des contraintes pesantes liées aux processus ou de toute propension à la prudence.

Un thème s'est profilé : celui de l'UNICEF en tant qu'organisation relais. En effet, non seulement sa programmation jette un pont entre les secours et le développement, mais son mandat en faveur des enfants est à l'intersection de tous les secteurs et les principes sur lesquels repose la Convention relative aux droits de l'enfant et les dispositions pertinentes du droit international humanitaire ont permis à l'UNICEF de faire la synthèse entre les droits de l'homme et l'aide humanitaire d'une façon plus complète et avancée que beaucoup de ses homologues. L'UNICEF est donc exceptionnellement bien placé pour jouer un rôle de

coordination, rôle qui sert très bien ses intérêts. Ces capacités de synthèse peuvent également être mises à profit dans des situations de transition d'après-conflit, domaine dans lequel l'UNICEF a fait preuve d'esprit d'initiative et pourrait jouer un rôle important à l'avenir.

Conformément à l'opinion de l'écrasante majorité des membres du personnel et des partenaires extérieurs, les propositions devant servir à définir la stratégie future présentées à la fin de cette analyse ne prévoient pas de domaines dans lesquels l'UNICEF devrait réduire sa contribution, mais insistent plutôt sur les aspects suivants :

1. Moyens permettant à l'UNICEF de mieux communiquer avec les acteurs et organismes clés, à savoir le coordonnateur des secours d'urgence, les Représentants spéciaux du Secrétaire général et le système des coordonnateurs résidents et des coordonnateurs des questions humanitaires, ainsi que la "branche politique" de l'ONU et les acteurs qui ne font pas partie des Nations Unies, tels que les donateurs et les ONG, et de mieux valoriser ses objectifs auprès d'eux;
2. User de son influence au sein des systèmes de coordination pour amener le système à adopter des approches davantage axées sur les problèmes et les opérations de terrain, en vue notamment de réduire au minimum les réunions dépourvues d'utilité pratique et les activités ayant pour seul but d'occuper les intéressés, qui ont entravé le travail de coordination interinstitutions, et à se concentrer sur les produits et les résultats concrets;
3. Tailler un rôle d'animateur pour l'UNICEF dans les situations de transition, notamment en facilitant la création de partenariats nouveaux ou le renforcement de partenariats existants avec les acteurs politiques et les institutions financières internationales;
4. Renforcer l'action de sensibilisation aux droits des enfants et à la protection de l'enfant, en particulier dans le contexte des personnes déplacées;
5. En outre, développer, préciser et promouvoir son projet fondé sur les droits au sein de l'UNICEF lui-même, afin de faire avancer la concrétisation de l'idée au niveau de la pratique de terrain;
6. Faire en sorte que l'UNICEF se donne les moyens de tenir son engagement vis-à-vis de la réforme de l'ONU sur le plan des interventions humanitaires, en libérant les bureaux régionaux et les bureaux de pays de certaines tâches de gestion organisationnelle pour leur permettre de se concentrer sur des tâches de coordination; en renforçant la capacité en matière d'approvisionnement en eau et d'assainissement du milieu (EAM) qui fait à présent défaut; en permettant aux personnes détachées de revenir et de poursuivre une carrière à l'UNICEF; et en plaidant en faveur d'une analyse et d'une action à l'échelle du système au sujet du problème de sécurité que pose actuellement l'action humanitaire de l'ONU.



## RESUMEN EJECUTIVO

El Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia (UNICEF) encargó este examen de su compromiso con la reforma de las Naciones Unidas en el sector humanitario, a fin de disponer de una evaluación sobre la forma y la medida en que el UNICEF ha contribuido al proceso de reforma, y en qué manera ello ha beneficiado al conjunto del sistema humanitario. El objetivo del ejercicio fue ofrecer a la organización una base sobre la que establecer estrategias en torno a cómo estructurar sus contribuciones, avanzando en el mejor servicio de los intereses de la organización y del sistema en su conjunto, con el objetivo de lograr los máximos beneficios para la infancia.

En general, el compromiso del UNICEF con los mecanismos y procesos de la reforma de las Naciones Unidas en la esfera humanitaria y su apuesta por el refuerzo y la armonización de la actividad humanitaria internacional y su contribución al respecto puede decirse que, en líneas generales, han sido:

**Coherentes** — El UNICEF ha sido un abanderado y motor de la reforma humanitaria desde hace más de una década, a partir de la resolución 46/182, y ha continuado desempeñando esta función durante el actual proceso de reforma.

**Basados en principios** — Desde la aprobación de la Convención sobre los Derechos del Niño, el UNICEF ha dado pasos de gigante en lo tocante a reformular su misión, basándola en los derechos humanos y haciendo de éstos la fuerza motora de dicha misión, y ha enfocado la reforma a nivel de todo el sistema haciendo hincapié en la cuestión de los derechos humanos. Al promover los principios humanitarios y defender la adopción del enfoque programático basado en los derechos humanos en contextos tanto humanitarios como de desarrollo, es una voz esencial (si bien no suficientemente enérgica todavía) para la promoción del enfoque basado en los derechos humanos en todo el ámbito humanitario y a nivel del sistema de las Naciones Unidas.

**Amplios** — El UNICEF ha contribuido más, en términos de personal, tiempo y recursos financieros adicionales, a los mecanismos interorganismos de coordinación a nivel mundial que cualquier otra organización. Sus contribuciones sobre el terreno, que incluyen muy buenos ejemplos de cesiones de personal, apoyo financiero, material y de gestión a los sistemas e instalaciones comunes y liderazgo en relación con los procesos interorganismos, son innumerables. Ha dirigido, codirigido o realizado muy importantes contribuciones a la inmensa mayoría de los instrumentos de coordinación en materia de políticas y basados en el terreno establecidos durante el último decenio, entre ellos, sin ánimo de ser exhaustivos, el sistema de Coordinadores Regionales y Humanitarios; el procedimiento de llamamientos unificados y el Plan Común de Acción Humanitaria; los mecanismos de coordinación relacionados con el equipo en el país, y las directrices para proteger los derechos humanos mediante la acción humanitaria y para prevenir la explotación y el abuso sexuales en los contextos de la ayuda, así como los marcos de trabajo en relación con la planificación y la preparación para las contingencias.

**Ventajosos** — El UNICEF ha salido ganando como organización gracias a su contribución, si bien los beneficios no son a menudo apreciables a simple vista. A través de su función de facilitador de la coordinación interorganismos, se ha colocado en la posición de actor humanitario de primer orden, al mismo nivel que organismos que tienen presupuestos humanitarios mayores y programas casi exclusivamente dedicados a las tareas humanitarias. A

decir de la mayoría, el UNICEF ha conseguido utilizar con éxito su compromiso con el sistema en su conjunto para promover su programa, centrado en la protección de los derechos de la mujer y de la infancia.

El UNICEF afronta actualmente varios importantes retos para continuar desempeñando su función catalizadora y de liderazgo. Algunos de ellos son:

- Las restricciones financieras, al no existir una fuente exclusivamente dedicada a sufragar los costos financieros asociados a la coordinación.
- Unos recursos humanos finitos, que están llegando al límite en cuanto a su capacidad para desempeñar tareas de apoyo y asumir nuevas responsabilidades y actividades organizacionales.
- La marcha de determinados miembros esenciales del personal que, por su dedicación a estos procesos, llegaron a ser identificados plenamente con la coordinación interorganismos y la reforma del sector humanitario;
- La “fatiga coordinadora” que afecta al personal de la sede, que tiene dificultades para establecer prioridades entre las numerosas exigencias que representan los mecanismos interorganismos en términos de tiempo y energías;
- La presión externa favorable a la supraintegración/homogenización, resultante del nuevo entorno de seguridad política y de la lectura errónea que algunos actores hacen de los objetivos de la reforma de las Naciones Unidas en lo relativo a la intervención humanitaria.

Las entrevistas realizadas a más de 40 miembros del personal del UNICEF en la sede y en el terreno y a personas que representan al personal directivo de otros organismos, así como dentro de la Secretaría de las Naciones Unidas, pusieron de manifiesto la existencia de un consenso abrumador en el sentido de que la función del UNICEF en la reforma de las Naciones Unidas, especialmente en lo relativo a promover, animar y dirigir la coordinación humanitaria, es esencial para la organización; de que dicha función es plenamente coherente con su mandato y que constituye una parte intrínseca del mismo, y de que dicha función no debería reducirse ni permitirse que pierda fuelle ante estas dificultades. Los entrevistados también estuvieron unánimemente de acuerdo en que las prioridades del UNICEF no se habían resentido por la coordinación, sino que, por el contrario, tenían mucho que ganar.

No obstante, tal como recalcó más de un funcionario, el hecho de que el UNICEF haya hecho más que otros organismos en determinadas esferas no quiere decir que no pueda o no deba hacer aun más. En concreto, el personal considera que el UNICEF debe aprovechar su posición en el sistema interorganismos para promover con más fuerza los derechos del niño y la protección de la infancia. El UNICEF carece actualmente de una estrategia global de promoción (algo distinto de una estrategia de comunicación), que incluya medios para hacer que su voz en favor de la infancia sea mejor oída en las trastiendas políticas de las Naciones Unidas y el Consejo de Seguridad. El UNICEF debería permitir que el personal encargado de las políticas interprete las bases sentadas en relación con los principios de programación basada en los derechos y las desarrolle ciñéndose a los objetivos de la reforma de las Naciones Unidas. Las políticas y la promoción deberían poder dar respuesta a los acontecimientos con celeridad, al margen de onerosas trabas de procedimiento y de hábitos conservadores.

Un tema general suscitado fue el del UNICEF como organización puente. En su programación, no sólo abarca esferas como el socorro y el desarrollo, sino que su mandato en defensa de la

infancia es tangencial a todos los sectores, y los preceptos básicos de la Convención sobre los Derechos del Niño y el derecho humanitario internacional han permitido al UNICEF servir de puente entre los derechos humanos y la ayuda humanitaria de una forma mucho más global y avanzada de lo que lo hacen la mayoría de sus organizaciones homólogas. El UNICEF se encuentra, de esta forma, inmejorablemente dotado para desempeñar una función de coordinación, tarea para la que cuenta con el mejor personal. Esta función de organización puente puede hacerse valer en situaciones de transición posterior a los conflictos, una esfera en la que el UNICEF ha demostrado tener potencial de liderazgo y en que está llamado a desempeñar un importante papel con el tiempo.

Ateniéndose al abrumador consenso manifestado por el personal y los asociados externos, las propuestas para encuadrar la estrategia futura que se presentan al final de este examen no señalan ninguna esfera en la que el UNICEF debería reducir su contribución o hacerla menos prioritaria, sino que se centran más bien en:

1. Las maneras en que el UNICEF puede sintonizar más efectivamente (y promover su programa) con agentes y mecanismos esenciales, concretamente el Coordinador del Socorro de Emergencia, los Representantes Especiales del Secretario General y el sistema de Coordinador Residente/Coordinador Humanitario, así como con los estamentos políticos de las Naciones Unidas y los agentes ajenos a esta organización como los donantes y las ONG.
2. Que el UNICEF utilice su influencia dentro de los sistemas de coordinación para empujar al sistema de las Naciones Unidas a adoptar enfoques más centrados en los problemas y más pertinentes para el terreno, teniendo especial cuidado en evitar la palabrería y las prisas, que han obstaculizado la coordinación interorganismos, y en centrarse en los productos y resultados substantivos.
3. Que el UNICEF fragüe para sí una función rectora en situaciones de transición, lo que incluye promover alianzas nuevas o más fuertes con agentes políticos e instituciones financieras internacionales.
4. Que logre dotarse de una voz más audible en materia de promoción de los derechos y la protección del niño, especialmente en el contexto de los desplazados internos;
5. Que además desarrolle, aclare y promueva mejor su enfoque basado en los derechos humanos en el propio seno del UNICEF, para lograr mayores avances en lo relativo a conseguir que el concepto se aplique más sobre el terreno.
6. Asegurarse de que la capacidad del UNICEF es acorde a su compromiso con la reforma de las Naciones Unidas en lo que atañe a la respuesta humanitaria: liberando a las oficinas regionales y a las oficinas nacionales de determinadas tareas de gestión de organización para centrarse en las labores de coordinación; reforzando la capacidad en materia de agua y saneamiento ambiental, que en la actualidad adolece de cierto relieve; permitiendo a las personas en comisión de servicios regresar y proseguir su carrera en el UNICEF; y promoviendo un examen a nivel de todo el sistema sobre el dilema que actualmente representa la seguridad en lo que respecta a las actividades humanitarias del UNICEF, así como adoptando medidas al respecto.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Overview and objectives

The terms of reference designed for this review (attached as Annex 1) set forth the scope and expected outputs of the study, as follows:

- The impact of UN Reform on the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and vice versa will be assessed, with particular attention to UNICEF contribution to national level UN system humanitarian response as it benefits children and women.
- The strengths and weaknesses of UNICEF’s contribution to the processes and instruments of UN Reform and to the shaping of UN policy around emerging humanitarian response issues (see below under scope) will be documented and assessed.
- UNICEF performance in terms of making use of the processes and instruments of UN Reform as well as emerging policy around the above-mentioned emerging issues at field level will be assessed.
- Any gaps worthy of UNICEF’s attention — i.e. areas of engagement in UN Reform that UNICEF appears not to have properly identified as important, whether at headquarters or other levels, or to which UNICEF is not contributing sufficiently — will be identified.
- The strategic priorities that should guide UNICEF’s investment in UN Reform in the upcoming 2-4 years have been identified and reviewed.

As reflected in the Terms of Reference (TOR), the decision to commission this study grew out of a perceived need to take stock of UNICEF’s activities related to UN reform in humanitarian sector, including issues of transition, to gauge the success of that effort, and to provide a basis for the organization to strategize around ways to conduct its future engagement. The terms called for “a comprehensive examination of UNICEF’s involvement and contribution to UN reform, with a specific emphasis on the results this involvement has had on country level programming.” At the mid-point of the organization’s medium-term strategic plan and the starting point of the second phase of UN reform, this was deemed a particularly opportune time to examine these questions.

As an external consultant commissioned to undertake an essentially internal study, the reviewer geared the final product to reflect not an outsider’s opinion of UNICEF’s performance in and net gains from UN reform, but rather a synthesis of UNICEF staff’s own determinations and self-assessment in these areas, as well as the views of key external partners. The report therefore attempts to draw conclusions and craft recommendations for action based on the points of consensus that emerged, while reserving the right as an independent piece of research to take issue with those conclusions and to highlight divergent perspectives and points of disagreement where they arise, whether within UNICEF or from external stakeholders. Moreover, the report adopts an outsider’s, or broader, perspective when addressing the larger issues of political context and the performance of the international humanitarian system as a whole. In an effort to be clear about “voice” the reviewer has endeavored to identify the general source of positions and opinions presented, while not directly attributing comments to named individuals.

## 1.2. Structure of report

Following this introduction, Section 2 begins with the broad issues of UN reform in the humanitarian sector and UNICEF's role as a key stakeholder in that process, including UNICEF's internal efforts to strengthen the organization's humanitarian response. It reviews the interrelation of UNICEF with the key actors and mechanisms of UN humanitarian reform, including both the 1991 reforms established under resolution 46/182, and those established through the Secretary-General's 1997 reform package. In doing so it lists the major areas and issues where UNICEF has made substantive contributions to the interagency system, and seeks to identify the areas of particular strength or weakness in UNICEF's engagement. Section 3 looks at specific interagency instruments and thematic areas under three broad groupings: (1) field-based coordination and planning systems; (2) common humanitarian policy and normative frameworks; and (3) operations support and common services. Section 4 provides four case illustrations (Afghanistan, Iraq, Sierra Leone, and Sudan) to highlight findings and present case specific applications of the preceding themes. The final section presents conclusions that assess UNICEF's accomplishments, areas in need of more attention or effort, and opportunities and challenges facing UNICEF going forward. They are followed by recommendations for specific ways in which UNICEF may begin crafting a strategic approach to its future engagement in the interagency system.

## 1.3. Methodology

The study employed the following methods:

Desk review. Documents examined included UNICEF internal strategic plans, guidelines, policy papers, executive directives, and case evaluations. The research also encompassed the field staff survey portions of the Country Office Annual Reports, and Regional Management Team reviews of the Medium Term Strategic Plan. In addition, the reviewer drew from a body of primary and secondary literature collected in previous research that pertain to or derive from UN reform mechanisms, including outputs of coordination bodies to which UNICEF contributed.

Key informant interviews. The evaluation management team prepared a list of interview subjects, to which the reviewer provided input. The selection criteria for internal informants included depth and range of experience within UNICEF and/or involvement at the interagency level. Along with the relevant headquarters staff, the list included approximately a dozen UNICEF field representatives and (RCs/HCs) for telephone interviews. Also interviewed were current or former representatives of other UN agencies at the senior leadership level, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and other Secretariat staff, the secretariats of the IASC and the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA), and the heads of consortia of international NGOs. Where relevant, the report also draws from recent prior interviews with UNICEF and other UN agency representatives.

Case examinations. Additional documentation and interviews were obtained for the specific purpose of presenting four case examinations/illustrations of the themes and issues addressed in the study. They are presented as broad illustrations only, as the scope of work for this review did not allow for the field visits and extensive documentation review required for case studies in the strict sense of the term. The cases themselves — Afghanistan, Iraq, Sierra Leone, and Sudan — were chosen by the evaluation management team with an eye to representing both country level and sub-regional humanitarian response, different typologies of emergencies, and chronological and geographical spread.

The drafting of the report has proceeded as an iterative process, with feedback and input from the team and other relevant reviewers on drafts, and particularly on the recommendations, and through exchanges with other evaluators to insure consistency between the two study components.

#### **1.4. Challenges and limitations**

By design, the review presents a qualitative rather than quantitative assessment. As the TOR states: "It will examine efficiency, not through detailed cost analysis which would be too time consuming and costly in and of itself, but through qualitative enquiry." However, in order to arrive at a reasonable assessment of results or value-added relative to effort invested, the reviewer initially felt it would be valuable to get rough estimates of the scope of UNICEF resources expended on coordination/reform processes. Due to a few factors, including the absence of centralized information at the agency or interagency levels, as of this writing it has not been possible to obtain estimates of: UNICEF's financial contribution to interagency working groups at the field and headquarters level, and staffing and financial contribution to joint assessments.

As the TOR anticipated, the study was constrained by a relatively short time frame (under three months), and limited background documentation. (The limits of documentation may add to the headquarters slant of the research. The COARs, for instance include a section on UN reform, which deals mainly with UNDAF and Common Country Assessment, Millennium Development Goals, and very little on humanitarian coordination structures and processes.) Timing and budget also did not allow for field visits, which will necessarily limit the field perspective and may unfairly weight the findings towards a headquarters view. This notwithstanding the TOR's intent that the study should include "a specific emphasis on the results this involvement has had on country level programming." These same constraints also dictate the depth possible to go within the case examinations, resulting in the best case with a necessarily superficial, albeit illustrative, review of country cases.



## 2. UN REFORM AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION: UNICEF'S ROLE

### 2.1. UNICEF's Role in the Humanitarian and Development Spheres

Efforts to reform the mechanisms for UN humanitarian action in fact predate the broader UN reform process initiated by Secretary-General Kofi Annan in 1997. Resolution 46/182 of December 1991 and subsequent resolutions<sup>1</sup> cemented the current institutional architecture for strengthened interagency coordination reflected, with such mechanisms as the Interagency Standing Committee for Humanitarian Affairs (IASC), the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP), and the Central Emergency Revolving Fund (CERF); the creation of the position of Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC); and, to support the ERC, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA, later to become OCHA). Under his 1997 reform package<sup>2</sup> the Secretary General (SG) moved to consolidate the thirty-odd departments, programs and funds, under four main sectoral areas: peace and security; economic and social affairs; development; and humanitarian affairs. An Executive Committee of agency principals and department heads was created for each sector to coordinate its work. At the field level, the UN Country Team (UNCT) was to increase its cohesiveness as well, utilizing common premises and services whenever possible, under a strengthened Resident Coordinator. "Track two" of SG's reform plan established a Senior Management Group, comprised of the coordinators of the four sectoral committees, heads of the regional commissions and other Under Secretary Generals to link directly to SG's office as a form of cabinet. DHA was reorganized into OCHA at that time.

The two strands have not been in all ways perfectly complementary. Although the 1997 reforms reaffirm and reinforce the earlier resolutions regarding humanitarian response, the broader objectives of the 1997 reform process are geared primarily to make the UN leaner, more efficient, and less fragmented in its field presence. The objective is a UN that speaks with one voice and promotes a coherent set of goals in its missions, incorporating the humanitarian, political, and military aspects. The result, in practice if not intent, at times threatens to eclipse some gains of the earlier humanitarian reforms, which, while also striving to create a stronger and more cohesive humanitarian response among the agencies, contain two crucial distinguishing emphases: 1) the important role of humanitarian advocacy, separate from (at times in opposition to) political actors and processes; and 2) an acknowledgement that in humanitarian response the UN is not the sole actor, but rather one pillar in a system that includes local entities, international NGOs, and the Red Cross movement.<sup>3</sup> These two aspects of inclusion and advocacy have at times bumped up against the more integrationist and necessarily UN-centric approach engendered by the later reforms, made all the more urgent by the current political and security environment. Often this approach has been emphasized in opposition to the spirit of the reform as envisioned by the SG's proposal, which does make reference to the importance of engaging non-UN humanitarian actors and promoting rights based approaches to aid.<sup>4</sup> Although UNICEF has served a leading and facilitating role in both

---

<sup>1</sup> "Strengthening of the Coordination of Humanitarian Emergency Assistance of the United Nations" General Assembly Resolutions A/RES/46/182 (19 December 1991), and A/RES/48/57 (14 December 1993); ECOSOC Resolution 1995/56 (28 July 1995).

<sup>2</sup> *Renewing the UN: A Programme for Reform*, Report of the Secretary-General, A/51/950 (14 July 1997).

<sup>3</sup> Resolution 46/182 makes repeated reference to the need to coordinate actions with "the International Committee of the Red Cross, the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Organization for Migration and relevant non-governmental organizations."

<sup>4</sup> As the Secretary-General's report states: "Humanitarian actions today go beyond the saving of lives through relief operations and involve a wide range of efforts covering early warning, prevention, provision of emergency assistance, advocacy of humanitarian and human rights principles, protection and monitoring, with a view to ensuring a smooth transition to longer-term development... The United Nations

waves of reform on the humanitarian side, this tension can be seen in its own objectives to protect its organizational identity and to act as humanitarian advocate for the rights of children and women, while remaining a leader and driver of humanitarian coordination.

The Executive Committees created under the UN reform process have added a degree of confusion to the ongoing process of humanitarian reform. The division of labour between the IASC and ECHA, for instance, is not well understood.<sup>5</sup> There remains no main locus for establishing in-country coordination arrangements as 46/182 intended the IASC to be. The increasing involvement of the Executive Committee on Peace and Security members, the Secretary General's office, Special Envoys and SRSG-cantered field mechanisms all contribute to coordinated responses, but at times also create confusion due to the lack of a clearly understood division of labour between them. The overlapping membership of the Executive Committees (of which UNICEF belongs to three out of four), has allowed for greater and more formalized interaction between the UN humanitarian actors and political departments such as Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), which has enhanced UN cohesiveness and coordination in conflict-related crises having a peacekeeping component. What is endangered, however, is the greater universality that the IASC and the spirit of 46/182 brought to UN humanitarian action, namely the acknowledgement of the importance of NGO and Red Cross actors, who, for their part, have noted their exclusion from these processes with concern.

## 2.2. UNICEF in humanitarian response

Humanitarian response has constituted an increasing proportion of UNICEF programming since the advent of negotiated access into active conflict situations in the late 1980s.<sup>6</sup> The upward trend spiked sharply in the late 1990s, with emergency directed funding increasing nearly four-fold between 1998 and 2003. All told, UNICEF estimates that between 25-30 percent of its funding is spent in countries experiencing emergencies.<sup>7</sup> When including core resources spent on programs in countries that are experiencing crisis, the figure rises to 45 percent.<sup>8</sup> With 55 current emergencies,<sup>9</sup> nearly half of UNICEF's country portfolio is comprised of countries undergoing humanitarian crises.

Confronted with the dramatic upswing in humanitarian needs, UNICEF found its resources stretched, and its capacities outstripped by the complex reality of conflict-related emergencies. A consensus grew among staff that the organization needed to take steps to bolster its humanitarian response to better fulfil its mandate. In doing so it has sought to link its institutional enhancements to the coordination goals embodied in UN reform program. To paraphrase prior

---

must further strengthen its capacity for launching coherent and coordinated humanitarian actions, under the guiding principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality. In doing so, the United Nations must work in partnership with governments, other intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations." From *Renewing the UN: A Programme for Reform*, Part II: Measures and Proposals, Section E: Humanitarian Affairs.

<sup>5</sup> Bruce Jones and Abby Stoddard, "External Review of the Interagency Standing Committee for Humanitarian Affairs," New York: OCHA (December 2003).

<sup>6</sup> Sudan in 1989 is generally considered to be the first case of negotiated access to a broad set of humanitarian actors other than the Red Cross movement.

<sup>7</sup> Hannan Sulieman (2004) "MTSP and Emergencies," UNICEF internal issues paper (8 March 2004).

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> UNICEF Executive Directors New Year's Message (January 2004).

evaluations and internal planning and policy documents,<sup>10</sup> UNICEF's twin objectives, at the core, have been to 1) Strengthen the capacity, timeliness, and predictability of its humanitarian response 2) Enhance interagency coordination to improve the overall humanitarian system, without losing focus on core mission for children and women, or the visibility and independent identity necessary to maintain funding levels. During the 1990s UNICEF established a number of new internal and partnership arrangements to strengthen rapid response to emergencies, and took advantage of new system-wide mechanisms. Together with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and World Food Programme (WFP), UNICEF was among the largest users of the CERF with those three agencies amounting to 80 percent of total CERF loans in the first 5 years since its inception.<sup>11</sup> Later that period, UNICEF developed its own Emergency Programme Fund which allowed for advance funding for rapid response without the burden of securing new donor funding to repay an external mechanism (a factor that has constrained many agencies from using the CERF). The UN Reform movement, beginning in 1997, lent still more weight to UNICEF's efforts in this area. The highlights in the process during this latter period have included, in brief:

- The Martigny Consultation (September 1998), which defined the goals of increasing UNICEF's flexibility and predictability in responding to humanitarian crises in a principled manner.
- The partnership between the Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department at DfID and UNICEF (January 2000) provided additional funds to meet UNICEF's goals in expanding its humanitarian response capacity particularly as regards protecting children affected by conflict and strengthening UNICEF's role in interagency coordination.
- Adoption of the UNICEF's Core Corporate Commitments (CCCs) in May 2000, which commits UNICEF to the undertaking of six core areas of activities within the first 6-8 weeks of a crisis:
  - information gathering and advocacy on the situation of children and women;
  - vaccinating for measles;
  - therapeutic and supplementary feeding along with nutritional surveillance;
  - water and sanitation;
  - caring for children separated from their families;
  - resumption of schooling.
- Martigny II meeting held in Copenhagen (June 2003) to refine the CCCs and provide the operational support framework for their implementation.
- Updated CCCs — and renamed as Core Commitments for Children - adopted (June 2004).

The CCCs stand out in particular as a means of integrating systemic coordination principles into UNICEF's internal capacity building.<sup>12</sup> By setting out what it is prepared and committed to take

---

<sup>10</sup> For example Jim Freedman, "Desk Review on UNICEF Humanitarian Response Capacity" UNICEF, (April 2001); UNICEF Core Corporate Commitments in emergencies (E/ICEF/2000/12); "Martigny II — Where Are We Now? A Review of UNICEF Humanitarian Response Capacity" UNICEF Evaluation Office (May 2003).

<sup>11</sup> OCHA, "Humanitarian Report for 1997: Resource Mobilization" (DHA publication, 1997) available on Relief Web, [http://www.reliefweb.int/ocha\\_ol/pub/humrep97/resource.html](http://www.reliefweb.int/ocha_ol/pub/humrep97/resource.html)

<sup>12</sup> UNICEF's Core Corporate Commitments to Humanitarian Response include the following as operational principles: "Establish UNICEF's response as part of a coordinated UN response plan,

on in emergency scenarios, UNICEF is responding to past critiques by other agencies that it has not always been predictable or reliable in its areas of responsibility in emergencies, but rather varied from case to case with a “pick and choose” approach on the part of its representatives.

Despite these rather dramatic advances in the institutional framework for humanitarian response, UNICEF’s Medium-Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) for 2002-2005 makes only light reference to UNICEF’s role in emergencies — a fact noted in several internal documents.<sup>13</sup> The Regional Management Teams, in their responses to the MTSP review, voiced a common theme that emergencies need to be addressed more systematically throughout the plan (one suggested a section to be included in each priority, identifying ways it may be implemented or adapted in crisis situations). The MTSP does, however, emphasize that “UNICEF will play an operational and catalytic role”<sup>14</sup> in UN global initiatives, including those deriving from the reform process. This catalyst role has become woven through UNICEF’s work and evidenced in its contribution to UN reform in the humanitarian sector.

The commitment to water and environmental sanitation (WES) warrants some separate discussion here because of the number of external informants who stressed this as an area of UNICEF comparative advantage, and in which the interagency system has come to rely on UNICEF to take the lead. Those informants familiar with the CCCs accordingly welcomed the formal UNICEF’s formal acknowledgement of this role. There is some serious internal concern, however, that UNICEF has not matched the resources to the requirements of this commitment, and that in fact capacity in this area has declined over the years. WES was not included in the DfID/CHAD capacity building grant to UNICEF, and limited personnel and resources for preparedness and rapid response in this area have been blamed for poor (initial) performance of UNICEF WES programming in Liberia and Haiti.

Finally, it is worth noting that although UNICEF’s budgetary resources (for humanitarian emergencies specifically) are relatively small compared to those of UNHCR and WFP, the three are nonetheless consistently placed together as the major or “core” humanitarian actors in the UN system. UNICEF has achieved this status in no small part through its active engagement and leadership in humanitarian coordination issues.

### **2.3. Principled positioning: UNICEF’s engagement in humanitarian reform**

It has been a particular strength of UNICEF in humanitarian action that many of its staff members (and the majority of those interviewed for this study) have come to view the goals of reform as more or less completely consistent with and reinforcing of UNICEF’s own organizational and programming priorities. Because UNICEF’s activities straddle the spheres of relief and development, and its focus on children cuts across all sectors of programming, there is perhaps a stronger sense than in other agencies of there being no option to working collaboratively with other agencies, and with NGOs.

Both internal and external respondents UNICEF’s partners have expressed the view that UNICEF’s contribution of resources and effort to interagency processes has been not only

---

designed in collaboration with national and other partners. Position UNICEF in sector coordinating roles, wherever appropriate.”

<sup>13</sup> See, for example, Suleiman, “MTSP and Emergencies,” and RMT responses to MTSP Review questionnaire.

<sup>14</sup> Extract from the Medium-term Strategic Plan, 2002-2005 (E/ICEF/2001/13, dated 7 November 2001) “1. Introduction,” 5.

generous and valuable to the system as a whole, but strategic and advantageous to UNICEF as well, which has its high profile and reputation on emergency response to thank for it. Through what may be termed “principled positioning,” UNICEF has successfully leveraged its capacities and willingness to serve as a leader and driver of interagency coordination to promote the core concerns of women and children within the humanitarian system.

### **2.3.1. Contributions and accomplishments**

While it was not possible within the scope of this review to arrive at a quantitative measurement of UNICEF’s contribution in financial or staff-hour terms, the following areas emerge as the main components of UNICEF’s contribution:

- **Leadership and internal advocacy:** It would be impossible to discuss UNICEF’s contribution to coordination without making special note of the leadership of certain individuals. UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy has been a visible and vocal presence in the humanitarian interagency mechanisms, and served as an advocate for improved coordination at the highest level of the system. Many external informants noted with appreciation her term as acting Chair of the IASC principals forum when the ERC was on mission for an extended period, and her recent chairmanship of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) and Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA) Inter-Agency Working Group on Transitions. A few also observed that of all the agency principals she is the most consistent in her attendance of the IASC and ECHA meetings. Nils Kastberg, during his tenure as Director, Office of Emergency Programmes (EMOPS), was widely credited as a crucial driving force behind the IASC, as was David Bassiouni.
- **Staffing:** From the time of its secondment of a UNICEF senior staff member to serve as the first Humanitarian Coordinator in Somalia back in 1992, UNICEF has stood out among the agencies for consistently contributing vital human resources to the humanitarian coordination mechanisms. UNICEF professionals have served in both global and field level coordination capacities.
  - A series of senior staff-level UNICEF secondees have led the IASC secretariat since its inception.
  - UNICEF representatives have taken on the role of RC/HC in several emergency countries.
  - In the IASC, UNICEF has chaired or co-chaired more reference groups, sub-working groups and task forces than any other operational agency.
  - A senior UNICEF staff member recently led a coordinated needs assessment mission to Iraq, representing 22 different UN entities as well as the World Bank and other participants.

By placing many of its finest professionals throughout the humanitarian (and broader UN) system, UNICEF has won accolades from other agencies and the Secretariat. In so doing, according to respondents within and without UNICEF, stands to further its agenda for children by infusing the system with professionals well versed in the principles and best practices of promoting and protecting child rights.

- **Substantive inputs** to policy and programming: The policy guidelines and programming frameworks generated in the interagency system which UNICEF either led or played a major facilitating role in producing include the following outputs
  - IASC Review of the CAP and Plan of Action for Strengthening the CAP (2002)
  - Growing the Sheltering Tree: Protecting Rights Through Humanitarian Action (2002)

- Plan of Action and Core Principles on Protection from Sexual Abuse and Exploitation in Humanitarian Crisis (2002)
  - Inter-Agency Contingency Planning Guidelines for Humanitarian Assistance (2001)
  - Policy Statement for the Integration of a Gender Perspective in Humanitarian Assistance (1999)
  - Gender and Humanitarian Assistance Resource Kit (2001)
  - Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets to Support United Nations Humanitarian Activities in Complex Emergencies (2003)
- **Financial support and systems management:** On numerous occasions UNICEF has contributed financial resources to meet administrative, management, and dissemination costs of interagency bodies. At the headquarters level this has included administrative staff salaries, jointly commissioned research and evaluations, conference logistics, and production costs for publications, videos and CD ROMs, etc. At field level, a review of the Country Office Annual Reports (COARs) shows that a majority of UNICEF country offices in all regions regularly kick in monetary support for the RC's office and thematic groups. Additionally, UNICEF has shared use of its financial system with agencies that lacked the organizational infrastructure for the remuneration of their staff. In 2001-2002, UNICEF played a leading role in instituting the Special Operations Living Allowance system for international staff of humanitarian agencies posted in hardship locations. UNICEF also contributed the financial resources and logistical support for travel by the SG's Representative on internally displaced persons (IDPs), Ambassador Francis Deng. Indeed, UNICEF receives praise from other agencies for its ability to act quickly in meeting needs and putting up its own resources to solve interagency problems. (This gap-filler role has also served the humanitarian system in programmatic aspects of in-country coordination, to be discussed in subsequent sections.)
  - **Institutional accountability:** As mentioned above, the CCCs and the MTSP both incorporate the principles of UN reform and interagency coordination into UNICEF policy and strategy. Additionally, these principles and the responsibility for active engagement in coordination have been incorporated into the latest Terms of Reference for UNICEF Representatives. The template for the COARs also includes a section intended to assess UNICEF's participation in and concrete contribution to the UN Country Team and the RC/HC system.

### **2.3.2. Challenges and critiques**

While the vast majority of external interviewees were hard pressed to find negative aspects of UNICEF's coordination, what criticisms did emerge centered around two main themes: First, that UNICEF in the field has traditionally been perceived by its partners as being too protective of independent agency identity; and second, that it has lacked predictability in its humanitarian response across emergencies.

Regarding the second point, as noted above UNICEF has taken steps to address the predictability issues by establishing the Core Commitments for Children. It should be noted that those external respondents familiar with the CCCs took a favourable view of them and indicated that they had begun to see progress in this area. Those who stressed the issue as a weakness were not acquainted with the (relatively) new policy.

The first point remains a subject of some debate. More notably in the early days, but continuing today, according to informants from other agencies, UNICEF's protection and promotion of its identity has at times caused friction, and led to the perception that UNICEF promotes itself at others' expense, to the detriment of the broader system. Although they understand UNICEF's need to keep a high profile to maintain funding levels in the absence of assessed contributions, they stress that all agencies also have an important obligation to represent the UN and fly a common flag.

The counterargument at UNICEF holds that not only does its voluntary funding base require a certain amount of visibility, but the additional resources UNICEF is able to attract by dint of its well-known name and image in fact benefit the system as a whole - a point which may not be as well understood or appreciated by other agencies. Moreover, one could argue, neither the objectives of UN reform nor the good of the system generally requires the subjugation of agency identity to the extent that some have implied. Those who insist that UN reform calls for harmonization rather than homogenization see the implications for UNICEF as being the need to develop a more sophisticated means of managing its own visibility and its agenda for children while working constructively under broader umbrella identity. Nonetheless, the fact that impressions persist of an internal culture that can at times be parochial and overly guarded of its own image, suggests that UNICEF has more work ahead to fully embrace and communicate its commitment to UN reform.

Internal assessments of UNICEF's weak points on UN reform tended to be more hard-hitting than the external critiques. These tended to cluster around three themes. First, that UNICEF continues to fall short in translating its concepts and principles on key issues such as rights-based programming and child protection into practical implementation in the field — or into sufficiently forceful advocacy efforts. Second, some express the concern that UNICEF's contribution may be overly personality-driven, with a small core of coordinators very engaged in the details of the interagency process and leading policy-setting on issues without the full understanding and support of the rest of the house behind them. And third, the amount of energy, staff and financial resources required to play this role has created a certain sense of coordination fatigue among some staff members in UNICEF headquarters, raising questions as to whether UNICEF is getting enough of a return on its investment.

Notwithstanding these concerns, overall UNICEF informants at both HQ and country offices express a consensus on the importance of the interagency system and UNICEF's facilitating role within it, evincing an organizational approach/culture of coordination at UNICEF that has developed over the last decade and continues to grow.

## **2.4. Other stakeholders: UNICEF's relationships with key humanitarian actors**

This section looks briefly at UNICEF's interaction with some of the main institutional structures and processes related to humanitarian action.

### **2.4.1. Emergency Relief Coordinator**

UNICEF staff and external observers agree that UNICEF as an agency has attempted to give room and deference to the ERC since the post was created to allow for more effective coordination (two respondents recalled in particular then Executive Director Jim Grant's participation in an interagency mission to Somalia under the newly appointed ERC in the early 1990s, which set the tone for coordination under a collective framework even as it meant sacrificing a measure of the very high visibility UNICEF was enjoying in Somalia up to that

point.) The relatively frequent turnover of ERCs and inconsistent leadership from that office has up until the present time led it to under-achieve in some crucially important areas in the past. These areas include serving as an assertive voice of humanitarian issues with the Security Council and the Secretary-General's office (especially as the SG appoints more Special Representatives who increasingly take on coordinating roles in the field), and fostering an environment of interagency coordination through building and maintaining informal communication links among the principals. UNICEF has an important opportunity to engage with the recently appointed new ERC, to encourage and help steer a more active agenda from that office, and revitalize the informal linkages of agency heads with each other and the ERC.

#### **2.4.2. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs**

As noted in the Somalia example, beginning with OCHA's predecessor DHA, UNICEF made determined efforts to give a place to the body and to the ERC as its head, even at a cost to its own profile. UNICEF was also involved at a senior level in the strategic planning positions during the reorganization of DHA into OCHA, and in fact chaired the process.

Although UNICEF staff and other members of the humanitarian community agree that OCHA has, in a relatively short time, accomplished a considerable amount in humanitarian coordination, its relationship with the humanitarian agencies is complex and often marked by tension. As a coordination entity, OCHA must negotiate the difficult space between management (for which it does not possess the authority) and a true operational support role (for which it does not possess the capacity.) Confusion reigns over OCHA's relationship to the IASC and the Executive Committees, both of which it participates in as a member in its own right, and over which it enjoys much greater "brand recognition" in the field.<sup>9</sup>

UNICEF at times finds itself in a mediating role between OCHA and the other agencies, which share in UNICEF's concern that OCHA not become too large and "operational," as in the past impeded the effectiveness of DHA as a coordinator.

#### **2.4.3. Inter-Agency Standing Committee**

Although all the major agencies have increased their level of commitment to the Interagency Standing Committee for Humanitarian Affairs (IASC) over the past five years,<sup>15</sup> UNICEF consistently stands out as for the depth, breadth, and consistency of its contribution.

IASC was envisioned by resolution 46/182 to serve as the primary coordinating forum for the UN agencies engaged in humanitarian response together with key non-UN actors. Several of the most important developments in field-level humanitarian coordination at have been developed or refined in the IASC, such as the consolidated appeal and humanitarian action plan processes, the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) system, contingency planning guidelines, and other field-based coordination systems and tools. It has also allowed for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and small groups of professionals across agencies to raise important issues and promote innovative ideas, a platform from which to focus international attention.<sup>16</sup>

Although all the major agencies have increased their level of commitment to the IASC over the past five years, UNICEF consistently stands out as for the depth, breadth, and consistency of its contribution. Past and present IASC Secretariat staff confirm that UNICEF, since the body's

---

<sup>15</sup> Jones and Stoddard

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

inception, has made the largest contribution in effort, staff time, and resources than any other agency. This has come at the cost of a great deal of work, however, and not all of the agency's efforts in the IASC have borne equal fruit. In general the IASC's subsidiary bodies have worked best and most productively where they have been task-oriented, and focused on output and objectives rather than structure or process (a good example being the IASC Task Force on Preparedness and Contingency Planning). The more successful examples have also been characterized by the personal interest and commitment of senior level agency staff (such as the Task Force on Prevention of Sexual Exploitation).

#### **2.4.4. Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs**

Other ECHA members and the secretariat have attested that in this mechanism also, UNICEF has demonstrated a high level of commitment, consistency, and seriousness of in its participation. However, interviews within UNICEF reveal ambivalence towards this mechanism UNICEF and its value added in humanitarian action.

The purpose of establishing the Executive Committees under the 1997 program of UN Reform was to bring greater coherence within and across departments. Initially small (about half a dozen members each) the membership of the Executive Committees has since mushroomed and overlapped. UNICEF staff and other IASC participants have been frustrated to see agenda items duplicated, and the distinction between mandates, agendas, and functions blurred. Some IASC participants have expressed concern that the system will lose the inclusive nature (i.e. the participation of NGOs and the Red Cross) and field orientation if agencies and the ERC shift their emphasis from the Geneva-based IASC to the ECHA core group (consisting of the agencies UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF, and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) together with OCHA) in New York.

Other ECHA members and the secretariat have attested that in this mechanism also, UNICEF has demonstrated a high level of commitment, consistency, and seriousness of in its participation. While UNICEF can effectively leverage issues in both fora, it may soon need to decide where it stands on the question of inclusion or exclusion of non-UN humanitarian entities in these discussions, and whether it should advocate for alternative arrangements to maintain a dialogue with these key players or process.

#### **2.4.5. Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator system**

UNICEF staff and external interviewees questioned on this topic agree that when performed well, the RC/HC is at the heart of effective, coordinated humanitarian activities in the field. UNICEF was in fact the first agency to second the first Humanitarian Coordinator (in Somalia, 1992), and has contributed to strengthening this still imperfect system in three important ways: 1) by participating actively in the design and refinement of the RC competency assessment; 2) by enabling and encouraging its staff to apply for these positions and forwarding names of highly skilled candidates for the assessment; and 3) by being a strong voice for pushing that RCs without relevant skills or experience for the humanitarian coordination role be replaced by more suitable candidates.

Over the past decade, and through much debate on the issue, a de facto system has emerged whereby the Resident Coordinator, a position institutionally housed in UNDP more or less automatically takes on the additional role of Humanitarian Coordinator when a humanitarian crisis occurs in that country. Critics of the de facto dual role (as opposed to a separate HC or the Lead Agency option) argue that the close ties to the host government fostered by an

effective RC can often constrain that person's functioning as a humanitarian advocate during a crisis, by making him or her overly reticent to speak out against government policies.<sup>17</sup> And furthermore, that NGOs and the Red Cross, important constituents of the RC/HC in the field, are essentially excluded from the selection process and feel their voices are not heard sufficiently on HC matters. On this last point, UNICEF has helped to mitigate the problem somewhat by being a strong voice behind the decision to hold the Humanitarian Coordinator retreats under the auspices of the entire IASC, rather than just UNDP, as formerly.

Interviews with UNICEF staff who have served in the RC/HC role and field staff opinions in questionnaires have underscored that the role of RC remains unclear and problematic. Since it is formally a UNDP role, the coordinator is typically burdened with management of the UNDP country office as well as the functions of coordinating the UN country team and humanitarian activities.

Although in the earliest days all participating agencies were criticized for putting up less than stellar applicants for the RC/HC postings, UNICEF by all accounts reversed this practice, and a few UNICEF secondees have been cited as among the very best performers in the role. A couple of external interviewees have pointed out that UNICEF could stand to be more proactive in putting forward immediate alternative names to replace RCs it deems unsatisfactory. It also bears mention that one internal informant expressed concern that UNICEF currently claims no RC/HC in the field, saying it raised questions regarding UNICEF's commitment to the system.

The problem remains that the current system is scant of potential RC and HC candidates who possess the combination of skills, experience, integrity, and stamina required to be effective in those roles. Some potential ideas for addressing the difficulties have emerged from UNICEF staff experiences in the RC/HC role, which mostly entail establishing support structures to allow the RC/HC to focus on the core tasks of interagency coordination role while delegating the UNDP management responsibilities to a strong deputy, and the programmatic oversight to agency sectoral leads.

#### **2.4.6. Special Representatives of the Secretary General and integrated missions**

Currently UNICEF and the humanitarian community generally do not possess any effective avenues for influence over selection of Special Representatives of the Secretary-General in humanitarian emergency contexts. The IASC has not been influential over these (essentially political) appointments, and many of its members express concern that the proliferation of SRSGs will further complicate and fragment humanitarian action in the field. In many ways this issue threatens to overshadow the issue of RC/HC in importance as increasing numbers of SRSGs are appointed in countries undergoing complex emergencies.<sup>18</sup> UNICEF senior leadership notes that while UNICEF cannot influence SRSG appointments, it is beginning to have a modest voice in the selection of Deputy SRSGs that often serve as the humanitarian side of the office. A strong DRSG could potentially mitigate the problem of a politically minded SRSG with little or no humanitarian experience, and thus fulfil the humanitarian coordination function. UNICEF would be well served to continue to push this channel both individually and through the IASC, and if possible to offer secondees for these roles.

---

<sup>17</sup> A detailed examination of the political complexities of the RC/HC dual role - an issue raised by nearly every subject interviewed for this study - can be found in Reindorp and Wiles *Humanitarian Coordination: Lessons from Recent Field Experience* (June 2001) New York: OCHA.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 36.

The increasing numbers of SRSGs are testament to the growing consensus among the UN system that integrated missions — whenever politically feasible — are the way of the future for UN operations.<sup>19</sup> The underlying premise of the integrated mission in complex political emergencies has humanitarian action serving as one central pillar within an overall coherent strategy for peace and stabilization. From a coordination and UN-wide coherence standpoint, the benefits to integrated missions are indisputable. However, for the humanitarian agencies they area decidedly mixed blessing A backlash to the integrated mission movement, led by humanitarian NGOs, has warned that the cost to humanitarian goals and principles is too dear; that coherence too often leads to conditionality or to aid taking a back seat. Humanitarian actors face serious ethical questions as to what extent they should align their programming or otherwise acquiesce with political entities on the longer-term goals of peace building?<sup>20</sup> In cases such as Afghanistan and Iraq, where the coalition forces have closely linked humanitarian action with political and military objectives, the dilemma has never been sharper. UNICEF and the other UN agencies find themselves in an even more difficult position than the NGOs in this regard, as in Iraq the UN has been identified quite closely with the occupying power, and was already a target of much popular resentment for its role in enforcing the 12-year sanctions regime. In Liberia, the NGOs have voiced particular alarm at the decision to integrate OCHA into the UNAMIL mission as an outright loss of critical humanitarian space.<sup>21</sup> For UNICEF, ensuring that humanitarian principles and protection of children’s rights are not lost in the unified stance of integrated missions will require some vigilance, and the willingness to advocate strongly within the system.

#### **2.4.7. Bilateral relations with other UN agencies**

One of the more striking elements of the external reviews conducted for this study is the number of representatives from the other agencies that point to UNICEF as their best or most important partner in humanitarian response. UNICEF is currently engaged in efforts to strengthen and clarify its individual agreements with its counterparts within the broader framework of interagency coordination. What the CCCs seek to accomplish broadly, UNICEF’s bilateral memoranda of understanding with other key humanitarian agencies attempt to establish in the nuts-and-bolts division of labour with specific counterparts. Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) or similar frameworks are currently being revisited and revised with UNHCR, WFP and World Health Organization (WHO), with the hope that they will result in strengthened, less vague understandings regarding who will take responsibility for what program activities in the given sectors.

Notwithstanding UNICEF’s apparent status as everyone’s best friend, some counterparts have expressed a sense of frustration that the MOU process with UNICEF has not come further sooner, and it is likely that UNICEF will have to continue to revisit these mechanisms as it more practically integrates its human rights-based programming approaches and looks to take a leading role in transitions.

---

<sup>19</sup> Wilton Park Conference proceedings “Humanitarian Coordination — How Does it Work? How Can it Be Improved?” Montreux, Switzerland (21-23 April 2004).

<sup>20</sup> Antonio Donini, Peter Walker, Larry Minear, “The Future of Humanitarian Action: Implications of Iraq and Other Recent Crises,” Report of an International Mapping Exercise by the Feinstein International Famine Center, Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Tufts University, January 2004.

<sup>21</sup> ICVA, “The Humanitarian Response in Liberia: Some Observations by the ICVA Coordinator” 17 June 2004, 2.

#### **2.4.8. Non-governmental organizations**

As noted above, both strands of UN reform in the humanitarian sector have implicitly acknowledged that civil society and private sector entities are increasingly important actors on the world stage. In the humanitarian realm, international NGOs in particular are crucial actors, the largest among them with program presences that outstrip the UN in more than a few countries.

UNICEF lists NGOs among their partnership frameworks for every single target area of the MTSP - as often as it lists other UN agencies.<sup>22</sup> In addition, because of the human rights approach's emphasis on participation, UNICEF has explicitly stated that this "calls for the involvement of NGOs or CBOs... (who are)... often in a unique position to facilitate the participation of children and women in programmes"<sup>23</sup>

The scope of the review did not include interviews with representatives of individual NGOs in the field, who may have lent a somewhat different perspective, but rather the consortia leaders who coordinate with UNICEF at the global level. From this, admittedly limited, survey of NGOs, UNICEF gets universally high marks for its interaction and partnership with them. It was one of the first agencies to shift from a relationship of contractor -agent to one of equal partners, and NGO representatives have noted that when they are looking for an ally in the interagency process it is typically UNICEF they approach first. UNICEF staff also point out that they have often served as interlocutors for NGOs with other parts of the UN and have endeavoured to smooth things over in cases NGOs when NGOs felt excluded or unheard by the UN system.

Although no interviews were conducted with NGOs in the field, it warrants note that some UNICEF field staff have reported hearing of some deep NGO dissatisfaction with UNICEF's overly cumbersome procedures imposed on NGOs compared to other UN agencies. Specific complaints heard from NGOs in the CEE region included UNICEF's attempt to introduce new administrative and financial requirements and procedures with little notice, and a lack of clarity and consistency in explaining these requirements to NGO partners. In such cases it is felt that UNICEF has taken the goal of accountability assurance to unreasonable and burdensome extremes.

#### **2.4.9. Donors**

Increasingly over the past decade, the international resources for humanitarian response have become overwhelmingly concentrated among a small handful of donor government agencies<sup>24</sup>, and that these bodies have stepped up their field presence and "operationality" to the point where they participate in or lead assessments, have a hand in the project designs of their implementing partners, and have essentially become critical actors in the field in their own right. At the same time, however, the donors remain uncoordinated among themselves, even between different programs of the same donor agency. UNICEF staff members have expressed the

---

<sup>22</sup> Medium-term Strategic Plan, Annex I, "Priorities, targets, indicators, core intervention areas and partnerships."

<sup>23</sup> (Revised Guidance for Collaboration with NGOs and CBOs," Executive Directive, CF/EXD/2001-013 13 July 2001).

<sup>24</sup> See Macrae et al, "Uncertain Power: The Changing Role of Official Donors in Humanitarian Action" (2002); Smillie and Minear "The Quality of Money: Donor Behavior in Humanitarian Financing" (2003); and Kent et al, "Study Four: Changes in Humanitarian Financing: Implications for the United Nations" (2003).

need to work constructively with donors to reconcile the two messages they say donors are sending: 1) that harmonization of UN agencies is necessary and desirable, and 2) that UNICEF should retain a strong, distinct, and visible profile in representing the rights of children.

Only in a handful of cases do the UN Country Teams include the regular participation of donors in dialogue and planning around country issues. Although staff in Geneva underscore the growing informal and regular contacts with donor representatives stationed there, the UN in general has weak coordination links to donors, with the Humanitarian Liaison Working Group that meets on the margins of the IASC representing the only formal mechanism for their participation in humanitarian discussions. A second one that's emerging is the "Friends of" groups that have formed around specific emergencies, which remain informal and highly substantive and effective.

It was expressed by some headquarters staff that UNICEF could usefully lead the field on engaging donors, both on the interagency level and individually, more closely and candidly, being open to discuss challenges and difficulties as well as successes.



### **3. UNICEF INVESTMENT IN, AND INCORPORATION OF UN REFORM IN THE HUMANITARIAN SPHERE**

In each of the below thematic areas UNICEF's contribution to the reform process at the field and global levels will be addressed, followed by a discussion of the impact it has had on the organization, and the value-added perceived by UNICEF staffers.

#### **3.1. Field-based coordination structures and mechanisms**

UNICEF field staff and some external respondents have noted that the UNICEF's adoption of the CCCs has begun, if somewhat slowly, to make a positive impact in its emergency programming in the field. These same respondents underscore that UNICEF has been at its most effective and valuable to the system when it can be counted on not only to fulfil these core commitments, but also when it has demonstrated the flexibility in order to fill gaps where they have arisen, and able to step aside also when others are better placed to take over certain activities that UNICEF might otherwise take on. (In water and sanitation, for instance, UNICEF has acknowledged the nearly universal demand that it take lead responsibility over the sector. In the CCCs it has committed to offer its leadership in the sector in emergencies as a matter of course, but may also choose to work under various forms of partnership when other agencies strong in the water/sanitation area, such as Oxfam or RedR, are present and capable of taking on major roles.)

Despite the oft-quoted objective of leaving a light footprint in Afghanistan, the typical and lamentable agency land rush occurred in the early days nevertheless, with UNICEF cited by UNAMA as one of the few true team players.

##### **3.1.1. Common Appeal Process/Common Humanitarian Action Plan**

Through the IASC sub-working group, UNICEF has been strongly engaged in efforts to improve the Consolidated Appeal Process and Common Humanitarian Action Plan including having a senior staff person lead the strategic review and reform of the CAP for the IASC a few years back,<sup>25</sup> and promoting the development of more analytical and standardized needs assessments and Common Humanitarian Action Plan designs.

Widely considered to be one of the most important mechanisms to emerge from the humanitarian reform process, the consolidated appeal process has improved considerably since its inception on the early 1990s when it represented little more than a collection of agency wish lists. However, most concede there is work still to be done on both the CAP and the Common Humanitarian Action Plan, which remain uneven across countries and emergencies, and have yet to be used consistently in all areas as strategic planning tools. In many cases the NGOs participate more as a pro forma responsibility for coordination than for any real sense of its relevance to their programming and funding, as they do not always see any value-added to them of participating. The CAP has not proven to garner much in the way of additional funding for their projects, and the timeframe does not correspond to their planning and project timelines, and donor engagement with the CAP is also not consistent across countries.<sup>26</sup> Yet by all accounts UNICEF does not question whether to participate, and in most cases remains one of

---

<sup>25</sup> "A Review of the Consolidated Appeal Process and Plan of Action for Strengthening the CAP," Submitted to IASC by David S. Bassiouni, Deputy Director, Office of Emergency Programmes, UNICEF Geneva, IASC: 12 November 2001.

<sup>26</sup> Reindorp and Wiles.

the more involved and committed participants to the process. In this regard, staff members largely agree that the CAP has been effectively mainstreamed into UNICEF's internal systems.

### **3.1.2. Contingency planning and preparedness**

Contingency planning provides as a good example of agency-led value-added to the system as a whole. In this case, UNICEF has developed a sophisticated methodology to benefit its own country programming and used the interagency architecture in order to share this tool with the broader community, leading the joint effort to test, train, and spread the application of a useful methodology in the field. Contingency planning has now been integrated into the terms of reference of the RC and while results are still uneven, is widespread, routine, and well regarded in the field.

Success in this area was due mainly to three factors: the demonstrated value of the methodology itself, the informal and task-driven nature of the IASC sub-working group on contingency planning, and the energy and leadership of key individuals at UNICEF, WFP and UNHCR. The sub-working group on contingency planning followed what has been generally the most effective mode of work and problem solving at the interagency level; that is a small group of professionals partnering across agencies on a specific problem or set of tasks, soliciting the participation of other experts from inside and outside the IASC and the UN system who contribute according to their professional capacity rather than agency affiliation, keeping the network small and informal, and getting the job done. It bears mention also this group first initiated the contingency and preparedness planning for Iraq, long before the rest of the system became seized of the issue, and therefore was able to lay important groundwork for the New York-based planning process in the immediate run-up to the war. In addition to those who worked directly on the guidelines, the effort was closely followed and well supported by senior management at UNICEF (which earmarked DfID capacity building funds for the purpose) and the other agencies — another key factor in its success.

To address the uneven application of contingency planning across UNCTs, UNICEF will need to actively support OCHA in the dissemination, promotion, and institutionalization of the framework. Moreover, UNICEF headquarters staff caution that the organization and the system generally still have a way to go in seeing preparedness as larger than contingency planning, making the jump to operational planning tools and institutional preparedness structures.

### **3.1.3. Joint assessments and missions**

UNICEF has participated in numerous joint assessments and missions, and where it has, has been regarded as a valuable contributor to the team. In addition, UNICEF is currently co-leading an IASC effort to develop more formal tools for undertaking joint assessments and evaluations, which stands to improve this promising, albeit patchy, mechanism. However, UNICEF's participation in missions has not been consistent, and for this it has been justly criticized.

Inter-agency missions have increased in frequency over the past few years and have served as a valuable means for establishing a common baseline for response and jointly addressing field coordination issues. In that many of these missions include donors and NGOs, they can also be important means of engaging the key non-UN actors. Yet they have also proven problematic when they are too large (particularly when members are representatives of non-operational

agencies), too frequent, or are poorly timed, creating a burden on field staff and a hindrance to programming. Field staff members also complain of too many of these missions beginning “with a blank sheet of paper,” without soliciting the participation of in-country staff or making use of the knowledge, experience and expertise already present in the field. Moreover, a few UNICEF staff have raised the issue of slower pace of some other agencies due to their more centralized decision-making structures; creating the danger that response time will be delayed by an assessment mission that had to wait for a member to receive its approvals from headquarters. It is therefore fair to say that some interagency missions are ill-advised. Nonetheless, more problems may result from UNICEF’s opting out, as the assessment of the situation and resulting interventions may be framed in ways that neglect, or are inappropriate for, the particular needs of children.

#### **3.1.4. Sectoral coordination and division of labour**

As mentioned earlier, a past critique of UNICEF in the field, specifically UNHCR and WFP, has been that UNICEF’s humanitarian response has not been sufficiently predictable. Under UNICEF’s decentralized leadership structure, its country representatives took decisions on a case-by-case basis on whether, where and how UNICEF will respond to a breaking emergency; an approach one former agency head described as “NGO-ish.”

Many within the UN system have emphasized that the agencies must begin to see their coordination based on sectoral needs rather than on agency mandates. Mandates have been used by some agencies in the past either to lay claim to areas of activity for which they don’t necessarily possess sufficient capacity or to decline necessary roles on the basis that they are not within their formal mandate. (Recently in Afghanistan some agencies that exhibited this behaviour found themselves roundly criticized by the government and UNAMA.)

The IASC having proven incapable, due to its consensus-based decision-making, of fulfilling its mandate to resolve division of labour questions and mandate gaps, UNICEF and the other agencies have been tackling the issue on a bilateral basis. As one staff member involved in the interagency system put it, with the nitty-gritty of coordination it is easier to do it bilaterally than through a forum like the IASC. UNICEF’s CCCs have reportedly already proven useful in this regard, and well received by its partners in the field. The MOUs UNICEF is revising with other agencies will need to go further still to reflect at technical level how UNICEF and its partner agencies have advanced on mutually agreed responsibilities, for instance UNICEF’s role in providing nutritional surveillance to complement WFP food aid programming. UNICEF staff and their counterparts interviewed on this issue stressed that the announcement of MOUs is insufficient, and that this time, more will need to be done to ensure their implementation in practice, leading to an outcome in which the cooperation is a pattern, rather than an option. UNICEF is taking steps in this direction already with partner agencies in Guinea (particularly in girls’ education), South Africa and elsewhere to harmonize program cycles, identify commonalities for collaboration, and hammer out the details field partnership arrangements that go beyond the MOU frameworks.

Some among the UN agency leadership have observed in this regard that the fact that maintaining different grant standards, fees, and cost recovery rates for every agency adds to contentiousness and competition, and represents a large barrier to what could be valuable joint programming.

#### **3.1.5. Transitions**

Longstanding institutional programming and funding splits between relief and development on the part of donors and aid implementers led to the shared conception of a transition “gap” that jeopardizes peace and reconstruction processes in post-conflict countries. Despite several IASC-produced or endorsed policy papers on the topic since 1995, and other major initiatives such as the Brookings process, the CPR Network, and recently the ‘4R’ process, the efforts have evidenced little continuity of effort or concrete results in terms of clear conceptual and programmatic guidelines.

Against this backdrop, the UNDG/ECHA working group on transitions, established in 2002 as a follow-up activity to Phase 2 of the UN reform process under the chairmanship of UNICEF’s Executive Director, set itself a formidable undertaking. Overall, its product has met with wide approval. The report sets forth a consensus on a working definition of transition as “the period in crisis when external assistance is most crucial in supporting or underpinning still fragile cease fires or peace processes by helping create the conditions for political stability, security, justice and social equality.” It emphasizes the fragility of the immediate post-conflict and return/resettlement phase and the need for flexible programming to address relief, rehabilitation, and development needs at once. Moreover, it underscores the vital need to work with and through national authorities, which require the credibility to lend them support as they take on crucial governance functions, but at the same time balance must be struck between ownership and the need to act fast in some areas. While some international actors have equated transition with reconstruction assistance, the broader aim of transition is consolidating peace, which requires broader coordination with a variety of actors, including for instance DPA, DPKO, the World Bank and other international financial institutions, donors, and aid agencies.

It bears mention that although most point to the outcome of the Task Force as a significant step forward, a few respondents were less sanguine, noting that for all the good work that went into it and case-specific lessons it yielded, it did not ultimately result in concrete decisions or clarification of either agency roles or resource mobilization. What is needed, they argue, is a true reckoning of agency capacities to identify practical ways to cooperate on the ground. The response to this argument would be that it was precisely this emphasis on practical, field based cooperation that led the Working Group to focus on the country studies, endeavouring not to reinvent wheels or create straight jackets, but to expand and enhance upon successful models already being used in various field settings. Nonetheless, the implementation plan being prepared as a follow-up to the Transitions report is anticipated to address responsibility issues more concretely. Overall there seems to be agreement that a path forward has been cleared, but much remains to be done in operationalizing the consensus.

Some staff members within UNICEF believe strongly that the organization possesses some inherent strengths vis-à-vis transitions that position UNICEF for potential leadership roles. For one, UNICEF is one of the few agencies that maintain a programming presence in country that encompasses both relief and development activities. In Iraq, for example, UNICEF continued running its programs for children throughout the sanctions period in partnership with the Iraqi health structures, while other actors were largely confined to the Oil for Food Program framework. The baseline indicators UNICEF was able to compile, as well as the immunization campaign it undertook just prior to the war, were of significant benefit to the post-war interagency response. In Sudan UNICEF is poised to evolve its management of OLS into a leadership role in post-conflict transition, and has agreed with the World Bank to take responsibility for managing the Capacity Building Trust Fund. UNICEF has further added to value to the international efforts regarding transitions by emphasizing education and the resumption of schooling in the earliest post-conflict stages, as both a means of protecting children in uncertain situations while enhancing trust and perceptions of a resumption of

normalcy, stability, and progress in the country emerging from conflict and crisis. Additionally, UNICEF is accustomed to working with a wide range of local actors and interlocutors, from national government entities to community based organizations, non-state actors and NGOs, and has been able to shift from one set to another with relative ease - a vitally important capacity for working in post-conflict societies.

To increase this facility, staff members acknowledge, and to ensure a place at the policy table in transitional countries, UNICEF will need to enhance its relationships with international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the regional development banks, and learn to work more effectively with trust funds. In Afghanistan and Iraq UNICEF has seconded significant numbers of its international staff to serve as technical advisors within government ministries, thus helping new government bodies develop, as one respondent termed it, the “software” of reconstruction and governance rather than the hardware. This is a practice that many internal and external respondents noted as crucial to transitions and something UNICEF should be prepared to continue and expand.

Some constraints to UNICEF moving into a more prominent role in transitions include uneven, unreliable funding to post-conflict cases that UNICEF has yet not been able to adequately mitigate with its own fund mobilization mechanisms, and the lingering perception among other parts of the UN (e.g. DPKO, DPA) of UNICEF as a service delivery organization, despite recent contributions to the knowledge base, policy, and analysis. An internal policy note of the subject of UNICEF in transitions notes these constraints and further points out the weakness of UNICEF to date in HIV/AIDS area in transition scenarios.<sup>27</sup>

### **3.2. Common humanitarian policy and normative frameworks**

The Secretary-General’s Programme of UN reform states that “The greatest source of strength enjoyed by the United Nations stems from its universality of membership and the comprehensive scope of its mandate. And the most encompassing manifestation of this strength is in the normative realm.” Correspondingly, common norm- and standard-setting and policy formation has comprised an important aspect of humanitarian reform and interagency coordination.

UNICEF’s proposal to DFID/CHAD for phase II notes that stronger links have been forged between global level political advocacy and country-specific advocacy strategy and partnerships at the field level, as well as more systematic recourse from the field to the focal points in HQ for policy and advocacy guidance.<sup>28</sup> In the interviews conducted for this review field staff have confirmed this observation, emphasizing that the various technical notes and policy guidance, as well as the CCCs, have been of great practical use. Headquarters (HQ) staff members, however, continue to profess confusion as to how organizational policy is formed within UNICEF on humanitarian issues before being transmitted upward to the interagency arena. It is assumed to be something of an ad hoc process, reactive to emergent issues and generated by the “coordinating core” within UNICEF New York and Geneva who were active in the interagency matters. The general feeling seems to be that this process has generated good policy in the past, and that the individuals involved in the interagency process, by essentially making policy “out on a limb” may even have pulled the organization into more advanced coordination roles than would otherwise have been the case. However, because of its ad hoc

---

<sup>27</sup> “UNICEF’s Future Role in Post-Conflict Transition,” Draft Policy Note by Anupama Rao Singh (2004).

<sup>28</sup> UNICEF, “A Global Proposal to Strengthen UNICEF Programming as it Applies to Humanitarian Response: Phase II” Submitted to DfID/CHAD. (November 2001), 11-12.

and personality-driven nature, the policy-making process is subject to change (potentially negative) as personnel changes.

Currently some external observers close to UNICEF and internal respondents express concern about what they see is a potential trend toward more conservative, less flexible and forward-thinking policy making within UNICEF. The dilemma seems to be how to create a more clearly understood process of policy formation at UNICEF without bureaucratizing it to the point where UNICEF will lose its place in the avant-garde. While no one has suggested instituting a formalized policy adoption process with white papers, etc., the sense that emerged that staff wish to allow those in policy making and coordinating roles to continue to have the discretion and flexibility to respond to events with a clear and timely UNICEF position, but based on an agreed upon set of policy and advocacy principles established after wide consultation. A policy and advocacy strategy built upon UNICEF's prior conceptual work on its core principles and values could provide this basis for policy makers participating in interagency fora. In this way those individuals could continue to push UNICEF's agenda with the most current thinking on policy issues and will no longer be flying blind, but will have the rest of the house more solidly behind them.

### **3.2.1. Rights-based approach to programming, protection, CAC**

The SG's reform package makes explicit reference to the need to integrate human rights advocacy into other areas of UN activity, including peacekeeping, development, and humanitarian action.<sup>29</sup> There appears to be a consensus among respondents that in this area UNICEF has led the pack, both in terms of integrating rights based approach into its own work and promoting frameworks for integrating human rights into humanitarian work to the broader humanitarian system. UNICEF was in fact among the first UN agencies to expressly adopt the rights-based framework to its programming, making the conceptual shift from a philanthropic/voluntary paradigm of meeting needs, to one of protecting basic rights. It has done so by invoking the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), adopted by the General Assembly in November 1989, which UNICEF incorporated into its mission statement in 1996.

UNICEF's Human Rights Based Approach to Programming (HRBAP) has provided an important conceptual bridge between the organization's humanitarian and development work, which is expected to serve UNICEF in developing its strategic role in transitions. Beginning in situations of conflict and/or failed states, where often both governments and non-state actors deliberately flout humanitarian and human rights laws to gain advantage the HRBAP provides a promising tool for action. It calls for principled engagement with non-state actors (often among the worst abusers of children's rights) invoking the CRC, which applies to all children in all situations, and may hold as duty-bearers to children not only the state, but also others including parents, local authorities or non-state actors. International humanitarian law, as enshrined in the Geneva Conventions and protocols, contain special provisions and protections for children. With these two bodies of international law, humanitarians have a broad legal basis for protecting children's

---

<sup>29</sup> "Humanitarian actions today go beyond the saving of lives through relief operations and involve a wide range of efforts covering early warning, prevention, provision of emergency assistance, advocacy of humanitarian and human rights principles, protection and monitoring, with a view to ensuring a smooth transition to longer-term development." From *Renewing the UN: A Programme for Reform*, Report of the Secretary-General, A/51/950, (14 July 1997), Part II: Measures and Proposals, Section E: Humanitarian Affairs

rights through their programming.<sup>30</sup> The rights based approach is also well suited to programming in situations where a post-conflict state is making the transition to peace, reconstruction, and development. The protection of rights implies a longer time horizon than the acute crisis period and a broader set of goals than humanitarian relief.

None of the interviews conducted for this study revealed opinions unfavourable to the rights-based approach, or the desire to return to a more straightforward, service delivery focus in UNICEF's work. On the contrary, most subjects stressed that HRBAP had not advanced enough in programming, that in many field contexts it remained abstract or theoretical, with staff groping for ways to realize it in practice beyond rhetorical support. Field staff have expressed the sense that UNICEF is nevertheless ahead of the pack on this issue, and should take on the responsibility for pushing the rights-based agenda in interagency fora and mechanisms. They make note that some Consolidated Appeals, demonstrate a complete lack of understanding on the rights-based approach, and in others it remains limited to buzz words in the narrative. The difficulty in translating the conceptual understanding to guidance for practical application of the rights based approach to programming is universal among agencies. The community of humanitarian actors has yet to agree on common terms of engagement or a system bottom-line for negotiating with authorities or non-state actors in conflict situations. Above all, its staff members stress that at the core of UNICEF's mandate is protection, and the agency needs to engage in protection activities more actively and consistently (in some cases, it was mentioned, protection was equated with and limited to family reunification).

Policy staff in the Office of Emergency Programmes and Programme Division are acutely aware of the need to translate HRBAP policies into action, and focused on developing practicable technical guidance for country offices. Numerous guidelines and trainings have and continue to be developed on rights and protection issues, both internally, such as the "Guidelines for Human Rights-Based Programming Approach" (21 April 1998), and as shared outputs with the interagency community, including the highly regarded *Growing the Sheltering Tree: Protecting Rights Through Humanitarian Action*. The revised CCCs have a stronger link to the rights-based approach and to related elements of UN reform such as a focus on advocacy.

Regarding children and armed conflict, UNICEF has unquestionably led the way on this issue since its support of the seminal study by Graca Machel on the *Impact of Armed Conflict on Children*. UNICEF pushed strongly for the appointment of SRSG for children in armed conflict and today works closely with that office (despite some tensions in the relationship). With the latest Security Council resolution on the issue (1539) calling upon the SG to devise a plan for monitoring and reporting violations to children's rights, UNICEF has begun to examine its own role in witnessing and reporting on human rights abuses. Large questions to be addresses include who would serve as the monitors/reported; to whom would they provide the information; and how and what sort of program or advocacy response would be triggered. UNICEF staff interviewed admit that protection is a newer issue, and with UNICEF staff capacity in the field already stretched, protection is simply not as well situated as other, technical sectors of UNICEF's work. To assist in this effort, UNICEF has established and leads an informal interagency group on children in armed conflict. This "non-group" of relevant and interested NGOs, human rights organizations, and UN agencies meets regularly to discuss the issues and seeks to identify the specific child violations that should be monitored. The group has assisted these parties in reaching a common understanding, and is now working on developing a set of key indicators for gauging the situation of children vis-à-vis the conflict, e.g.: 1) recruitment and

---

<sup>30</sup> Programme Policy and Procedure Manual:: Section 01: Human Rights Based Approach to Programming, "Chapter 2: Operations Framework", 8.

use of children as child soldiers, 2) abductions and forced labour, 3) maiming and killing 4) gender based violation, 5) denial of access, such as attacks on schools and hospitals.

The working group on separated children provides another example of a small, informal forum led by UNICEF and attended by various UN and non-UN experts that has proven effective in framing issues and planning strategies for action. The informal and substantive nature of these bodies avoids interagency politics and allows for a lot of useful work to get done on the technical level.

Despite its advances in this area in recent years, UNICEF lacks sufficient human resources capacity to adequately meet its mandate for child protection in emergencies. Staff members note that the organization has been forced to “shuttle the same handful of people around” from one emergency to another. Liberia was cited in particular as an example where inconsistent staffing at the country office level and temporary gaps in HQ’s policy section left the mission at first bereft of people with sufficient experience in issues related to child soldiers. UNICEF now finds itself somewhat in damage-control mode, trying to roll back and rework what it sees as inappropriate interventions by the mission (such as the provision of cash allotments to demobilizing children). UNICEF staff note a significant expansion of child protection activities across UNICEF countries, but feel it is inconsistent and lacking leadership at a policy level on norms and standards. UNICEF field staff members have been encouraged to be proactive and take risks on child protection matters. However, this kind of support from headquarters is necessary but insufficient, leaving too much to the discretion of the person on the ground, particularly in light of the political cautiousness of many RCs around this sensitive issue. Staff questioned on this topic almost universally declared the need to develop additional technical assistance, guidance, and leadership from HQ on child protection issues.

In conflict situations where UN peacekeeping forces are present, UNICEF has taken up the responsibility for training and advising peacekeeping personnel on child rights and child protection. The newer practice of posting Child Protection Advisers (CPAs) in UN peacekeeping missions is one that UNICEF had originally proposed to take a stronger management role over, either by direct secondments to the missions or having its country offices play this role. Currently the CPAs are recruited as mission personnel, but UNICEF has made its staff available for these assignments (including the first CPA appointed in Sierra Leone). Although the management arrangements are less than ideal from UNICEF’s standpoint (see case illustration of Sierra Leone, below) the CPAs nonetheless represent an important opportunity for UNICEF to expand on its strategic secondments of personnel to advance the interests of children, and underscores the need for enhanced human resource capacity. UNICEF staff members both in the field and at headquarters have expressed the sense that UNICEF needs more ownership over child protection process. The system for fielding CPAs, for example, should be expanded and continued regardless of any changes to the Office of the Special Representative for the Secretary General /Children in Armed Conflict.

### **3.2.2. Advocacy**

Humanitarian advocacy, implied within the HRBAP, expressly invoked in UN Reform, warrants separate discussion. As the 1998 guidelines on rights based approach programming state.

“UNICEF and other UN agencies must advocate for change when national policies and practices, or the policies and practices of bodies other than the State, undermine the realisation of rights...Advocacy is neither an external relations activity nor an add-on to a sectoral intervention. It is a key programme component, based on accurate data regarding the rights situation in specific areas which is derived from systematic monitoring, and it forms a thread linking the various aspects of the entire programme.”<sup>31</sup>

UNICEF engages in many types of advocacy, of which promoting children’s rights vis-à-vis the state and non-state actors is just one. This kind of advocacy can be formalized on the country level or effected through backdoor channels when too politically explosive to include in country plans. UNICEF’s engagement on child protection also requires advocating its principles to political and military actors within the UN system, as well as externally. As one example, in the UN response to Liberia, as alluded to above, DPKO is leading a program for demobilization, disarmament and reintegration of combatants. Under their program child soldiers are receiving cash allotments similar to those provided to adult demobilizing soldiers. This practice is strongly opposed by UNICEF in general, as an inappropriate intervention that only increases the children’s vulnerability. And while UNICEF engaged in advocacy on this issue at different levels of the organization in different fora, there was no multi-level strategy guiding the organization as whole.<sup>32</sup> Despite recommendations of a previous evaluation of UNICEF in humanitarian response<sup>33</sup>, and the predilection of some key staff members, UNICEF remains without an organizational strategy for advocacy.<sup>34</sup>

Of greater concern is the sense, as mentioned above, expressed by some staff members of an overly conservative approach on the part of UNICEF of late to political and human rights advocacy in cases of serious rights abuses and forgotten emergencies — precisely where UNICEF’s voice should be the loudest (these staff members cited in particular Guantanamo, Chechnya, Indonesia, OPT, Northern Uganda, and Zimbabwe). These informants felt that UNICEF tends to be overly diplomatic, even timid, in highlighting abuses of child rights, particularly vis-à-vis great powers. At least one interviewee opined that Country Representatives are increasingly unwilling to be vocal in these issues, because they do not sense they would have the strong support of headquarters if they were to get in trouble with the host government (whereas previously this was considered almost a badge of honour, according to the informant). It should be noted that other field staff expressed, to the contrary, that they did feel supported and encouraged by UNICEF HQ, but still desired a greater degree of leadership and guidance in advocacy activities.

### **3.2.3. Civil-military interface**

UNICEF has in general taken a stronger stand than other UN agencies on the importance of protecting neutral humanitarian space and keeping the lines between humanitarian and military operations separate and distinct. In Afghanistan, UNICEF stood out starkly among the UN agencies in the assertiveness of its opposition to the U.S. military forces wearing civilian clothes performing small scale-aid interventions.

---

<sup>31</sup> UNICEF Executive Directive. “Guidelines for Human-Rights Based Programming Approach” (CF/EXD-1998-004, 21 April 1998) 10-11, 31.

<sup>32</sup> UNICEF. “Pilot Real-time Evaluation — UNICEF support in Liberia, May 2003-April 2004” (June 2004).

<sup>33</sup> Jim Freedman, Jim. “Desk Review on UNICEF Humanitarian Response Capacity” UNICEF. (April 2001).

<sup>34</sup> The lack of and need for a UNICEF advocacy strategy was noted in several interviews and in the document “Martigny II — Where Are We Now? A Review Of UNICEF Humanitarian Response Capacity” UNICEF Evaluation Office (May 2003).

The recent guidelines adopted by the IASC serve as another case in point. The IASC has come out with four different guideline documents on the interrelation of humanitarian action with military operations. The most recent process began outside of the IASC, which raised concern of UNICEF as well as UNHCR, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and NGOs, particularly on the substantial role being played by donors in their design, and doubts concerning the MCDU (a unit whose expertise has in the past been largely restricted to response to national disasters). The NGO members of the IASC credit UNICEF in particular for standing firm that a common policy needed to be forged in the IASC on the issue before proceeding. While the final product has met with less than full satisfaction, IASC members generally agree that the original draft had it been adopted by the UN would have been unacceptable.

#### **3.2.4. Gender mainstreaming**

UNICEF has served as co-chair of the IASC subsidiary body devoted to gender mainstreaming for several years. This particular body was responsible for producing two significant outputs, the Policy Statement for the Integration of a Gender Perspective in Humanitarian Assistance (1999) and the Gender and Humanitarian Assistance Resource Kit on CD-ROM (2001) but had lost momentum and support by 2003 when it was recommended by the external review (though opposed by the IASC) to conclude work and close down. Unlike the subsidiary bodies for contingency planning and sexual exploitation, and the two aforementioned informal groups UNICEF HQ staff have developed on issues of children, the gender reference group was more perfunctory, with its mandate extended repeatedly, meetings held with agencies represented at fairly low levels, and little personal involvement or leadership on the part of senior staff members of any of the participants. On the whole the emphasis on output had shifted to one of process, and the feeling among UNICEF participants was that UNICEF was shouldering too much of the administrative workload and financial burden of this body with little return to show for it.

#### **3.2.5. Internally displaced persons**

The ongoing debate over responsibility for IDPs, and the continued spotty coverage of displaced population groups in emergency settings, arguably reflects the failure of the UN humanitarian community to resolve fundamental mandate gaps. Many UNICEF staff members, along with other representatives of IASC member agencies admit to having deep reservations about the so-called “collaborative approach” that they have agreed to for covering IDP needs, noting that it has not resulted in any consistent or predictable system of meeting IDP needs from one emergency to another. NGOs in particular have emphasized they see this as one of the interagency community’s major failings, and have cited as cases in point the controversial IDP leadership assignment in Iraq on the one hand<sup>35</sup>, and the lack of leadership on IDPs currently in Liberia.<sup>36</sup> The practice of keeping the IDP issue as a standing item on the IASC Working Group agenda was felt to be symptomatic of the larger problem. Several IASC members felt it had become little more than a pro forma report and that keeping it on the agenda actually did the issue a disservice by creating the illusion that it was being addressed and progress was being made — another case of process disguised as substantive action.

---

<sup>35</sup> Interviews with NGO representatives

<sup>36</sup> ICVA, “The Humanitarian Response in Liberia: Some Observations by the ICVA Coordinator”

On the issue of IDPs, UNICEF overcame its initial reluctance to single out this population group as a special category of victim and has since become one of the most active members of the UN system in raising awareness of the issue and supporting interagency initiatives in creating guidelines and standards.<sup>37</sup> Although it may seem at first blush as though the interagency community has made a great deal of substantive progress on IDPs in the 1990s, in truth the cited accomplishments — The Guiding Principles, the Interagency Network on Internal Displacement, the Internal Displacement Unit in OCHA - are mostly on paper and in headquarters offices rather than on the ground. The norms and policies developed over the 1990s, as important as they are to UNICEF's normative tool box, have yet to translate into a system in the field that is, in the words of US Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, "predictable, accountable, universal and equipped"<sup>38</sup> to meet the needs of IDPs in emergencies.

UNICEF has lately focused its efforts on improving the IDP network, the interagency forum within OCHA's IDP Unit, and seeking to infuse new ideas and energy into the process. In UNICEF, many of those involved with the unit speak of frustration with the body, which meets once a month but seldom tackles concrete problems. UNICEF's proposals have included a rotating chairmanship, country-specific meetings on the IDP situations in Haiti, Liberia, and Uganda, and setting mini-work plans that set forth three concrete things the network will accomplish. No doubt these would represent improvements to the process, but it is worth asking if the potential impact on the IDP protection will equal the energy spent on improving an HQ-based mechanism. Neither UNICEF nor any other agency has proposed or promoted the kind of far-reaching structural change that the IDP issue requires. Given the predominance of women and children in IDP populations, the unique vulnerability of displaced children to sexual abuse, separation, disruption of schooling, and other concerns central to UNICEF's mandate, this would seem an issue on which UNICEF should be prepared to take a stronger leadership stance.

### **3.2.6. Sexual violence and exploitation**

UNICEF played a key role in developing the IASC guidelines against sexual exploitation, today cited as one of the most effective examples of policy-setting within the IASC framework. A senior staff member co-chaired (with OCHA) the Task Force created in response to the West Africa scandal involving aid workers sexually exploiting women and children in refugee camps, and worked rapidly to develop guidelines and a plan of action. Among the contributors to its effectiveness, the Task Force set for itself a specific and time-bound TOR for developing an interagency response, engaging NGOs and consulting with donors throughout. Like the Contingency Planning group, this process was led by a tight group of senior professionals from UNICEF and OCHA assisted by technical experts, and their interactions were all of a substantive rather than perfunctory nature. The principles were rapidly adopted by agencies and worked into internal agency charters and codes of conduct, as well as incorporated into UN administrative guidelines for staff, giving them authority within the UN system, and the Plan of Action was widely distributed in the field. Moreover, both donors and agencies have conducted

---

<sup>37</sup> Catherine Phuong, "Improving the United Nations Response to Crises on Internal Displacement," *International Journal of Refugee Law*, Volume 13, Issue 4 (2001); Abby Stoddard "Everyone's and No One's: IDPs, Refugees, and the Politics of Aiding the Displaced" in *The Politics of Forced Migration*, Nitza Nachmias, ed (forthcoming).

<sup>38</sup> Statement by Ambassador Richard C. Holbrooke, United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Cardozo Law School, New York, March 28, 2000, USUN Press Release # 44 (00) March 28, 2000 [http://www.un.int/usa/00\\_044.htm](http://www.un.int/usa/00_044.htm) (11 February 2003), 2.

some follow-up monitoring of compliance — an implementation aspect notably lacking in previous common policy initiatives.

Interviewees and past evaluations have noted, however, that the process received a significant and unusual push from donors and media pressure after the scandal broke, and expressed some scepticism that the interagency community would have produced the guidelines with such alacrity if the pressure had not been applied.

UNICEF for its part was not implicated in the scandal, but has been active in the field, particularly in Western and Southern Africa, in promoting the guidelines and adapting them to specific country and program conditions. Many staff members questioned expressed the sentiment that UNICEF bears a natural responsibility for leading in the implementation and promotion of these principles, i.e. “if UNICEF doesn’t, who will?”

### **3.3. Operational issues**

#### **3.3.1. Security**

In recent years UNICEF has been active through the IASC in participating in task forces on security and contributing to new guidelines in cooperation with UNSECCORD and other agencies. Most recently, the IASC established a set of guidelines on the UN-NGO interface in security, heretofore considered one of the major gaps in field-based security arrangements.<sup>39</sup> On the field level, UNICEF country offices report numerous instances of cost sharing for security with UNSECCORD and other agencies, and other UNICEF contributions including seconding and sharing security officers, UNICEF management of security functions in common premises, and its overall security role for OLS in Sudan.

After the fatal attack on the UN offices in Baghdad on 19 August 2003, the understandable reaction within the UN system was to hunker down and prioritize the safety of its personnel, who appear to have become appealing soft targets for belligerents in some areas. At least a few UN officials have lamented the resulting situation, where security concerns have come to drive and dictate the humanitarian agenda. Security issues have also lent great weight to the push for integrated UN missions.

In UNICEF as well as other humanitarian agencies, staff express growing concern that the emphasis on security and integration threatens to paralyze effective humanitarian action, which to be effective must entail both a degree of accepted risk and the distance from political interests to project an image of neutrality. After the tragedy in Baghdad, UNICEF staff members agree, the increased attention given to UN security system is necessary and valued, but the humanitarian agencies must take care that by adhering to a single set of rules they do not negate their very mandate and purpose as humanitarians. Staff point out, for example, that the UN security phases and staff reductions and withdrawals, applicable to all UN staff, come under the authority of the Designated Official, who is very often a UNDP representative official and not attuned to the work style and risk threshold of emergency response actors. It is said also that the security phases are used to send political messages to the government or other factions in country, which further muddies the waters for neutral humanitarian operations.

---

<sup>39</sup> IASC-WG, “Recommendations to the IASC-WG From the IASC-WG Staff Security Task Force”, 18 January 2002

On the global level, UNICEF has been an active participant in interagency discussions and working groups on issues of security. In Sudan, Afghanistan, and several other countries where UNICEF maintains a prominent presence, UNICEF has stepped up to fill security gaps and taken on various aspects of security management for the interagency community and NGOs. Although it is not typically seen to be within UNICEF's operational niche, this represents another area where UNICEF staffers believe they should be leading more, not less. These staff members stress that collaboration on security is much more robust than it used to be, and in fact has prevented "hundreds if not thousands" of serious security incidents. In current and future integrated missions, UNICEF increasingly will have to grapple with the dilemma posed between being good team player and being present where needed to aid and protect children; or in other words, how to assure coherence and complementarity while maintaining separate humanitarian space and independent action.

### **3.3.2. Common services/JLC**

Common logistical and communication services, and centralized information gathering and dissemination, enable agencies and NGOs to coordinate more effectively and enhances efficiency across the international response. UN reform has emphasized the need to minimize inefficiencies in costs and time that occur as each agency establishes separate operational systems for communications, logistics, information, etc. In addition, common premises are encouraged not only for cost effectiveness but to foster enhanced communication and collaboration. As reflected in interviews and country office documentation, UNICEF has taken these directives seriously and taken steps in this direction in nearly every country office. At times the UNICEF office has been too large for common premises, but even in such cases UNICEF has contributed to common services in other ways, including seconding or sharing security officers and logisticians, streamlining radio communications services, running common vehicle pools, obtaining common banking agreements, and other inputs.

The IASC Working Group's agreements to establish Joint Logistics Centres (JLCs) and Humanitarian Information Centres represents an important step forward, and where implemented to date has already evidently demonstrated capacity to enhance response.<sup>40</sup> For the most part UNICEF field staff are optimistic about the JLCs' potential, citing particularly positive experiences in Afghanistan. Some caution, however, that while the JLC could play an increasingly important role, the UN community needs to make very clear the terms of its work. It will be add value so long as it focuses on coordination, brings in the logistical assets required, provides guidance and advice to agencies, but should not become operational in terms of running transport and warehouses, customs clearance, etc. (Some in UNICEF also expressed the perception that the JLC, originally seen as an outgrowth of WFP tries to give preference to food aid over non-food items.) UNICEF has sent to date approximately 10 staff members through the JLC training program to become secondees when a JLC is deployed.

## **3.4. Cross-cutting themes**

### **3.4.1. Defining emergencies, humanitarian action, and humanitarian actors**

A contingency planning survey of UNICEF Country Offices found that in almost every country UNICEF has responded with five to eight different emergencies, and that different agencies necessarily defined emergencies in different ways based on their mandate and priorities. An infestation emergency to the Food and Agriculture Organization would not be an emergency to UNICEF, and a disruption of immunization programs may be an emergency to UNICEF but not

---

<sup>40</sup> Jones and Stoddard.

to WFP, and so on. This has had implications for preparedness and contingency planning, since debates arise over the appropriate focus of planning. Therefore, and in keeping with the problem-driven as opposed to mandate driven concept of interagency coordination, the UNICEF-led interagency Contingency Planning task force has been pushing a holistic, all-hazard approach to preparedness. With the strong encouragement of key donors the interagency process endeavours to enhance the system by providing a common picture of the full range of emergencies that may require international response.

On a broader level, this and many other studies have observed that within the UN system there exists no clear common definition or parameters of what constitutes humanitarian action and actors. The trend among agencies has been to expand the humanitarian concept to allow for more actors and a wider range of activities to find a place at the humanitarian table (an unhelpful development, according to many, especially in bodies like the IASC which has no steering committee or core group). Notwithstanding the humanitarian mandate creep, when faced with extremes of insecurity such as in Iraq, many have called for clearer agreement on what constitutes life-saving humanitarian action. UNICEF includes education/schooling resumption as a core activity in humanitarian emergencies as a protection function, but some within the organization have questioned whether this can realistically be included as an essential mandated function in extreme cases.

Another unresolved definitional issue that a few field staff members highlighted in interviews was the cases of “chronic emergency,” i.e. how to define and approach those situations where the political transition has stalled, conditions are not conducive to reconstruction or development programming, and the population’s needs are serious but not acutely life threatening. In these cases the transition framework does not apply, nor technically do the CCCs, which are primarily designed to structure UNICEF’s activities for the first 6-8 weeks of a crisis. Some countries, on their ninth or tenth CAP, run a major risk of donor fatigue and waning of public attention, and stand to benefit greatly from an infusion of new ideas and approaches to about their limbo status.

## 4. CASE ILLUSTRATIONS

The following four cases serve to exemplify some of the main issues examined in this review, and attempt to highlight the strengths, weaknesses, and lessons for the future regarding UNICEF's role in the ongoing reform of UN humanitarian action. As per the terms of reference, these necessarily brief and superficial sketches of long-running and complex emergencies should be viewed not as full case studies, but rather as case-specific illustrations of the review's themes as they played out on the field level.

### 4.1. Afghanistan

Afghanistan has endured over 20 years of recurring conflict, wide scale human rights abuses, and crushing poverty. Its current fragile transition hangs on the cooperative relationship that has been forged between international actors and the new Afghan government (and among the international actors themselves), and is serving as laboratory and litmus test for the principles of UN reform and the new thinking on transitional assistance.

#### 4.1.1. Context of current crisis and UNICEF's prior programming in country

During the period of the Taliban regime up until the US military action in October 2001, UNICEF was programming roughly \$15 million worth of aid a year, making it the largest UN actor on the ground. As the Taliban was consolidating its power and punitive control over the population, the UN agencies found themselves contending with ever tightening restrictions on their humanitarian access and activities, and rights abuses against women that grew more egregious as time went on. It was in this context that the UN established the first ever framework agreement<sup>41</sup>, a precursor to the integrated mission approach which sought to enhance coherence the political pillar of UN operations with humanitarian action and human rights. While applauding the concept, UNICEF staff members who were on the ground at the time maintain that the framework agreement made no appreciable impact, and negotiations with the Taliban were not facilitated as a result. On the contrary, it became increasingly clear that the government officials were "toying with the UN" as one UNICEF staffer put it, and had no intention of dealing in good faith.

Faced with proliferating restrictions on girls' education and women's rights to work and to leave their homes, the UN found itself unable to come to a common position on how to respond. Many agencies and NGOs were holding to the position that the Taliban's *decrees* were an extension of Afghan culture, and UNICEF, not for the first time in Afghanistan, found itself a lonely voice at the UN in decrying the ever-retreating bottom line. Carol Bellamy was pushing the issue at the IASC during this time, and UNICEF did withdraw its support of Taliban schools, but UNICEF stopped short of withdrawing completely in protest, which might have shone a more intense light on the untenable human rights situation.

#### 4.1.2. Planning and preparedness

Events unfolded with surprising rapidity in Afghanistan after September 11, and neither UNICEF nor the interagency community generally proved able to keep up with the planning and

---

<sup>41</sup> The "Strategic Framework for Afghanistan" was a policy instrument established by UN actors in Afghanistan and approved by the SG in September 1998 that set out the "principles, goals and institutional arrangements for a more coherent, effective and integrated political strategy and assistance programme."

coordination requirements for the early phases of the response. During the period of the US combat operations in October-November 2001, UNICEF, like other UN agencies and NGOs, was running programs by remote control, with international staff in Pakistan and national staff endeavouring to keep up minimum operations. According to UNICEF field staff, the Islamabad office was struggling to cope with the large numbers of incoming personnel on loan from other country offices and to make the shift to the new high pace and profile nature of the emergency. For this reason UNICEF was not in the vanguard of the international community's return to Afghanistan, but was one of the later deployers. On returning it found rates for housing and office facilities had already spiked due to agencies uncoordinated scramble for real estate, and suitable space in short supply, which delayed its start-up further. Although under OCHA coordination the agencies produced joint plans - the November 2001 Emergency Assistance Plan, later folded into the Immediate and Transitional Assistance Plan (ITAP) — many have critiqued them as being little more than a compilation of rushed individual agency plans and lacking in ownership or meaningful participation by the interim government.

UNICEF and the other agencies named regional coordinators to a joint planning body, and UNICEF was prompt in appointing a special representative to this post for which three of its regional office domains intersected. Without pre-existing communication and coordinated planning on the regional level, this was too late to be practically effective in the immediate term (it did however provide a channel for input into the mission structures in development and paved the way for a future coordinating role for UNICEF). Other factors frustrating the interagency response included the delay in establishing UNAMA and in appointing the DRSG for relief, recovery and reconstruction until March 2002.<sup>42</sup>

#### **4.1.3. Assessment of UNICEF's contribution to interagency coordination**

Having been somewhat slow out of the gate in 2001, UNICEF later distinguished itself for its leadership and facilitation of the interagency effort in several areas. According to representatives of UNAMA, and its own self assessments, UNICEF was one of the better performers in its willingness to participate in interagency processes, and particularly those important to transition, including:

- Following systematic sectoral approach to programming, including taking the lead in sectors where it had the capacity and its leadership was needed (education, water and sanitation) and playing key roles in other sectors (UNICEF is operational lead in health while WHO does disease surveillance) phasing over leadership to national entities as their capacities increased.
- Providing secondments to assist UNAMA and government authorities develop a the National Development Framework, thereby enabling the creation of Afghan-owned, results based framework that has come to overlay and guide the entire transition effort.
- Promoting the use of common premises. After the land rush, UNICEF was one of the first agencies to agree to join into a common UN compound. UN officials have come to acknowledge the importance of minding the cost efficiencies of UN system, not just for the sake of donors, but for local populations who, when they see separate and relatively luxurious accommodations (and systems) for the various UN bodies they see money going into the UN system rather than there own country and communities.
- Promoting common services and operations support. UNICEF staff recall pushing operations coordination in Kabul, normally the purview of another agency and led even

---

<sup>42</sup> UNDG/ECHA, "Report of the UNDG/ECHA Working Group on Transition Issues," (Annex One, Country Study: Afghanistan), 5.

communications coordination, for which it did not have comparative advantage but simply stepped up to fill an important gap. UNICEF took on the management of common services and premises, including running the vehicle pool for pickups, security for the compound, a cafeteria, crèche, and gym for all staff. It also negotiated and a banking agreement on behalf of all UN agencies. In all, according to former field staff, UNICEF spent roughly \$1.8M in these efforts, with expected full cost recovery in two years, through rental revenues.

- Providing technical assistance, including secondments to Afghan ministries, minimizing parallel structures and activities and helping lend credibility to the fledgling government.
- Sharing UNICEF security personnel with other agencies, including a four-week secondment of a security officer to UN Security Coordinator in Kandahar.
- All told, about 15 UNICEF personnel were seconded to other agencies and government ministries in Afghanistan.
- Filling various small gaps throughout the system such as providing tents for voter registration.

Although it does not necessarily take away anything from UNICEF's contribution, it need be noted that the incoming Afghan government (and specifically former World Bank official Ashraf Ghani) proved capable of exerting unprecedented coordination authority over the international assistance effort, to largely beneficial effect. In addition, the SRSG allowed his deputy — a former UNICEF regional office with a great deal of experience — much leeway to run the relief and development side of the mission. The connection undoubtedly helped UNICEF to be heard and to work effectively with the mission structure. Finally, the UNICEF Representatives in the field were credited as being a risk takers and proactive about identifying and filling gaps — a necessary element of UNICEF's leadership.

One critique of UNICEF to emerge had to do with its communications/public relations. Some external observers perceived a moment where UNICEF seemed to succumb to its old tendency to highlight its organizational profile at the expense of larger goals. Specifically, some involved in the Afghanistan response felt that UNICEF promoted itself too strongly around the highly acclaimed Back to School program that it led, and did not share enough of the spotlight and the credit with the new government, which dearly needed it for its own credibility. The instance underscores the need for UNICEF to be more mindful of the principles of local ownership and to work harder to balance its visibility goals if it is to become a major player in transitions.

#### **4.1.4. Major issues**

**Humanitarian principles and space:** Afghanistan saw unprecedented linkage of humanitarian assistance to great power political and military objectives. As part of its hearts and minds campaign, the US military made controversial airdrops of food aid during the period of combat operations, and later deployed military personnel in civilian clothing to undertake small scale relief and reconstruction activities. On this issue staff in the field again felt that UNICEF was lonely voice in the UN mission to forcefully argue against these practices and for the preservation of neutral humanitarian space. UNICEF shared and publicly echoed the concerns of many NGOs that this blurring of lines compromised both humanitarian ethics and the physical security of aid workers. At brainstorming meetings on the issue convened by the DRSG, staff felt that UNICEF was alone and out on a limb among the UN agencies in the strongly principled stance it took. Staff noted with appreciation the strong level of support they from received from UNICEF HQ, particularly EMOPS. As in the time of the Taliban, it was unclear what recourse

was available to UNICEF beyond pushing the issue in UN fora (the CT, the mission, or and the IASC), signalling the need, one could argue, for broader organizational advocacy strategies.

- **Child protection:** UNICEF staff members interviewed on Afghanistan acknowledged that this was an area of some weakness. Disappointingly, in the critical areas unique to UNICEF's mandate in child protection, the organization failed to adequately translate its mission into practical strategy, in the eyes of its staff. UNICEF is working on child soldier demobilization under the broader umbrella of DDR, yet when faced with the large number of children in Afghan prisons, UNICEF did not act decisively. Some staff members interviewed assert that there should have been a strategic discussion on how to assist these children, perhaps as straightforward as improvements in the quality of incarceration premises or creating separate facilities. The attitude cited of "we don't get involved in prisons" represented, at best, a missed opportunity for action in child protection.

#### **4.1.5. Conclusions**

In many ways Afghanistan represented a significant step forward for the UN system and for UNICEF as a coordination leader. The extent to which agencies worked with and through the government ministries embodied the consensus on the importance of transition assistance to shore up the peace process as the most crucial way forward to improving people's lives in the longer term. UNICEF, after an awkward start, distinguished itself in its leadership role, setting a promising precedent for future engagement in transitions. It fell short, however, in fulfilling its advocacy and protection responsibilities — duties that derive from its own mission and from the principles of UN reform.

#### **4.2. Iraq**

Although the case of Iraq is in many ways *sui generis*, it has yielded useful lessons regarding interagency humanitarian coordination and UNICEF's facilitating role, particularly in the early planning and preparedness phases. Informants from within UNICEF and elsewhere in the UN system point out the particular characteristics about the Iraq case that, in their estimation, helped increase cohesion among humanitarian actors. In brief:

- An unusually long lead time for planning and preparedness measures
- A planning approach to sectoral coordination in which agencies took on roles according to capacities rather than mandates or PR purposes, which carried over into field operations.
- An abundance of government funding, reducing competitive tendencies among agencies
- Less agency branding, or "flag-flying"

Throughout the run-up to the Iraq war and the initial humanitarian response UNICEF found its main strength in its long-term presence in country, encompassing independent program activities in addition to those within the Oil for Food Programme framework, which enabled it to provide the crucial information base for the response and initial activities even before the war began.

Despite largely positive reviews for planning, mitigation, and coordination efforts, however, UNICEF and its counterparts have since late 2003 faced what one agency head described as "mission impossible" in Iraq. The deteriorating security situation in country after the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime, the inability of the UN to distinguish itself from the occupying power, and the application of a one-size-fits-all security regime to the entire UN system has hamstrung

relief and recovery efforts and raised concerns in many fora about the future of UN humanitarian action.

#### **4.2.1. Context of crisis and UNICEF's prior programming in country**

As in Afghanistan, Iraq had been undergoing severe humanitarian conditions well before the latest war broke out, having endured 12 years of international sanctions. UNICEF had maintained programs in the country since 1983, and supported humanitarian and health sector activities since the UN imposed sanctions in 1990. As a partner of the Oil for Food Programme (OFFP) since 1996, UNICEF monitored the water and sanitation, education and nutrition sectors in southern and central Iraq, while engaging in direct implementation of humanitarian assistance in the north. In addition to its OFFP responsibilities, by 2002 UNICEF's programs action included: monitoring and advocacy on the effect of sanctions on children, humanitarian inputs, early childhood, education, HIV/AIDS, juvenile justice, and WES activities.

As of January 2003, UNICEF had 38 international and 142 national staff in the North, and 20 international and 43 national staff in Southern/Central Iraq.<sup>43</sup> Of all the UN agencies, UNICEF had the largest and most comprehensive presence in country prior to the war.

#### **4.2.2. Planning and preparedness<sup>44</sup>**

Taken as a whole, the planning for the war's aftermath is widely viewed as a positive experience and a model for future interagency coordination. The deeper one goes within UNICEF, the stronger the critiques on various aspects of the process, particularly the interagency level, which was deemed cumbersome and complex. It is important for this study, however, to take a broad view of the results as they relate to UNICEF's contribution to the program of UN reform in humanitarian action. From this vantage point what comes across most strongly is that UNICEF successfully used its comparatively large in-country presence and its sub-regional management structure to provide three crucial elements to facilitate interagency preparedness and planning and enhance the ultimate response:

- **Pre-war mitigation measures:** UNICEF took advantage of its access and health sector contacts, and employed emergency resources to undertake a measles vaccination campaign right before the war, in anticipation of displacement and health sector disruptions to come.
- **Continuity of crucial services:** UNICEF's network of Iraqi engineers was able to provide emergency potable to Southern Iraq in the first days of the conflict and water maintain water and sanitation services throughout the war. Additionally, water equipment for up to 300,000 IDPs in Iraq was pre-positioned in neighbouring countries, and a partnership agreement was established with Oxfam for sub-regional and country programming.

---

<sup>43</sup> Simon Lawry-Wright, "Internal Evaluation of UNICEF Emergency Preparedness & Early Response in Iraq, September 2001-June 2003," Commissioned by UNICEF Iraq Country Office, MENARO, and the Evaluation Office (April 2004) 9.

<sup>44</sup> Internal assessments of UNICEF's subregional planning process and interagency planning coordination have been already been completed (see UNICEF MENARO, "UNICEF Preparedness and Early Response in the Iraq Crisis: Results of the Iraq Subregional Lessons Learned Workshop, Istanbul, 2-3 October 2003" and Simon Lawry-Wright study, above note.) This section reflects and draws from that assessment's much more comprehensive and detailed findings, but seeks to avoid duplicating the work and rather to draw broader lessons where possible.

- **Information base:** Through its programming in country UNICEF was able to provide health and nutritional surveillance information, and prepared the Iraq Watching Briefs for the World Bank on health, education and water management, which outlined the various vulnerabilities and likely needs for a post-war Iraq.

A key feature of the planning process was its regional scope — the first ever for UNICEF and the interagency community alike. In part this grew out of lessons learned in the early phase of the Afghanistan case, which suffered from the lack of a regional perspective to the crisis and the coordinated response. In an example of either remarkable prescience or astute proactive planning, the Middle East and North Africa Regional Office (MENARO) began the sub-regional preparedness and response *planning* process one month after the September 11 attacks in 2001. UNICEF offices in Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Syria, Turkey, MENARO and CEE/CIS Regional Offices, together with headquarters and Copenhagen over a series of consultations reviewed possible political outcomes and their humanitarian consequences. Through this process the each country office updated or prepared its own Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan, and MENARO adopted an initial Sub-Regional Emergency Plan of Action in December 2001.

Over the course of the following year the planning process began at the interagency level. Several months before the weekly UN teleconferences during the immediate run up to the war, a small interagency group of technical experts, initiated by UNICEF, convened around the potential humanitarian emergency in Iraq and held working meetings that took a structural, sectoral approach to planning. The forum used was the IASC sub-working group on contingency planning, which UNICEF chaired, and the 2003 review of the IASC highlighted the Iraq case as a successful model of interagency pre-crisis planning coordination, citing UNICEF and WFP in particular for their effective leadership. Through extensive consultation and field travel this group moved beyond the usual scenario planning to the level of actual operational planning, stimulating planning within the individual UN country teams, and enabling the agencies to flesh out likely requirements, assign lead roles, and strategically enhance organizational capacity, including the pre-positioning of personnel. The team's efforts resulted in a consensus on numbers and a basis for planning more broadly, as well as coordination structures on a sub-regional basis. Agencies were subsequently able to establish a Joint Logistics Centre in Cyprus, to service the sub-region. The IASC review stated, "The process certainly constitutes the most sophisticated interagency planning process undertaken to date within the UN or the IASC, and provides important lessons for moving forward."<sup>45</sup>

The process was not completely free of problems, however. The handover from the Geneva-based working group to the New York-based planning mechanism as the war grew more imminent was less than smooth, and resulted in a certain amount of discontinuity. UNICEF staff engaged in the early planning acknowledge in retrospect that much greater consultation should have taken place between the two levels to make sure that the all participants were sufficiently informed as the process made this logical progression. UNICEF staff members involved in the interagency planning expressed great frustration that an overly large number UN actors came to the planning table with no field level operational capacity (either pre-existing or potential in the near-term), which consumed precious time and energy needed to coordinate between those few agencies who would be doing the actual work. It also bears mention that the planning process suffered from negative perceptions in some corners, including the somewhat cynical accusation that UNICEF and WFP were using their leadership to stake out turf in post war Iraq, and the more valid concern that NGOs, particularly the Europeans, were being sidelined. Additionally there was widespread dissatisfaction over the handling of IDPs, to be discussed more below. At

---

<sup>45</sup> Jones and Stoddard.

least one informant lamented the fact that UNICEF offices were burdened with overlapping, labour-intensive planning processes (at the country office, regional and interagency levels). Others implied, however, that UNICEF was able to drive the interagency planning precisely because it kept its own internal planning process active and so continually brought new information and ideas to share with its counterparts.

A single informant, representing the senior leadership of a different agency, spoke in largely negative terms about the Iraq planning process, noting lack of clarity and accountability among the agencies. This was a lone voice among the interview subjects however, and virtually all informants speaking from the technical or working-level presented more or less the opposite impression — that the responsibility and accountability structure worked unusually well, with the exception of the IDP debate.

#### **4.2.3. Assessment of UNICEF's contribution to interagency coordination**

All informants agreed that the regional scope of planning was a novel and promising development, given that interagency coordination at this level is generally quite weak. With the exception of the Latin American regional IASC group that meets regularly in Panama, and the supposedly temporary Regional Interagency Coordination Support Office in Southern Africa, there are no formal structures for regional or sub-regional coordination. UNICEF is decentralized working on the assumption that the regional Director provides line management to the countries undergoing emergencies. Other agencies have more centralized decision-making structures, or have different geographical configurations to their regional offices. With regard to planning around Iraq, for instance, UNHCR's decision-making was centralized in Geneva, UNICEF's in Amman, and WFP's in Cairo. Most agency representatives felt that the incongruence of their regions was problematic, but not overly so. Getting the key decision makers to work together began as a series of conference calls between OCHA and the various regional directors. The list later expanded to RCs and others. The experience, largely viewed as positive by those involved, also bespoke a growing recognition in the system that regional directors are important players. UNICEF linked its own planning process to the interagency exercise. The regional office likewise managed the Watching Briefs for Iraq that UNICEF took on for the World Bank, freeing the country office to deal with the pressing programmatic needs. (This was a particularly important infusion of human resource capacity that, if it could be replicated in similar contexts, would greatly enable UNICEF in its coordination leadership.)

The planning process for humanitarian response approached tasks with cluster groups of capable agencies as opposed to the more turf-oriented lead agency model, and this was carried over into interagency post-war reconstruction efforts. UNICEF, as previously noted, had a strong country presence in Iraq and by all accounts played a large role in driving the interagency coordination process. It provided leadership for the health and water/sanitation cluster groups, and in sectors where it did not have the lead role it was able to provide capable representatives to contribute their expertise for these groups.

In another unusual feature of the Iraq case, with the exception of one organization there was no strong pre-existing NGO field presence, unlike in many prior emergencies. Although not all the major NGOs felt fully engaged during the planning process, participants in the cluster working groups found that where NGOs had technical capabilities, their participation worked quite well, despite the fact that few of them had any Iraq experience. A few subjects also noted the exemplary cooperation between the Red Cross movement and the UN in many instances.

In terms of UNICEF's role and contribution to common systems, the Iraq country office played various roles and filled gaps in key areas. For instance, in the north UNICEF established a communications structure for the interagency community. UNICEF also provided the OIC function for the whole UN system during the bombing when everyone was withdrawn. And a senior UNICEF staffer agreed to lead the joint reconstruction needs assessment mission to Iraq — a major undertaking that encompassed 22 different UN entities and the World Bank.

#### **4.2.4. Major issues**

**Security:** Although people are careful to preface their remarks on Iraq by noting that it is an aberrant and extreme case, the security discussion around Iraq has uncovered deep concerns and dire predictions about the future of the UN in humanitarian action. UN humanitarian actors are increasingly worried that security has begun to drive every aspect of UN humanitarian operations, with the Canal Hotel bombing as the watershed moment, but continuing a process that started earlier. While not minimizing the tragedy of the 19 August bombing, UNICEF and other agency representatives decry the “force and fortress mentality” that has come at the cost of access, and has effectively paralyzed some operations. A recent external report on Iraq observed “many international humanitarian NGOs present in Iraq have been blistering in their criticisms of the apparent inflexibility and even paralysis of the UN’s humanitarian apparatus since the bombing.”<sup>46</sup>

At the time of this writing, most international staff of UNICEF and other agencies work from Amman, with the few remaining in Iraq mostly confined to their residences. Minimum Operating Security Standards (MOSS) compliance in Baghdad allows only three people to work in the UNICEF office at any given time because of the size of the bunker. Staff members are currently trying to get new, MOSS-compliant office in order to accommodate more people. In Basra UNICEF has no operating office and all staff must work from home. The result is the practical workload has shifted to contractors, suppliers, and other counterparts with UNICEF monitoring remotely and making payments from Amman. UNICEF staff members explain that while some program objectives can be met in this way, it lacks the face-to-face element they all feel to be crucial, and has a negative effect on staff morale.

**Advocacy:** UNICEF's internal review of planning and early response noted that the UN system as a whole needed to demonstrate better understanding of the politics and perceptions in the region, including the interrelationship in the popular opinion between Iraq and the Palestinian issue. The authors of that report and many interview subjects also felt more could and should have been done to promote humanitarian principles vis-à-vis the occupying power. In truth, the complex questions of humanitarian principles and the appropriate role of UN agencies that the Iraq case raises present too large an issue to cover in any reasonable manner by this superficial review.

**Transition:** Arguably, good groundwork has been laid for transition assistance in Iraq once conditions allow. UNICEF in particular is well placed to play an important role through the contacts it has maintained with local and government structures throughout the sanctions and war period (one staff member emphasized that there are always good people in ministries that agencies can identify and build on, and too often these nationals are pushed aside on the assumption that everyone who worked for the prior government is bad guy who can't be trusted). UNICEF can also build on its already established partnership with the World Bank on

---

<sup>46</sup> Greg Hansen, “Humanitarian Action in Iraq: Emerging Constraints and Challenges,” Report produced for the Humanitarianism and War Project, Tufts University (April 27, 2004).

Iraq's social sector issues. Nonetheless, most of those interviewed for this study express strong feelings that it does not make sense to focus much on transition in Iraq at this time. The general sense is that Iraq is not post-conflict but rather in the second phase of the conflict with the possibility of moving into a third. The recently restarted regional planning process around the regional implications of a renewed or civil war in Iraq is testament to this mindset.

**IDPs:** The question of responsibility for IDPs proved controversial in Iraq, as in so many other cases, when a vacuum materialized over the management of IDP camps. The HC took the decision that IDPs would remain under his purview but that the International Organization for Migration (IOM), which already had an IDP program in the north (for resettling returning Kurds), would play a major role. This move was interpreted in many parts of the humanitarian community as giving IOM the lead for IDPs, which was viewed as unsatisfactory by many, and was particularly objected to by NGOs. The expected large outflow of refugees did not materialize and a number of internal displacement issues cropped up, leading UN informants to conclude and acknowledge that the IDP question should have received much more attention early on. UNICEF informants spoke of difficulty in clarifying the responsibilities and tasks for protection of the IDP population, particularly fitting in UNICEF's focus on child protection with UNHCR's and ICRC's broader protection mandates. Because protection does not have a set of part definitions and standards like, say, water and sanitation, often the agency representatives found themselves talking about completely different things. Internally among UNICEF staff there was some confusion over prioritization, noting that for UNICEF child protection encompasses everything from care for orphans to psychosocial assistance, to children in trouble with the law. Their comments suggest that UNICEF will need to focus more attention on strategic guidance in the child protection area.

#### **4.2.5. Conclusions**

No doubt a large number of lessons from Iraq will emerge when all is said and done, and the reverberations of this particular emergency will be felt throughout the UN system for many years to come. For the purposes of this review, the following conclusions may be drawn as relevant to how UNICEF promotes the elements and vision of UN reform within its own programming and interagency role.

- Replicate the concept of the planning model used in Iraq, both in its linked layers (county-subregion-HQ) and its technical focus on clusters of responsibility rather than simply assigning lead agencies according to mandate. The fruitful efforts of the IASC sub-working group on contingency planning, chaired by UNICEF, should be supported as a continuing work in progress, and brought to bear in new emergent cases.
- Make contingency planning around the most likely emergencies a part of regular thinking, and take it beyond the country level to a regional perspective. For example consider what sort of supporting roles the neighbouring country teams would be able play in the case of an emergency in one country when field staff are evacuated.
- Provide additional human resource inputs to handle the load. One informant suggested that given the significant amount of work that a well coordinated planning process requires around a major crisis UNICEF should consider appointing crisis managers that have a director's grade level but are free from the management functions of the regular programs and the possible other, smaller crises in the same country.

- Keep in mind there is no substitute for ground presence. No matter how good the preparedness and contingency planning, events can make the plans irrelevant in a week. UNICEF's presence throughout and its own planning on country level, helped keep the interagency planning relevant.
- Pay early attention to capacity building in anticipation of future transition, and continue to coordinate with national and local counterparts despite the large influx of external actors and the tendency to create parallel structures.
- By the same token, do not make a premature shift to a reconstruction mindset when political or security conditions do not allow. In this regard, many involved in Iraq feel that humanitarian action was pushed off the front burner way too early.
- Further develop strategic guidance for field staff in child protection issues.

### **4.3. Sierra Leone**

Based on limited interviewing and documentation on the Sierra Leone case, a picture emerges of UNICEF being a constructive member of a fairly successful and well-integrated recovery and transition response. It also highlights a promising new development and opportunity for UNICEF in child protection, namely the placing of child protection officers within peacekeeping mission structures, as well as the ongoing need to step up advocacy efforts in this area.

#### **4.3.1. Context of crisis and UNICEF's programming in country**

Currently in the third year of transition after 11 years of civil war and regional turmoil, Sierra Leone is among the countries at the very bottom of the Human Development Index. The war produced half a million refugees and an even larger number of internally displaced, in addition to 50,000 killed.<sup>47</sup> The lasting images and legacy of the brutal conflict in that country reside with the children and youth who suffered egregious violations of their rights, including high levels of abduction, forced conscription, sexual abuse, maiming and other atrocities. Accordingly, in addition to critical aid inputs in the areas of health, water and sanitation, nutrition, basic education, and assistance to displaced persons and returnees, UNICEF maintains priority objectives in the areas of child protection and demobilization.

#### **4.3.2. Assessment of UNICEF's contribution to interagency coordination**

UNICEF has played an active role within the UN Country Team, leading the sectors of education and water and sanitation, and more broadly with NGOs, who during the periods of greater violence and loss of access were crucial for maintaining relief services to many parts of the country when the UN was unable to operate to full capacity.

During the period from the beginning of the latest conflict up until December 2003, UNICEF coordinated with agency partners to provide services to the refugee camps within Sierra Leone, undertaking child protection as well as education and WES activities. By all accounts this collaboration worked exceedingly well, and once the camp populations decreased to a manageable level, UNICEF was able to turn over responsibilities to the agency in charge of overall camp management.

---

<sup>47</sup> UNDG/ECHA, "Report of the UNDG/ECHA Working Group on Transition Issues," (Annex One, Country Study: Sierra Leone), 96.

UNICEF was also heavily involved on the common services side. It initiated and led the move to a common banking system for agencies, whereas before all maintained different accounts and exchange rate agreements with different banks. Through UNICEF's initiative the agencies were able to use collective bargaining to secure more favourable rates for all. There is one common office currently established in one district of Sierra Leone, which is managed by UNICEF.

UNICEF has experienced some coordination problems regarding the 4Rs process, which is nominally a common initiative but in reality is managed primarily by one agency with little substantive participation by others. UNICEF and other agencies have complained that the 4Rs process in Sierra Leone remains mostly in the theoretical stage, and little has been accomplished in effecting its operationalization in programming. For these and other reasons, including perhaps some internal reticence, UNICEF has not been able to rationalize the 4Rs process with its own country strategies.

#### **4.3.3. Major issues:**

**Child rights, protection, and demobilization:** The UNICEF CO's work in this area has included supporting the reintegration of abducted girls back to their families, providing training to UN Military Observers in the protection of children in conflict contexts, and providing testimony at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Also in Sierra Leone UNICEF provided a staff member to UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) as the first Child Protection Adviser to serve with a UN peacekeeping mission (the mission in Democratic Republic of Congo is now using CPAs as well). This was described as a long-term outgrowth of the Graca Machel study, and the subsequent efforts by the SRSG for children and armed conflict in lobbying for Security Council Resolution 1260 of August 1999, which called for two CPAs to be deployed as part of the mission.

UNICEF helped to develop the terms of reference for the position together with the SRSG and DPKO, which formally recruited the individual, and the officer essentially reports to all three. Perhaps as are typical growing pains in new institutional relationships, there have been reports of a bit of an organizational culture clash between the three entities, leaving the CPA to negotiate between the varying levels of management, support, and reporting requirements. Tension was noted also on such matters as the question of who participates in drafting the input for the Secretary-General's report to the Security Council. In general, UNICEF received the highest marks for providing necessary support and technical guidance to the position without micromanaging.

By all accounts the CPA posting is a significant and much needed enhancement to the peacekeeping mission structure. In a sense the practice has formalized a role UNICEF had been playing already, as in other country cases where the peacekeeping missions lacked internal expertise on child protection issues and it often fell to UNICEF to provide technical input and training. The CPA also fulfils other functions in transition that fall outside of the role in UNAMSIL, such the work done for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for the Special Court, and with the Ministry of Social Welfare, both performed in cooperation with the UNICEF Country Office.

Despite the widely perceived need in this area, a September 2003 UNICEF document showed child rights and protection as the least funded sector by far, meeting only 2% of requirements with a single donor government.<sup>48</sup> In light of this discrepancy, it appears incumbent on UNICEF to increase its advocacy efforts in addition to the technical expertise and programmatic guidance it has contributed.

**Transition:** Apart from the faltering 4Rs process, other aspects of transition planning have reportedly worked quite well. 2004 saw what is expected to be the last CAP for Sierra Leone, and recently UNICEF and its counterparts worked together on a “Transition CAP” that provided a valuable opportunity for to think together on longer term strategies and programs. Another example of effective coordination around issues of transition has been the support the UNCT has provided the government in its own ‘National Recovery Strategy.’ The UNCT sends one agency representative at a time to represent the whole UN at District Recovery Councils, and for its part, UNICEF has attached consultants to the ministry of social welfare to assist in planning and building capacity for the transition ahead.

#### **4.3.4. Conclusions**

When the first Child Protection Officer was deployed, only generic terms of reference for the position existed. Now that the CPAs have been posted in different countries and have begun to amass experiences and lessons learned, UNICEF might usefully play a role in compiling a set of best practices and developing criteria for when the posting of CPAs are needed. In this it should consult closely with DPKO as it begins its own evaluation process of the CPAs. It will be important for UNICEF also to identify ways in which the technical and programmatic work can interlink with external advocacy and public awareness raising around child rights and protection.

#### **4.4. Sudan**

In an example of difficult conditions compelling coordination, many of the integration and harmonization elements that the UN reform program seeks to achieve were already extant in Sudan for 15 years, in the form of Operation Lifeline Sudan. While it may be difficult to highlight the positive in the context of a 20-year “chronic emergency” that has seen roughly two million killed and four and a half million displaced, while humanitarians were forced to haggle for every inch of access, valuable lessons may still be drawn from the OLS experience and UNICEF’s leadership role within it. This case illustration will not attempt to assess the value of OLS in the context of the Sudanese conflict from a political or diplomatic vantage point, nor will it address the issues of humanitarian aid used as political leverage for peace or fuel for war. Rather, it will focus more narrowly on the role and contribution of UNICEF in establishing and leading the framework within the context of the goals of UN reform.

It could be argued that Sudan does not provide a fair example of UNICEF’s practical engagement of UN reform, owing to the uniqueness of the OLS structure and UNICEF’s predominance in nearly all aspects of its maintenance. What came through consistently in interviews, however, was the strong sense among UNICEF staff that not only was UNICEF capable of handling to these multiple coordination roles and overall leadership of the process, but is in fact what UNICEF is best suited to do. As one field staff member put it, the Sudan case makes a strong argument that “UNICEF should not be modest in taking on the challenges of coordination.”

---

<sup>48</sup> The government of Ireland had contributed \$100,000. “UNICEF Humanitarian Action: Sierra Leone Donor Update, 9 Sep 2003” posted on Relief Web: <[www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int)>

Under the OLS framework UN agencies and NGO members have not only cooperated closely together on the provision of assistance, but have also made significant advances in developing common principled policy stances, and agreeing to a common terms of engagement, to an extent that has eluded other Country Teams. For its part, UNICEF has provided a consistent source of leadership and material inputs to the system that field staff recommend be modelled in future scenarios.

#### **4.4.1. Context of crisis and UNICEF's programming in country**

UNICEF's Executive Director James Grant, acting as Personal Representative of the Secretary General, established the first OLS framework in 1989 in response to the famine in Bahr el Ghazal. Since that time UNICEF has maintained a lead role in the non-government areas, responsibility for relations with Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), and coordination of the cross border aid operations based in Kenya. As such UNICEF manages the logistical support and security umbrella for the NGOs participating in OLS, who have agreed to abide by its principles. OLS has enjoyed strong engagement of NGOs in the south, and increasingly collaborative relationships with those who choose to operate outside OLS. UNICEF has maintained the responsibility for system-wide security, and in the beginning it chaired all sector groups. Initially the chair of all sector groups, UNICEF eventually handed over sectoral leadership to other members according to capacity, including an NGO that became the chair for the protection group.

#### **4.4.2. Assessment of UNICEF's contribution to interagency coordination**

Under UNICEF's leadership a sophisticated interagency coordination and management structure was developed within OLS, including the formal participation of more than 40 national and international NGOs that actively engage in the management team as full partners through a steering committee.

A major factor in the heavy NGO participation in OLS over the years has been the operational competence demonstrated in logistical and security cooperation. The OLS logistics base in Lokichokkio, managed by UNICEF and WFP, has been critical to delivery of aid entering the southern part of the country. The security framework has also won especially high marks, as highlighted in a 2000 external study:

"The OLS security system has been critical to the expansion of OLS activities in the south. It is a testament to that system and to the Ground Rules that no security-related expatriate deaths in southern Sudan since 1992, and compared to other war zones, few casualties among Sudanese relief workers."<sup>49</sup>

The interagency system in Sudan of course has also had its share of difficulties and frustrations, bespeaking the limits of coordination and the obstacles to actual joint programming. UNICEF informants observe that at one point the OLS structures had become too rigid, and the structural reforms of two years ago should in fact have been implemented much earlier. There have also been examples of the problem of "lowest common denominator" coordination. In one instance a donor provided a large umbrella grant for security to one agency, which in turn farmed it out to 14 others — a process that took four months. When it was time to report back to the donor, one

---

<sup>49</sup> Mark Bradbury et al, "The Agreement on Ground Rules in South Sudan" HPG Report 4, March 2000, London: ODI.

of the 15 agencies was several months late and the entire report was delayed until this piece of funding could be properly accounted for. The incident was a classic example of coordination moving at the pace of slowest member, and the credibility of many being harmed by the poor accountability of one.

When UNICEF interviewees spoke of glitches and problems with this leadership role, the points they raised had mainly to do with the multiple lines of accountability for senior staff, to be discussed in more detail below.

Since the SPLM/A and the Sudanese government signed a Memorandum of Understanding in October 2002, humanitarian access in the south has greatly improved. The recent peace agreement further raised hopes for the beginning of recovery. These developments have sadly been offset by the humanitarian crisis now unfolding in Darfur in the West. At the time of this writing the Darfur emergency was still unfolding, and there was not enough source information to render reasonable judgments of the interagency response for the purposes of this review. One staff member thought it was worth noting, however that in Darfur, one staff member noted, UNICEF has broken the mold of prior competitive PR practices by offering other NGOs and NGOs unrestricted use of the video documentation it is producing on the emergency. In this way its counterparts, who lack the communications capacity enjoyed by UNICEF, can take the footage, edit it in any way they want, and use it for their own public education and fundraising campaigns.

As a participant described it, OLS is very much a living organization and its structure is changing with new political realities. Now that humanitarian access is no longer impeded as it once was, the framework needs to be managed and evaluated in a different way. No longer measured by external assessments of how many locations/persons have been reached by the aid, the agencies involved in OLS must now begin to demonstrate what benefits have actually been achieved. Accordingly UNICEF/OLS is working to develop new systems to monitor impact. UNICEF leadership in OLS also anticipate that many more actors will now come in to Sudan and operate outside the OLS framework, but are not overly concerned that this will be fatal to coordination. Recent experience has shown that OLS and non-OLS entities can work effectively as sectoral partners even if not under the same management umbrella.

#### **4.4.3. Major issues**

**Common principles and terms of engagement:** This review has highlighted UNICEF's ongoing attempt to base its program activities on a foundation of human rights and humanitarian principles — an objective that is shared and reinforced in the Secretary-General's program for UN reform. The Agreement on Ground Rules (1992/1995) in southern Sudan set forth a common bottom line, or minimal conditions, under which the humanitarian actors of OLS would agree to operate. The agreement, prompted by deteriorating security conditions, was groundbreaking in its incorporation of international human rights and humanitarian law that held both combatants and aid workers accountable for preserving these standards. Having a united front of agencies and NGOs prevented belligerents from cutting separate deals and playing divide and rule with the aid community. UNICEF made its particular mark was made on the agreement as seen in its emphasis on the CRC and a special focus on child protection issues.<sup>50</sup> The Ground Rules have not been emulated in other cases with anywhere near the same success, though in many cases, notably Afghanistan during the Taliban regime, such mechanisms have been sorely needed.

---

<sup>50</sup> "SPLM/OLS Agreement on Ground Rules" reprinted in Bradbury et al.

**Too many hats: the RC/HC dilemma revisited:** The UNICEF representative in Sudan maintains responsibility not only for UNICEF programming but also serves as the Deputy RC/HC, Designated Official for security, and at times the OCHA representative. The current representative uses two physically separate offices in Nairobi — one where he sees people and performs direction and fundraising duties on behalf of UNICEF, and the other where he performs the duties of DHC on behalf of all agencies — with the additional accountability to UNDP. Additionally, the duties associated with serving as DO for over 1000 people can take up a significant percentage of time. The critical importance of the RC/HC role to the goals of UN reform warrants more careful attention and action; specifically on the question of how to rationalize and deputize the responsibilities of these individuals so that they may fulfil their mandate. UNICEF should make this a priority in its dealings with IASC and the Secretariat.

**Transition:** As Sudan begins, as is fervently hoped, to enter a transition phase, capacity building has emerged as a pressing issue. The international community will face the daunting task of building a public sector out of what has been essentially a guerrilla movement. As the preferred partner of the SPLM, UNICEF will necessarily be very involved in capacity building efforts because it is a preferred partner of SPLM. UNICEF has therefore agreed to establish a capacity building trust fund for donors' contributions. In agreement with the World Bank, UNICEF will help set up the fund and run it until such time that the World Bank becomes a full operational partner. Although some in UNICEF express unease at getting into the trust fund business, these mechanisms are increasingly seen as important features in post-conflict recovery and transition, and will likely represent a growing feature of UNICEF's work.

#### **4.4.4. Conclusions**

UNICEF has been widely praised for its leadership of the OLS mechanism, which is notable both for its operational soundness and its sophisticated and effective application of human rights and international humanitarian law. The innovations of OLS and the Ground Rules should not be held out as exceptional measures for exceptional circumstances, but rather UNICEF and others should seek to actively emulate, adapt, and build upon them in other scenarios. From a practical standpoint, Sudan reinforces the argument made elsewhere in interviews for this study, for the separation of agency management responsibilities from coordination responsibilities to help the field personnel in these leadership roles.



## **5. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1. General findings**

It is a truism of humanitarian action that coordination typically works best when the situation is most dire; when the various actors pull together and see collaboration not as an option, but a must. Based on the research and interviews undertaken for this study it would not be unfair to say that the no-option mindset has characterized UNICEF's approach to humanitarian coordination generally, and that its engagement in the humanitarian sphere in turn has influenced how it engaged in other sectors of the UN reform process.

In addition, UNICEF's participation in humanitarian reform has been driven for the most part by principles and the urgency of practical issues in humanitarian action requiring common solutions. As such, UNICEF's engagement has been strongest and most effective where it has been problem/task-oriented, and focused on product over process, as characterizes a great deal of its work with and through the IASC. In the field UNICEF has contributed in numerous and often unsung ways to the effectiveness of the UN Country Team and the advancement of UN reform, and has done so by virtue of its capacity and willingness to lead, to proactively fill gaps where they occur, as well as by its flexibility to step aside from certain roles when it is the best interest of the system to allow other actors to fill them.

As for external respondents, their unanimous message to UNICEF as it looks to its role in reform and coordination going forward is embodied in the repeated three-word refrain "keep it up." In fact, UNICEF has built up a great deal of capital during the past several years, and informants stress that this be maintained, refreshed, and used.

The opportunities facing UNICEF at this time include the chance to forge new and enhanced partnerships with increasingly critical actors such as the World Bank, and to foster a close working relationship with a new and highly energetic ERC that can help to inject humanitarian concerns into the political sphere of the UN. In the area of transitions UNICEF is facing a wide range of new opportunities for action and the potential to play a leading role, for which it has already demonstrated willingness and initial capacity. For this UNICEF enjoys the benefit of a great deal of interagency groundwork already laid, as well as a remarkably dedicated and loyal staff, who (at least in the sample provided for this review) display fairly high levels of consensus on the key issues related to UN reform.

The threats it confronts have to do in large part with the broader geopolitical and security environment, and political interests that stand to subordinate or taint humanitarian action. First and foremost, UNICEF must be willing to leverage its credibility and moral authority to advocate strongly for child rights, to the P-5 as well as developing countries. The dilemma mentioned above between the goals of achieving security and facilitating effective teamwork on the one hand, and doing the necessary to be an effective implementer and advocate for children stands to become more pronounced for UNICEF in the coming few years. On the level of the UN system, the gains in humanitarian coordination made in the first strand of reform are somewhat threatened by the 1997 reform processes and mechanisms where they overlap, and in particular where they stand to roll back the inclusiveness and universality that the IASC-based processes have engendered. Finally, within UNICEF itself, the organization must contend with not-insignificant staffing and financial resource issues, compounded by a feeling in some quarters of

coordination fatigue, as it struggles to meet the myriad process needs of its interagency commitments.

## **5.2. Strategic priorities looking forward**

UNICEF currently does not possess a set strategy to structure or guide its activities in the processes of humanitarian reform/coordination, and it was in thinking about the potential for creating such strategies going forward that this review was commissioned. In beginning the research, the reviewer initially expected the findings to indicate areas where UNICEF could effectively pull back or de-emphasize in order to better equalize its effort with the expected return. However, in discussions with staff, there was not one issue or action area that emerged as being irrelevant to UNICEF's mandate, or where a recommendation was made for UNICEF to decrease its engagement. At the same time, there were a great many areas that were mentioned as in need of UNICEF's increased engagement or outright leadership.

It is increasingly important, for institutional resource issues as well as for the new roles it is envisioning in countries in transition, for UNICEF to broaden its range of institutional partners. While not neglecting its interagency coordination commitments, UNICEF must look more beyond the UN system as well, particularly to the World Bank and other international financial institutions, the private sector, and government actors, including emerging or "non-traditional" donors.

Engagement with donors is another area where UNICEF can focus its energies in new ways to help make improvements at the system-wide level. Through the honest-broker role that has served it well in the past as a interlocutor for the UN humanitarian communities with the broader political universe, UNICEF is perhaps the best placed (or only) agency to open a candid dialogue with donors on the ways in which their fragmented funding policies and mixed messages have hindered the coordination they claim to want. The Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative begun last year could serve as a useful springboard for UNICEF to facilitate a healthy discussion on UN-specific donor funding issues among the key donors and its agency counterparts.

The following section presents proposals for future action emerging from findings under each of the subject areas examined in the review.

## **5.3. Recommendations**

### **5.3.1. On relating to key interlocutors and mechanisms**

- Identify and push for the placement of more UNICEF secondees to DSRSG postings.
- Promote regular informal communication with ERC and agency principals (such as weekly teleconferences or breakfast meetings), and seek ways to increase the engagement of NGOs in New York-based coordination fora.
- Do not scale back activities within the IASC, but on the sub-working group level, focus energy and contributions on those mechanisms that offer substantive, problem driven and task-oriented coordination, rather than those which are largely procedural. Support the closing down of IASC bodies that offer more process than product.

- Open and help lead a new dialogue with donors and other agencies to facilitate a candid, open discussion on UN-specific donor funding issues among the key donors and its agency counterparts, to reduce competitiveness and inefficiencies that result from current funding modalities.

### **5.3.2. On developing UNICEF's role in transitions**

- Adapt program approaches to the demands of post-conflict transition situations. This will entail working not only *with* but increasingly *through* and *within* governments to foster credibility and stability essential to the peace process; shifting from a direct implementation role to a less visible support and mentoring approach; and taking on new and unfamiliar areas of responsibility such as managing trust funds.
- Continue to seek and build upon partnership opportunities with the World Bank, and begin to explore ways to work constructively with regional development banks and private sector actors.
- Explore the possibility of forming a global alliance with the Bank that would identify roles and responsibilities for UNICEF in transition situations as they arise.

### **5.3.3. On coordination systems**

- Reopen the discussion at the interagency level on RC/HCs to press for the removal of UNDP organizational duties from the position so the RC/HC may focus exclusively on the coordination function.
- Continue to identify and encourage UNICEF staff to apply for RC/HC positions and other strategic secondments.
- Strengthen and regularize interagency coordination and joint planning and preparedness at the regional level. Facilitate the UNICEF regional office to initiate and lead coordination at this level via giving greater program management responsibilities authority to Deputy Regional Director.
- Adopt a policy of seeking UNICEF participation in all proposed joint missions for humanitarian agencies, from the very earliest design stages. While admittedly a strain on staff resources, poor outcomes stemming from UNICEF non-participation are more costly.

### **5.3.4. On common policy, advocacy, and norms**

- Begin to develop a comprehensive policy-making and advocacy strategy framework, identifying fundamental principles of UNICEF advocacy (as distinct from communications) based on the human rights and IHL principles already underpinning UNICEF's rights-based approach. Make an organizational commitment to speak out more strongly against violations of children's rights wherever they occur.
- Within such a framework, allow/encourage/expect policy staff and other HQ and field personnel involved in interagency mechanisms to formulate advocacy strategies around specific issues in accordance with these principles. Delineate the areas of responsibility

between Country and Regional Offices and HQ, and establish mechanisms to support Country Representatives in raising "sensitive issues" with their host governments.

- Continue efforts to clarify programmatic applications of the rights-based approach, which remain abstract for some field staff, and promote these outward to the broader humanitarian community, and to political actors and instruments inside and outside the UN system. In recognition of UNICEF's growing stake in humanitarian emergency response, IHL, as enshrined in the Geneva Conventions, must be given attention and priority in UNICEF programming equal to that afforded the CRC.
- Strengthen UNICEF field action in child protection: take on additional monitoring and reporting roles in partnership with human rights organizations; begin to compile best practices/lessons-learned on experiences of child protection in conflict situations; arrange with DPKO to feed into the upcoming evaluation of Child Protection Advisers.
- Focus policy and advocacy attention on IDPS, which remain a critical shortcoming and stumbling block in effective reform. Do not limit these efforts to working with the IDP Unit, but rather forge a strong UNICEF position on the need for more far reaching change in the interagency system for meeting IDP needs — child protection principal among them. .

#### **5.3.5. On operational support issues**

- Advocate for a thorough examination of the current UN security regime with an eye to identifying appropriate adjustments, which would a) separate security issues from political concerns and b) ensure the humanitarian sector does not become paralyzed by adherence to single, system-wide standard.
- Create career-tracking mechanisms to facilitate the return of secondees to suitable UNICEF positions after their term is complete
- Explore opportunities for mid-level staff exchanges, and for UNICEF to temporarily host staff from other agencies.

#### **5.3.6. Other internal issues**

- Seek expanded resources to enhance technical guidance for child protection and preparedness and rapid response capacity in WES.
- Expand the practice of tasking deputy ROs with increased programme management functions in order to allow the RO to more actively engage in regional-level coordination
- More actively promote a shared understanding of functions and importance of UNICEF's leadership of and work in on the interagency level via internal communications and staff presentations. At the same time, broaden the circle of staff involved in interagency affairs - especially via new linkages between geographical staff at HQ and regional levels with counterparts in other agencies.

## **ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **Assessment of UNICEF's Contribution to UN Reform and its Impact on UNICEF in the Humanitarian Sector**

#### **1. BACKGROUND**

UN Reform was formally launched, in 1997, by Secretary General Kofi Annan, with the express intent of achieving greater unity of purpose, coherence of effort and flexibility in response by the UN system. In addition to managerial and structural reforms for greater efficiency and effectiveness, it included clear substantive policy objectives -- promoting sustained and sustainable development as a central priority but also increasing capacity in peacekeeping, peace building and humanitarian response. In the sphere of humanitarian affairs, the current SG's UN Reform effort built on the basis established in December 1991, with GA resolution 46/182 which highlighted the need for a more coherent and consolidated approach to humanitarian affairs and established many of key structures associated today with UN coordination and reform — the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, the Emergency Relief Coordinator, and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs later to become the Office of the Coordinator of Humanitarian Affairs.

UNICEF is significant player in the UN reform in both the development and humanitarian context. UNICEF has an important combination of field presence, clear mandate, extensive networks with civil society and private sector organisations, and a significant volume of operation. The UN Reform offers an opportunity for UNICEF to be more effective and efficient in carrying out its mission. The challenge for UNICEF is to translate global reform initiatives into effective country level programmes and structures for the benefit of children, and effectively transmit field-based initiatives and analysis back to headquarters.

A second phase of the UN Reform process is soon to be initiated. UNICEF too is at a turning point as it is undertaking a mid-term review of its Medium Term Strategic Plan (2002-2005). Internally within UNICEF, it is considered an appropriate time to examine past experience with UN Reform as systematically and objectively as possible with a view to drawing lessons and shaping a future strategy and approach for engagement in the UN Reform process in a way that will promote the best interests of children.

UNICEF has commissioned a study to examine UNICEF involvement and contribution to the UN Reform process under the UN Development Group. These terms of reference covers a parallel study focuses on the UN Reform process in the sphere of humanitarian affairs.

#### **2. OBJECTIVES**

As with the main UN Reform study, the objective is to provide “a comprehensive examination of UNICEF's involvement and contribution to UN reform, with a specific emphasis on the results this involvement has had on country level programming.” This study will focus on UN Reform in the humanitarian sector, including issues of transition.

The evaluation is expected to yield the following results:

- The impact of UN Reform on UNICEF and vice versa will be assessed, with particular attention to UNICEF contribution to national level UN system humanitarian response as it benefits children and women.

- The strengths and weaknesses of UNICEF's contribution to the processes and instruments of UN Reform and to the shaping of UN policy around emerging humanitarian response issues (see below under scope) will be documented and assessed.
- UNICEF performance in terms of making use of the processes and instruments of UN Reform as well as emerging policy around the above-mentioned emerging issues at field level will be assessed.
- Any gaps worthy of UNICEF's attention — i.e. areas of engagement in UN Reform that UNICEF appears not to have properly identified as important, whether at headquarters or other levels, or to which UNICEF is not contributing sufficiently — will be identified.
- The strategic priorities that should guide UNICEF's investment in UN Reform in the upcoming 2-4 years have been identified and reviewed.

The primary use of the evaluation results will be to feed into discussions on UNICEF strategy for its contribution to the next phases of the UN Reform process. The focus on UNICEF strategy for engagement with the UN Reform process feeds into the mid-term review of the UNICEF Medium-Term Strategic Plan. Lessons will also feed into ongoing efforts by the organisation to strengthen its humanitarian response capacity.

### **3. SCOPE**

This evaluation is very broad looking at organisational performance globally in relation to a broad and complex system-wide reform process in the humanitarian sector. It will be focused by the following considerations.

#### **3.1 Time span**

The study will need to reflect the on the full period of UN Reform in the humanitarian affairs sector, beginning with the GA resolution 46/182, December 1991. However, it is recognised that assessment of UNICEF performance in the earlier years will be limited by availability of data.

#### **3.2 The institutional context**

The study will need to focus on UNICEF interaction with the structures and mechanisms set in place under UN reform in the humanitarian sector as follows:

- the Emergency Relief Coordinator
- the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC) System
- the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) later the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)
- the Inter Agency Standing Committee
- the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA)
- as well as ad-hoc high level crisis working groups (country focused) — e.g. Iraq, Sudan, Afghanistan (*through both the IASC and ECHA*)

Linked to the above, there are numerous established units, sub-working groups, ad-hoc groups associated with various themes that are outlined below.

#### **3.3 Thematic focus.**

The evaluation will need to examine the UNICEF contribution to UN Reform and its impact on UNICEF in relation to a number of issues/themes that have been variously the focus for establishing structural units and procedures, and/or for the development of guidelines and best

practices. The following themes are grouped under broad categories, though these clearly overlap.

#### Coordination and planning mechanisms and processes

- the Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) and Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP)
- Inter-agency contingency planning
- Inter-agency assessment missions (including in transition phase)
- Sectoral coordination
- Transition from relief to development — assessments for reconstruction, sectoral coordination, division of labour

Early warning — including Framework Team

#### Common standards, principles

- Interaction between humanitarian action and human rights -- human rights-based approach to humanitarian action; protection; humanitarian principles (humanitarian imperative, neutrality, and impartiality)
- Humanitarian-military interface
- Gender mainstreaming

#### Issues for humanitarian action

- Peace, Security and Disarmament
- Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)
- Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
- Sexual violence and exploitation
- Mine action
- HIV/AIDS in emergencies

#### Operational support issues

- Staff security
- Common Services including UN Joint Logistics Centre

#### Cross-cutting themes

In addition to the above themes that constitute actual mechanisms for or areas of coordination, collaboration under UN-Reform, there are a few cross-cutting themes that influence the results of UNICEF interaction with UN-Reform:

- Defining emergencies — There are significant differences between agencies in terms of what is defined as an emergency. These differences relate back to agency mandate and have often been seen as a barrier to coordination.
- Division of labour — UNICEF and other agencies have more recently tried to define core area of action for all emergencies with a view to more consistent agency response and therefore better interagency collaboration. How effective this has been and how this helps or hinders effectiveness of UN response has not been assessed.

### **3.4 Evaluation criteria**

The assessment will necessarily focus on selected standard evaluation criteria. As detailed further in the evaluation questions below:

This evaluation will examine the relevance of UNICEF contribution to UN Reform, setting this in the context of UNICEF mandate and policy, as well as in relation to the emerging needs of the humanitarian sector as the numbers and profile of emergencies has changed. This will merge with discussions of policy coherence within the humanitarian sector.

It will examine efficiency, not through detailed cost analysis which would be too time consuming and costly in and of itself, but through qualitative enquiry.

Assessment of effectiveness is limited. The evaluation will examine the results of UNICEF contribution to UN Reform, which necessarily requires setting this in the context of the effectiveness of UN Reform in the humanitarian sector. However, UNICEF contributions to UN Reform were rarely if ever articulated in any form of plan of action and results cannot be measured against explicit objectives.

Assessment of impact will focus on the results for UNICEF country level programming.

The evaluation will explore sustainability of UNICEF contributions, distinguishing institutional and financial issues as relevant.

Assessment of coordination is of course the very essence of the exercise.

The above will all be limited by resources and methods described further below.

### **3.5 Evaluation questions**

The evaluation questions below provide a more detailed picture of how this exercise is intended to explore the above criteria. The exercise will need to cover the following questions in relation to each of the structures and themes outlined above.

- **What is the significance or worth of UNICEF contribution to the specific UN Reform effort (i.e. under each theme)?**

How significant has UNICEF contribution been to the overall progress in this area?

- **How well does the direction of UN Reform in each thematic area match with UNICEF mission and mandate?**

To what extent has it represented a change from prevailing UNICEF culture and practice, and to what extent has it provided continuity or supported ongoing changes within UNICEF?

To what extent does it represent a threat to UNICEF mission and mandate and/or to what extent does it provide an opportunity for UNICEF to further this?

To what extent has UNICEF effectively used UN Reform to further its mission and mandate and/or has this suffered from the effects of UN Reform?

To the extent that UNICEF tried to meet its commitment to UN Reform in this area, what has been the opportunity cost for UNICEF in the past few years and what opportunity cost might it represent in the future?

- **How well is UNICEF prepared to meet its roles and responsibilities in the future, i.e. achieve the best possible contribution to UN Reform and draw the most out of it?**

Is UNICEF showing an adequate level of organisational commitment?

How well has the organisation aligned the necessary resources — human, financial?

Finally, in assessing UNICEF performance, it will be necessary to establish an overall assessment of the performance of the UN system under UN Reform in the humanitarian sector.

This will be done based on available documentation and interviews with three snapshots — at the beginning of the process in 1991, at mid-point reference to be established and as of 2003.

In broad terms, the evaluation must establish some measure of **how the UN Reform (new thinking, processes, instruments, guidelines) affected UN system humanitarian response**, as a context for assessments of UNICEF contributions or impact on UN performance.

### **3.6 Performance standards**

The evaluation will entail examining very different types of performance at the global and field levels.

In terms of UNICEF contribution to UN Reform at the global level — within IASC and ECHA etc. and the myriad sub-working groups and ad hoc groups — performance standards do not exist. (Broad Terms of Reference for the IASC provide useful principles and responsibilities but at a very broad level.) Performance will need to be assessed in relation to a structured set of criteria. This will be developed in the early stages of the evaluation.

In terms of UNICEF performance at field level, the very work of UN Reform has generated much clearer performance standards in recent years. Guidelines and/or good practice guidance exist on the CAP, contingency planning, humanitarian-military interface, gender mainstreaming, IDPs, sexual violence and exploitation, mine action, HIV/AIDS in emergencies and security among others. These can only be used as performance standards with careful reference to when each was formulated. Further, care will be required in identifying differences in interpretation as recent experience with guideline on civilian-military interaction in Iraq has revealed.

In all facets of the evaluation, given the difficult nature of performance judgements required, it will be critical that internal and external perspectives are explored, and points of agreement and disagreement are clearly identified and explained.

## **4. METHODOLOGY**

The methodology will combine:

- Desk review
- Key informant interviews, both internal and external
- Examination of 3-4 cases of country level and/or sub-regional humanitarian response

The assessments will be primarily qualitative, however sampling of both interviewees and country cases will be designed to provide sufficient grounding across different typologies of emergencies and UNICEF Country Offices to allow generalisation.

### **4.1 Desk review**

It is recognised that literature available is limited. There is a small body of literature external to UNICEF that reflects on both the progress of UN Reform and to a small provides an objective external reference on UNICEF performance. There is limited internal UNICEF documentation — work plans and work plan monitoring reports — that will provide some information on headquarters activities in support of interagency coordination as well as some evaluations of country level or sub-regional UNICEF response.

### **4.2 Key informant interviews**

Key informants will be selected in following groups.

To provide a perspective on headquarters level interaction:

- UNICEF headquarters staff having or having had a role in headquarters level contributions to UN Reform processes, instruments, policy or guidance.
- Senior staff from other IASC member organisations (UN and NGO) who likewise either have or have had a role in headquarters level work under UN Reform.
- Ex- or seconded UNICEF headquarters staff having worked in the IASC Secretariat.

To provide a perspective on field level interaction:

- UN staff having acted as Humanitarian Coordinators, a subset of which should be UNICEF staff (current, ex, seconded) having acted in that position.
- Selected ex- or seconded UNICEF staff in other senior positions in the humanitarian sector.

And for case studies:

- UNICEF staff acting in senior management roles in field offices and also as headquarters focal points (NY and Geneva) for each of the country cases.
- Staff who are acting or acted as heads of offices of key UN organisations in the case countries.

#### **4.3 Country cases**

Country cases will be explored through documentary review and interviews to assess fully the results at field level. These are not expected to be full case studies, but are intended to assess performance at field level. The following are some of the considerations that will guide case selection:

- With a view to reflecting the evolution of UN Reform in humanitarian context, UNICEF interaction and the results, cases will be selected from different periods and may include one or more chronic emergency.
- There will also be an effort to control for the overwhelming importance that the individual personalities of heads of offices have for interagency dynamics, and thus to select cases spanning more than one UNICEF Representative.
- Availability of evaluations covering the overall country response by UNICEF will be a criterion for inclusion.
- Relevance of transition issues will also be a criterion for inclusion.

Possible cases identified initially include: Iraq, Liberia, FYR, and Sudan.

#### **4.4 Validation & debriefing**

The first draft of the evaluation will be circulated to a Reference Group (see below) prior to a debriefing meeting to review and discuss the main findings and conclusions and implications. The Reference Group will then have an opportunity to provide more detailed comments on corrections of fact on this first draft.

#### **4.5 Links to parallel study**

The evaluator responsible for the exercise covered in this TOR will exchange with evaluators carrying out the assessment of UNICEF interaction with UN Reform under the UN Development Group at three key points:

- At the outset of this exercise, the two teams will meet to compare methodologies and for the Development focused team to share any of their lessons on process;
- At a mid-point to be determined, the two teams will meet to exchange initial conclusions emerging and identify any common issues for further exploration in each exercise.
- At a near final stage, the two teams will meet to exchange more refined conclusions and discuss and refine any common implications.

#### **4.6 Limitations**

The methodology is restricted by time and financial budgets.

- Documentation is limited. In particular, data for an overall assessment of the UN Reform process which provides the context for the assessment of UNICEF contributions will be limited.
- Field visits will not be included.
- Interviews will be carried out primarily by phone. However, if the consultants are based neither in Geneva nor New York, visits to one or both of these locations may be required.

### **5. ACCOUNTABILITIES**

#### **5.1 Evaluation Management Team**

The membership is still to be determined but will likely include one representative from the Office of Emergency Programmes (EMOPS), Programme Division, Division of Policy and Planning and the Evaluation Office.

The Team will:

- Take any decisions on adjustment of the TORs.
- Approve the proposed sampling of key informants and contribute to building the list of interviewees.
- Facilitate in identifying relevant documentation.
- Approve the structure of the final report.
- Work with the evaluator to prepare how the debriefing meeting will be managed.
- Approve the final draft as meeting the TORs.

#### **5.2 The Reference Group**

The Reference Group will be the same for that of the parallel evaluation of UNICEF and the UN Reform process under the UN Development Group with a few key additions from two groups of staff:

- Headquarters staff with specific experience of UNICEF work with the IASC, ECHA and/or OCHA
- Key field office staff that are significantly involved in UN Reform in the humanitarian sector.

The Reference Group will:

- Comment on draft Terms of Reference with a view to ensuring that the right questions are posed,
- Discuss a preliminary draft and/or provide further written comment as necessary,
- Discuss final recommendations and advise on prioritisation, refinement and follow-up to the UNICEF headquarters Inter-Divisional Standing Committee on Children Affected by Armed Conflict.

#### **5.3 Evaluation Office**

The Evaluation Office will take the primary role of facilitating the evaluation exercise and will act as the central point of contact for the Evaluator. The Evaluation Office will:

- Coordinate and provide to the evaluators lists of possible key informants for subsequent selection.
- Facilitate in identifying possible country cases.

- Coordinate and provide to the evaluators the core of internal UNICEF documentation (additional documentation will invariably be identified directly by the evaluator in the course of interviews).
- Facilitate arrangements for all interviews — both internal and external — and facilitate any additional contact with external partners as needed.
- Ensure coordination with the parallel evaluation of UNICEF contribution to UN Reform under the UN Development Group.
- Consolidate comments on the first draft.
- Manage all administrative and contractual matters.

#### **5.4 Evaluator**

The evaluator will be responsible for:

- Proposing a detailed work plan.
- Further developing the methodology design to be approved by the EMT.
- Proposing a structure for the final report to be approved by the EMT.
- Carrying out all research and delivering a final product in a manner consistent with the Programme Evaluation Standards. The final evaluation report must also meet standards described below under Deliverables.

## **6. PROCEDURES AND LOGISTICS**

### **6.1 Deliverables**

The final product is a report presenting findings and conclusions on evaluations questions above for each of the specified issues. The level at which recommendations will be pitched — i.e. as implications or more defined recommendations targeting specific actors will be defined in the final version of the TORs, to be finalised in the first week of the assignment.

The report must meet the attached Evaluation Report Standards.

The executive summary must follow the specifications for entry in the UNICEF Global Evaluation and Research Database in the attached Technical Note.

The final report should be provided in hard-copy (1 copy) and electronic version in Microsoft Word 97 on a CD.

#### **Contract Period:**

The contract shall commence March 1, 2004 and shall expire on the satisfactory completion of the services described above by May 30, unless sooner terminated or amended under the terms of this contract.

#### **Working Arrangements**

The evaluator is expected to provide his/her own office space and working equipment. At certain stages of the work it will be expedient for the evaluator to spend sometime in UNICEF offices, especially if he/she is not based in New York, for which space will be provided.

#### **Reporting/supervision**

The team will work under the overall supervision of Kate Alley, Project Officer, UNICEF Evaluation Office.

## ANNEX 2: BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bassiouni, David S. "A Review of the Consolidated Appeal Process and Plan of Action for Strengthening the CAP," Submitted to IASC by David S. Bassiouni, Deputy Director, Office of Emergency Programmes, UNICEF Geneva, IASC: 12 November 2001

Borton, John et al. "Aid responses to Afghanistan: lessons from previous evaluations" Paper commissioned by OECD/DAC, December 2001

Bradbury, Mark, Nicholas Leader and Kate Mackintosh. "The Agreement on Ground Rules in South Sudan" (Study 3 in *The Politics of Principle: the Principles of Humanitarian Action in Practice.*) HPG Report 4, March 2000, London: ODI

Broughton, Bernard. "Study of the UNICEF Northern Caucasus Emergency Programme November 1999 to December 2002" (March-August 2003) New York: UNICEF.

Dalton, Mark, Karin von Hippel, Randolph Kent, Ralf Maurer, "Study Four: Changes in Humanitarian Financing: Implications for the United Nations" (September 2003), New York: OCHA

Donini, Antonio, Peter Walker, Larry Minear. "The Future of Humanitarian Action: Implications of Iraq and Other Recent Crises" Report of an International Mapping Exercise by the Feinstein International Famine Center, Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Tufts University, January 2004.

Freedman, Jim. "Desk Review on UNICEF Humanitarian Response Capacity" UNICEF. (April 2001)

Fisher, Nigel. "Presentation at UNICEF Martigny II Meeting" (June 18, 2003)

Hansen, Greg. "Humanitarian Action in Iraq: Emerging Constraints and Challenges." Report produced for the Humanitarianism and War Project, Tufts University (April 27, 2004). IASC "Interagency Contingency Planning Guidelines for Humanitarian Assistance." Recommendations to the IASC. November 15, 2001.

ICVA. "The Humanitarian Response in Liberia: Some Observations by the ICVA Coordinator" (17 June 2004).

ISIM. "Summary: Roundtable on Humanitarian Action in Iraq" From a meeting held February 3, 2003, hosted by the Institute for the Study of International Migration (ISIM). Georgetown University. Washington DC: ISIM.

Jones, Bruce and Abby Stoddard. "External Review of the Interagency Standing Committee" New York: OCHA (December 2003)

Jonsson, Urban, Iain Levine and Hamish Young, UNICEF. "The Right to Nutrition in Conflict Situations." Paper presented at the Symposium on Nutrition in the Context of Crisis and Conflict (Berlin, 11-15 March 2002)

Lawry-Wright, Simon. "Internal Evaluation of UNICEF Emergency Preparedness & Early Response in Iraq, September 2001-June 2003." Commissioned by UNICEF Iraq Country Office, MENARO, and the Evaluation Office (April 2004), 9

Macrae, Joanna et al (2002) *Uncertain Power: The Changing Role of Official Donors in Humanitarian Action*, HPG Report 12 December 2002, London: Overseas Development Institute.

Reindorp, Nicola and Peter Wiles. *Humanitarian Coordination: Lessons from Recent Field Experience* A Study Commissioned by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, New York: OCHA (June 2001)

Smillie, Ian and Larry Minnear, *The Quality of Money: Donor Behaviour in Humanitarian Financing* (April 2003) Humanitarianism and War Project, Tufts University

Stoddard, Abby. "Everyone's and No One's: IDPs, Refugees, and the Politics of Aiding the Displaced" in *The Politics of Forced Migration*. Nitza Nachmias, Ed (forthcoming).

Suliman, Hannan. "MTSP and Emergencies," UNICEF internal issues paper (8 March 2004)

UNDG/ECHA. "Report of the UNDG/ECHA Working Group on Transition Issues"

UNICEF Annual Report 2002

\_\_\_\_\_. "Draft: Child Protection: Illustrative Conceptual Framework"

\_\_\_\_\_. Children Affected by Armed Conflict: UNICEF Actions. May 2002

\_\_\_\_\_. UNICEF Core Corporate Commitments in emergencies (E/ICEF/2000/12)

\_\_\_\_\_. "A Global Proposal to Strengthen UNICEF Programming as it Applies to Humanitarian Response: Phase II" Submitted to DfID/CHAD. (November 2001)

\_\_\_\_\_. "A Human Rights Based Approach to Programming in Humanitarian Crisis: Is UNICEF up for the Challenge?" (Draft 3, September 2003, Humanitarian Policy Unit/EMOPS)

\_\_\_\_\_. "Executive Directors New Year's Message" (1 January 2004)

\_\_\_\_\_. "Martigny II — Where Are We Now? A Review of UNICEF Humanitarian Response Capacity" UNICEF Evaluation Office (May 2003).

\_\_\_\_\_. "Review of UNICEF's Role in Operation Lifeline Sudan 1999" (Draft Report, 15 June 1999).

\_\_\_\_\_. "UNICEF's Future Role in Post-Conflict Transition" (Draft note, June 2004).

\_\_\_\_\_. "UNICEF Preparedness and Early Response in the Iraq Crisis: Results of the Iraq Subregional Lessons Learned Workshop" Istanbul, 2-3 October, 2003.

\_\_\_\_\_. "UNICEF WES Emergency Preparedness and Response: Plan of Action 2004-2005" WES Section (January 2004).

UNICEF Executive Directive. "Guidelines for Human-Rights Based Programming Approach" (CF/EXD-1998-004, 21 April 1998)

UNICEF Executive Directive. "Revised Guidance for Collaboration with NGOs and CBOs" (CF/EXD/2001-013, 13 July 2001)

UNICEF Medium-term strategic plan for the period 2002-2005 (E/ICEF/2001/13)

UNICEF MENARO. "UNICEF Preparedness and Early Response in the Iraq Crisis: Results of the Iraq Subregional Lessons Learned Workshop, Istanbul, 2-3 October 2003"

UNICEF Programme Policy and Procedures Manual 2002. Chapter 2, Operations Framework, Section 1. Human Rights-Based Approach to Programming

\_\_\_\_\_. Chapter 6, Section 8. Emergency Preparedness Tool

\_\_\_\_\_. Chapter 6, Section 2. Incorporating Vulnerability Analysis in the Situation Analysis

United Nations "Strengthening of the Coordination of Humanitarian Emergency Assistance of the United Nations" General Assembly Resolution A/RES/46/182 of 19 December 1991

\_\_\_\_\_. "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations" GA Resolution A/RES/48/57 of 14 December 1993

\_\_\_\_\_. *Renewing the UN: A Programme for Reform*, Report of the Secretary-General, A/51/950, (14 July 1997)

UN IASC "The Interagency Standing Committee and Working Group Concise Terms of Reference and Action Procedures, Revised and Abridged February 1998," Geneva: IASC & IASC-WG Secretariat.

United Nations Interagency Standing Committee documents:

- Consolidated Appeal Process Guidelines (1994)
- Exit Strategy from Relief to Development (1995)
- Exit Strategy for Humanitarian Actors in the Context of Complex Emergencies (1997)
- Field Coordination: Appointment of Humanitarian Coordinators (1994)
- Gender and Humanitarian Assistance Resource Kit (CD-ROM) (2001)
- Growing the Sheltering Tree: Protecting Rights Through Humanitarian Action (2002)
- Guidelines for Field Staff Promoting Reintegration (Golden Rules)-(2000)
- Guidelines for HIVAIDS Interventions in Emergency Settings (1996)
- Guiding and Operating Principles for the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets in Support of Humanitarian Operations (1995)
- Humanitarian Impact of Sanctions (1994)
- IASC Review of the CAP and Plan of Action for Strengthening the CAP (2002)
- IASC Statement of intent for UN Agencies operating in Somalia (1995)
- IASC Statement to Security Council on humanitarian situation in the Great Lakes region (1996)
- IASC Statement in days of tranquillity for polio eradication (1999)
- IASC Statement on the International Criminal Court (1999)
- IASC Statement on the CARE Workers (1999)

- IASC Policy Statement on Regroupment in Burundi (2000)
- IASC Statement on the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) (2002)
- IASC Statement on the Humanitarian Crisis in Southern Africa (2002)
- Interagency Contingency Planning Guidelines for Humanitarian Assistance (2001)
- Lead Agency Model for Strategic Coordination (1997)
- Manual on Field Practice in Internal Displacement (1999)
- Note of guidance on relations between Representatives of the Secretary-General,
- Plan of Action for 2002-2003
- Policy Statement for the Integration of a Gender Perspective in Humanitarian Assistance (1999)
- Protection of Internally Displaced Persons (2000)
- Recommendations to the IASC-WG from the IASC-WG Staff Security Task Force (2001)
- Report on Strengthening Field Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance in Complex Emergencies (1994)
- Resident Coordinators and Humanitarian Coordinators (2000)
- Respect for Humanitarian Mandates in Conflict Situations (1996)
- Review of the IASC Work Plan, 2001
- Summary Record and Action Points (IASC Sessions 21-26: 31/05/1999-09/04/02)
- Summary Record and Action Points (Working Group Meetings 37-51)
- Statement on Security in Refugees and IDP camps in Rwanda and Neighbouring Countries (1994)
- Strategic Humanitarian Coordination in the Great Lakes, 1996-1997: An Independent Assessment (1998) Technical Guidelines for Consolidated Appeals Process (2002)
- Terms of Reference for Humanitarian Coordinators (1994, 2003)

## ANNEX 3: LIST OF INTERVIEWS

### UNICEF STAFF

NAME	TITLE
Bernt Aasen	UNICEF Representative, Sudan
Steven Allen	UNICEF Representative, Indonesia
Louis-Georges Arsenault	Deputy Director, Programme Division
Carol Bellamy	Executive Director
Ted Chaiban	UNICEF Representative, Sri Lanka and the Maldives
Peter Crowley	Principal Officer, Coordination & Capacity Building, EMOPS
Nicola Dahrendorf	Chief, Humanitarian Policy & Advocacy Unit, EMOPS
Carel de Rooy	UNICEF Representative, Russia
Hazel de Wet	Humanitarian Policy Unit, EMOPS
Shamsul Farooq	Deputy Director, Supply Division, Copenhagen
Mario Ferrari	UNICEF Representative, Angola
Manuel Fontaine	Child Protection Section, Programme Division
Elizabeth Gibbons	Chief, Global Policy Section, Division of Policy and Planning
Leila Gharagozloo-Pakkala	Senior Programme Officer, UNICEF Somalia
Morten Giersing	UNICEF Representative Bangladesh
David Gressly	Deputy Director, India Country Office
Mark Henderson	Water and Environmental Sanitation Section, Programme Division
Nils Kastberg	Regional Director (former Director, EMOPS)
Angela Kearny	UNICEF Representative, Liberia
Noreen Khan	Global Policy Unit, Division of Policy and Planning
Iain Levine	Human Rights Watch (Former Chief, EMOPS/Humanitarian Policy Unit)
Julianna Lindsey	Programme Officer, Humanitarian Response Unit
Tom McDermott	Regional Director, MENARO
Geetanjali Narayan	Humanitarian Policy Unit, EMOPS
Bo Viktor Nylund	Head, Child Protection Section, UNICEF Sri Lanka
Philip O'Brien	Regional Director, Geneva Regional Office
Everett Ressler	EMOPS, Geneva
Sharad Sapra	Director, Communications Division
Hanaa Singer	Regional Emergency Officer, CEE/CIS & Baltics Regional Office
Anupama Rao Singh	Deputy Director, Programme Division
Christian Skoog	Programme Officer, EMOPS, Geneva
Aboubacry Tall	UNICEF Representative, Sierra Leone
Daniel Toole	Director, Office of Emergency Programmes
Pierette Vi Thi	UNICEF Representative, Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Sheldon Yett	Programme Officer, Humanitarian Response Unit

## SECONDED UNICEF STAFF

NAME	TITLE/AFFILIATION
David Bassiouni	UNICEF Jerusalem
Kathleen Cravero	UNAIDS (Former HC, Burundi)
Afshan Khan	Coordinator, Reform Project, Office of the Deputy Secretary General
Kirsi Madi	IASC Secretariat, Geneva
Rosemary McCreery	ASG for Human Resources, UN Secretariat
Bert Theuermann	Child Protection Adviser, Office of the Special Representative, UN Mission in Sierra Leone

## EXTERNAL INTERVIEWS

NAME	TITLE/AFFILIATION
Catherine Bertini	Under Secretary General, Management (former Executive Director, World Food Programme)
James Bishop	Director, Humanitarian Policy and Practice, Interaction
Anne Willem Bijleveld	Director, Division of Communication and Information, UNHCR
Nigel Fisher	
Ruud Lubbers	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
Marta Mauras	Office of Deputy Secretary General
Joel McClellan	Executive Secretary, Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response
Carolyn McKaskie	Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, OCHA
Ross Mountain	Special Representative of the Secretary General <i>a.i.</i> for Iraq, Former Chair of IASC and Director and Assistant Emergency Relief Coordinator, OCHA/Geneva
David Nabarro	Rep of the DG of WHO for Health Action in Crises
Ed Schenkenberg van Mierop	Coordinator, ICVA
Julia Taft	Director, United Nations Development Programme/BCPR

