Road map and outline of the revised evaluation policy of UNICEF

UNICEF Executive Board
First Regular Session
6th–8th February 2018
Rationale for the revised evaluation policy

- Changes in the environment in which UNICEF operates
  - The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015
  - The adoption of resolution 71/243 (2016 QCPR)

- In response to reviews of UNICEF’s evaluation function, *inter alia*:
  - JIU 2014 Analysis of the evaluation function in the UN system
  - MOPAN 2015-16 Institutional Assessment of UNICEF
  - UNEG/OECD-DAC 2017 Peer Review of UNICEF’s Evaluation Function

- To reflect updated best practice
  - Revised UNEG Norms and Standards 2016
What do we want a new policy to achieve?

▪ Reinforce the **use** of evaluations for learning, decision making and accountability in UNICEF and amongst its partners

▪ Strengthen the application of **UNEG Norms and Standards** to all evaluations throughout UNICEF

▪ Enhance the **capacity and professionalism** of UNICEF staff who manage evaluations

▪ Increase mutual support between evaluation and **other learning and accountability functions** (monitoring, audit, data, research)

▪ Enhance UN **partnerships** and support for **national evaluation capacity** in the context of the SDGs; strengthen the contribution of UNICEF to the review of progress towards the SDGs
Purpose of evaluation

- Evaluation serves UNICEF’s mission, and supports the organization in the delivery of programmes to fulfil the rights of all children; as well as the broader principles and values of the UN, including commitment to human rights and gender equality, and the attainment of the SDGs.

- In UNICEF, evaluation’s purpose is:
  - Learning: evaluations support better decision making and promote learning for continuous improvement in delivery of results for children
  - Accountability: evaluations help improve performance management and accountability for results at all levels; improve accountability for learning from evaluations in the organization
  - Improved national evaluation capacity: supporting countries to assess and enhance progress in achieving the SDGs and fulfilling children’s rights
Levels of the UNICEF Evaluation Function

- Corporate and strategic governance level:
  - Independent corporate/global evaluations undertaken by Evaluation Office; evaluation of joint global programmes; Evaluation Office oversight of the evaluation system

- Regional and Country level:
  - By Regional Offices, multi-country thematic evaluations, Country Programme Evaluations; technical assistance and quality assurance to Country Offices
  - By Country Offices, evaluations of national policies and programmes in which UNICEF is a partner; support to country-led evaluations; UN joint and system-wide evaluations

- External stakeholder level:
  - Contribute to review of progress towards the SDGs, and system-wide evaluations
  - Evaluation of UNICEF’s evaluation function
## Safeguards to be considered (to be elaborated in the policy)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNEG norm /standard</th>
<th>Safeguards for upholding norms and standards</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independence</strong></td>
<td>Director heads an independent and impartial evaluation function in UNICEF</td>
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<td><strong>Impartiality</strong></td>
<td>The Head of Office ensures application of the provisions of the Evaluation Policy in the conduct of evaluations at Divisional/Regional/Country level</td>
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<td><strong>Ethics</strong></td>
<td>All evaluation managers and evaluators conform to the UNICEF procedures for ethical standards, UNEG ethical standards, UNEG code of conduct and UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Independence</strong></td>
<td>All evaluation consultants sign the Code of Conduct for Evaluators in the United Nations system.</td>
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<td><strong>Impartiality</strong></td>
<td>Country Programme Evaluations will be managed by Regional Evaluation Advisors with support from the Evaluation Office.</td>
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<td><strong>Human rights and gender equality</strong></td>
<td>Key stakeholders, including children (when appropriate), marginalized groups, national partners, and governments should be engaged at relevant stages of the evaluation.</td>
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<td><strong>Credibility</strong></td>
<td>The Regional Evaluation Advisor provides technical guidance and quality assurance for country level evaluations.</td>
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<td><strong>Impartiality</strong></td>
<td>Evaluations for L3 emergencies will be managed by the Evaluation Office in consultation with the Emergency Management Team</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Credibility</strong></td>
<td>L2 evaluations will be managed by the Regional Office in consultation with the Evaluation Office; L1 evaluations by the Country Office in consultation with the Regional Office.</td>
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<td><strong>Professionalism</strong></td>
<td>Every staff member of UNICEF responsible for managing evaluations will undergo basic training for purposes of upholding the norms and standards of the profession</td>
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Specific provisions to enhance accountabilities for safeguards

- As per the UNICEF Management Response to the UNEG/ OECD-DAC Peer Review of the Evaluation Function
- Expansion of the role of the external Audit Advisory Committee to include matters pertaining to the oversight of the evaluation function
- Establishment of an external Evaluation Advisory Panel to advise the Evaluation Director on improvements to methodologies, procedures, quality assurance mechanisms, and the management response mechanism
- Establishment/strengthening the position of Regional Evaluation Adviser – to provide quality assurance to Country Offices
How will the policy ensure adequate coverage of evaluations of UNICEF’s work?

- **Principles**: regular evaluation of performance at country level; areas of potential risk and or opportunity should be prioritized; evaluations should be done when context changes sharply

- **Corporate level**:
  - Evaluations undertaken in support of the Strategic Plan and other polices and plans approved by the Executive Board
  - In support of policies and programmes initiated by the Executive Director
  - Of other global and multi-region initiatives, including joint programmes

- **Regional level**:
  - Evaluations undertaken in support of multi-country initiatives
How will the policy ensure adequate coverage of evaluations of UNICEF’s work?

- Country level:
  - Country Programme Evaluations
    - At least once every two programme cycles
    - Sequenced to feed in to subsequent CPD and UNDAF
    - At least once per programme cycle IF monitoring and audit information points to a significant shift in the programming context or a significant increase in the level of risk
  - Country Programme Component and Thematic Evaluations
    - At least one country programme component evaluation and/or thematic evaluation per year
How will use of evaluations be enhanced?

- The policy can promote and support key actions to enhance the use of evaluation findings and recommendations, including:
  - Timely evaluations, linked to key decision making moments in programming, policy development and planning
  - Supporting evaluability assessment to improve programme design
  - Promoting high quality evaluations through actions such as use of subject matter experts as evaluators, applying OECD-DAC evaluation criteria
  - Using new and better technology in both the conduct and dissemination of evaluation findings and recommendations
  - Ensuring a robust evaluation management response system, with appropriate monitoring and follow up of management responses
  - Regular feedback to senior management on evaluation findings and recommendations
What are the accountabilities for ensuring implementation of the policy?

- Given UNICEF’s decentralized structure, the policy will identify accountabilities at all levels to support management and governance throughout the organization.
- Accountabilities will be identified for all entities responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented.
- Accountabilities will be defined for specific leaders/managers to ensure clarity of roles.
- Accountability for learning from evaluations will also be defined.
Financial resources

- The policy will maintain UNICEF’s commitment to allocating at least 1% of programme expenditure to evaluation.
- The Evaluation Office will establish a pooled fund to complement expenditure by all levels of the organization and to support capacity development.
- The use of the Costed Evaluation Plan at country level will enable better monitoring and planning of allocations and coverage.
Implementation and reporting arrangements

- UNICEF will issue appropriate instructions to carry forward the implementation of the policy

- The Evaluation Director will report annually to the Executive Board on the status of implementation of the policy

- An independent review of the performance of the policy should be undertaken in 2022
Key elements of the UNICEF 2018 evaluation policy

1. Rationale for revised evaluation policy
2. Definition and purpose of evaluation in UNICEF
3. Guiding principles underlying the policy
4. Evaluation Theory of change
5. Performance standards for evaluation (including safeguards and coverage norms)
6. Use of evaluations
7. Accountabilities for evaluation
8. Synergies with other evidence and knowledge functions in UNICEF
9. Partnerships for evaluation and national evaluation capacity
10. Evaluation resources: financial and human resources
11. Implementation, reporting and review
## Critical timelines*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>JIU system wide assessment of evaluation</td>
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<td>2016</td>
<td>UNEG Norms and Standards updated</td>
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<td>2016-2017</td>
<td>MOPAN Institutional Assessment of UNICEF</td>
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<td>2017</td>
<td>UNEG/OECD-DAC Peer Review of the UNICEF Evaluation Function</td>
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<td>2017 September</td>
<td>UNICEF Management Response to the Peer Review</td>
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<td>Oct 2017 - Jan 2019</td>
<td>Internal Consultations on the evaluation policy</td>
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<td>Dec 2017 - Feb 2018</td>
<td>Consultation with external Audit Advisory Committee</td>
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<td>Jan-Feb 2018</td>
<td>Consultation with external Evaluation Advisory Panel</td>
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<td>Jan 16 2018</td>
<td>Informal Briefing for Executive Board on the revised Evaluation Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 6-9 2018</td>
<td>First Regular Session of the Executive Board</td>
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<td>Feb 12 2018</td>
<td>Workshop with Member States and UN experts</td>
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<td>Feb 19 2018</td>
<td>Remaining feedback received</td>
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<td>Feb 26 2018</td>
<td>Draft policy shared informally with the Executive Board</td>
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<td>March 5 2018</td>
<td>Deadline for feedback on draft policy</td>
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<td>March 23 - 4 April 2018</td>
<td>2nd draft Evaluation Policy dispatched for editing and procession</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 22 2018</td>
<td>Informal briefing of the Executive Board</td>
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<td>June 11 2018</td>
<td>Presentation of 2nd draft evaluation policy at the Annual Session</td>
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* As will be guided by the Executive Board