

# Management Response to the Evaluation of Innovation in UNICEF Work

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unicef   
for every child

# Evaluation of Innovation in UNICEF Work

## Evaluation Management Response

UNICEF agrees with all three recommendations of the evaluation:

Evaluation Recommendation	Response
1. Develop a shared strategic vision and approach that directly addresses fundamental constraints in the current approach and drives decision-making across the organization	<b>Agree</b> – Draft Global Strategy and Vision for Innovation has been developed <i>Recommendation is approx. 90% complete</i>
2. Act on needed structural change to advance innovation as a means of achieving results for children	<b>Agree</b> – Office of Innovation is being re-organized; Roles for HQ divisions, Regional Offices, and Country Offices identified <i>Recommendation is approx. 50% complete</i>
3. Utilize a portfolio management approach for innovation	<b>Agree</b> – Draft portfolio prioritization process developed. Global inventory of innovations currently being consolidated. <i>Recommendation is approx. 25% complete</i>

# Recommendation #1 – Develop a Shared Strategic Vision and Approach [...]

## Context for Strategy

- Innovation has always been at the heart of UNICEF’s ability to achieve results for children, and has been an element of the Strategic Plan since 2014. The organization has:
  - Worked with partners to develop technologies to keep vaccines cold
  - Created better solutions for identifying and treating child malnutrition
  - Pioneered techniques for bringing safe water to rural communities
- UNICEF’s 70-year history of innovating has enabled incredible advances for children around the world, however, without faster progress, by 2030:
  - **167 million** children will still live in extreme poverty
  - **60 million** children of primary school age will still be out of school
  - **69 million** children under 5 will still die from preventable causes
- This *Innovation for Impact* strategy is intended to guide future innovation work by better positioning innovation to match and maximize UNICEF’s strengths and comparative advantages

# Recommendation #1 – Develop a Shared Strategic Vision and Approach [...]

## Innovation for Impact: Accelerating Results for Every Child, Everywhere

The specific objectives of the *Innovation for Impact* strategy are to:

- Reinforce UNICEF's programme leadership on innovation for children and young people
- Renew UNICEF's role as an implementer at scale for innovations for children and young people
- Establish UNICEF as a thought leader on innovation needs for children and young people
- Engage key stakeholders to innovate with, and for, children and young people

**Innovation for UNICEF will be defined** as a new or significantly improved solution that accelerates a result for children or young people.

**UNICEF's innovation vision** is for the organization, its partners and other stakeholders for children and young people to use innovation as a fundamental and indispensable means of accelerating results for children and young people, including the most vulnerable and marginalized.

# Recommendation #1 – Develop a Shared Strategic Vision and Approach [...]

## Key Shifts of Innovation Strategy

The critical shifts required to deliver on the innovation vision are:

1. Setting global **priorities based on the needs** of children and young people
  - Learning
  - Clean Water and Sanitation
  - Newborn Health
  - Emergency Response (including health emergencies)
2. Focusing on **scaling** innovations
3. **Catalysing** inventions where no known solution exists
4. **Connecting** the organization and **convening** critical stakeholders to solve the most pressing challenges facing children and young people

The shifts will be enabled by:

- Establishing a portfolio management approach
- Innovative funding and financing
- Ensuring rapid learning and fostering collaboration
- Building innovation culture and competence across UNICEF



## Recommendation #2 – Act on Needed Structural Change [...]

### Clarity on Innovation Roles Across the Organization

- Seamlessly working across HQ, RO, and CO is critical to the success of the Innovation strategy and as such **innovation will continue to be a disseminated function** across HQ and the field
- The **Office of Innovation is currently being re-organized** to provide strategic leadership, enhanced support to the field, streamlined processes and organization-wide accountability. Expected results of the Office of Innovation are also being updated
- **Clear organization-wide roles and accountabilities** have been developed and are being disseminated (ROs, COs, HQ divisions).
- Innovation related governance will be refined to further enable this increased collaboration

# Recommendation #2 – Act on Needed Structural Change [...]

## Innovation Across Headquarters

### Office of Innovation (NEW)

Sets strategic agenda; manages innovation portfolio; supports RO & CO staff to deliver and scale innovations (Enabling Services); Manages project teams focused on priority areas; Advises on innovative finance models for innovation and within the organization more broadly; supports the development of financial structures.

### Programme Division & Office of Emergency Programmes

Supports the setting of innovation priorities in conjunction with Global Positioning and RO; Supports portfolio management; Provides technical expertise as required. Leads scaling project implementation, as appropriate.

### Supply Division

Leads product innovation, including design and sourcing of product innovations; influences markets and suppliers; Provides technical expertise as required on product and market innovation

### Information and Comm. Technology Division

Leads digital / technology innovation portfolio, including digital incubation, prototyping, scale and replication; Provides technical expertise as required on technology innovation; Leads digital internal innovation, including co-leads with PMR on Real-time programme monitoring

### Division of Analysis, Planning & Monitoring

Supports setting of innovation priorities in conjunction with PD, EMOPS and RO; leads on data-related innovations; Co-leads with ICTD on Real-time programme monitoring

### Office of Global Insight & Policy

The team provides policy support on emerging and frontier issues affecting children and young people in real time.

### Division of Communication

Leads global advocacy efforts to catalyse innovation for children and young people and strategically positions UNICEF as a global innovator for children.

### Public and Private Partnerships (PPD/PFP)

Supports public and private sector partnerships; share ideas / innovations from public and private sectors; Works closely with partnerships team within the Office of Innovation to identify appropriate partnerships and support due diligence screening

### DED Innovation for Results

Oversees overall innovation strategy and implementation, including priority setting and investment decisions (>\$5M) Provides overall leadership to Innovation Priorities

### DED Management

Leads Innovation Culture with Culture Advisor; leads Internal Innovation, including change management activities

## Recommendation #2 – Act on Needed Structural Change [...]

### Innovation with the Field

Key roles that the regional and country offices are expected to undertake are:

#### Prioritize

- a. Support the setting of priority areas for innovation based on regional and country issues and challenges
- b. Identify potential innovations to address emerging issues and gaps

#### Scale

- a. Pilot frontier innovations at country level
- b. Implement innovation scaling projects
- c. Undertake monitoring & evaluation activities on innovation projects

#### Catalyze

- a. Catalyse others to leverage their comparative advantage to contribute to innovations that impact children, in collaboration with UNICEF or on their own

#### Connect & Convene

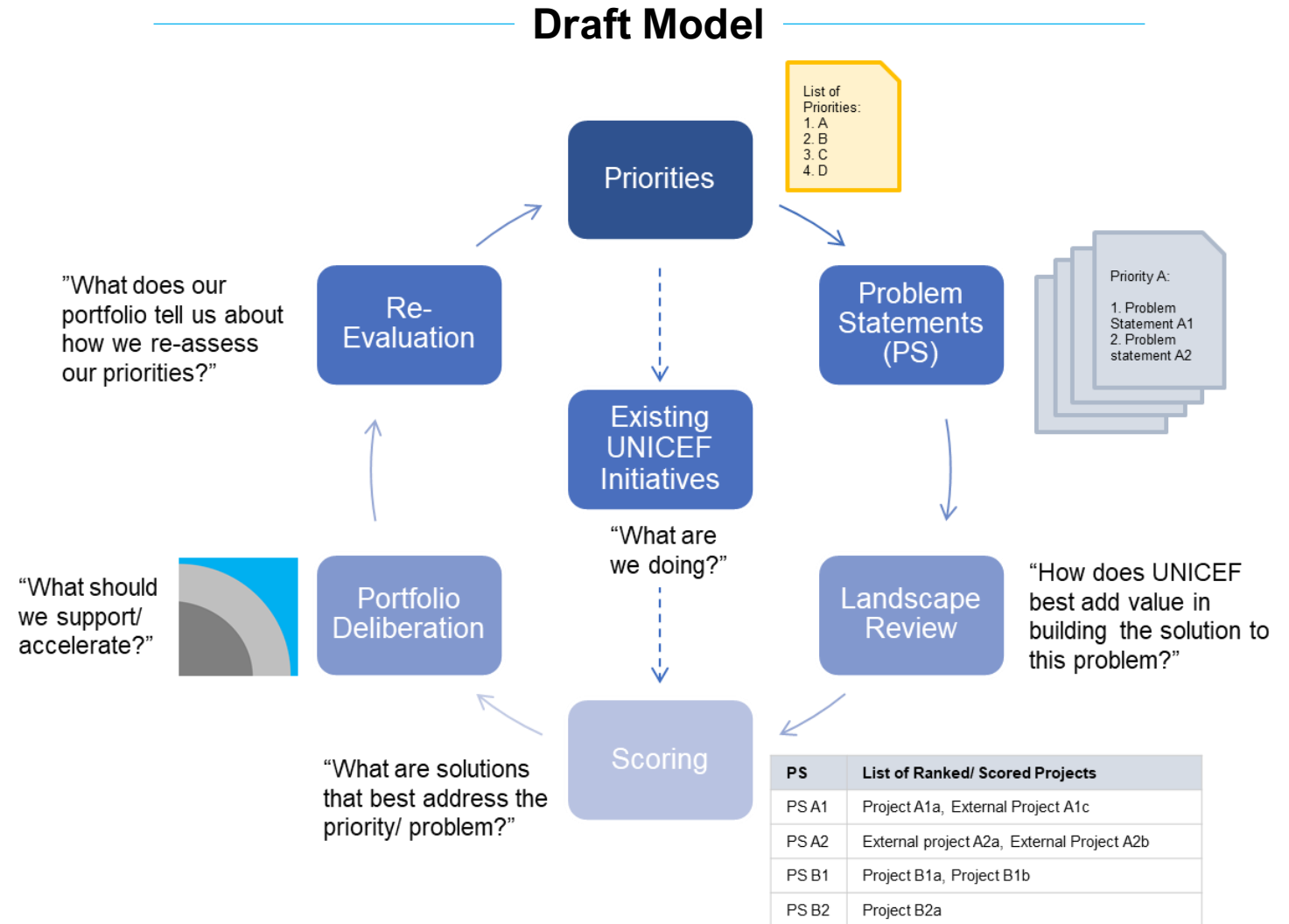
- a. Facilitate partnerships with the public and private sectors at a regional and country level
- b. Document and share regional and country trends, insights, and lessons learned



# Recommendation #3 – Utilize a Portfolio Management Approach for Innovation

## Portfolio Management Approach and Global Inventory of Initiatives

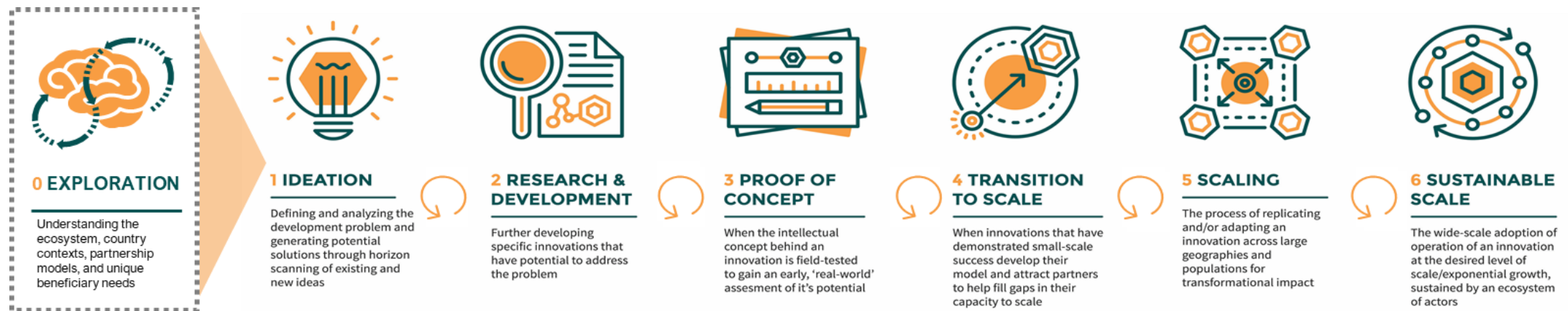
- A portfolio management approach has been drafted, and a global inventory of innovation initiatives is being consolidated
- The portfolio management approach will help UNICEF align innovation activities to priority areas or issues, and enhance the organization’s ability to make strategic resource allocation choices on innovation activities
- Programmes, ROs and COs will manage their respective innovation portfolios within the general framework developed by HQ, allowing flexibility to address country-programme specific innovation priorities



# Recommendation #3 – Utilize a Portfolio Management Approach for Innovation

## Consistency Across the Organization

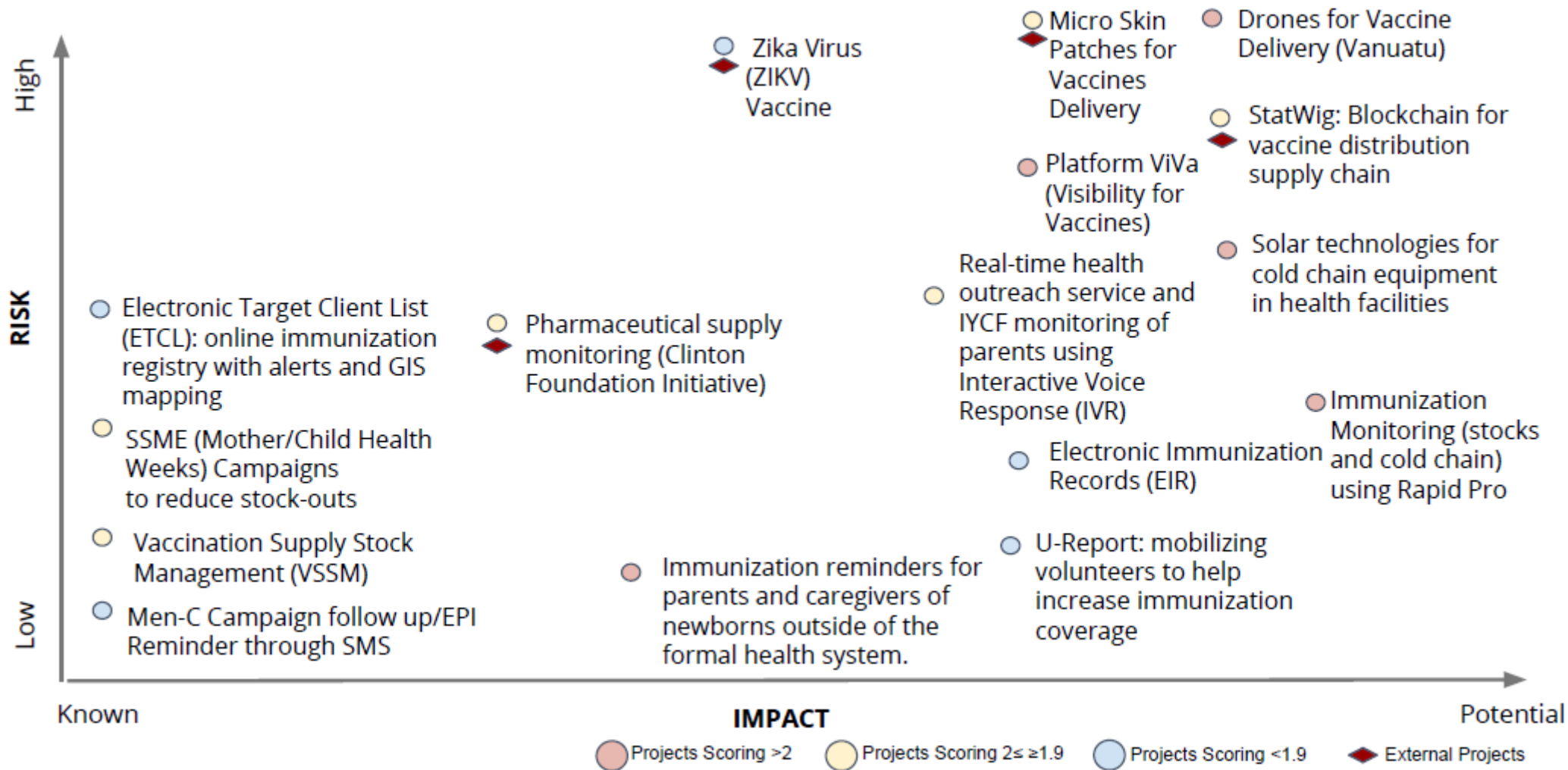
- Innovation within UNICEF will follow a common architecture (developed by the International Development Innovation Alliance), use common language, and use a common stage-gate approach.
- To help guide the organization’s focus and ensure the right actions are taken, the portfolio will be examined through different lenses, such as: Risk; Impact; Stage of Innovation; Type of Innovation (e.g., technology, product, programmes); SDGs and Strategic Plan Goal Areas; Age of UNICEF target beneficiaries; Region



# Recommendation #3 – Utilize a Portfolio Management Approach for Innovation

## Portfolio Management Approach, cont'd

- An **illustrative example** how the draft portfolio approach might categorize innovations related to NewBorn Health (under 5 mortality rates)



# Moving Forward

## Next Steps

- Recommendation #1 – Launch the Shared Strategic Vision and Approach
- Recommendation #2 – Implement the Needed Structural Change
- Recommendation #3 – Implement the Portfolio Management Approach for Innovation
- What success looks like...
  - Capacity building completed with UNICEF staff and positive signs of cultural shift
  - Country's engaged, with defined innovation targets
  - A balanced portfolio of innovations focused on both scale and exploration
  - A number of active partnerships assisting UNICEF on all stages of innovation
  - Initial signs of impact and acceleration of results in identified strategic areas of focus

Thank You