Management Response to the Evaluation of Innovation in UNICEF Work

Daniel Couture, Director of Innovation, a.i.; Director of Information and Communications Technology

August 22 2019
UNICEF agrees with all three recommendations of the evaluation:

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

Office of Global Insight & Policy
The team provides policy support on emerging and frontier issues affecting children and young people in real time.

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.

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**Recommendation #2 – Act on Needed Structural Change […]**

**Innovation with the Field**

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

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<th>Prioritize</th>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Catalyze</th>
<th>Connect &amp; Convene</th>
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| a. Support the setting of priority areas for innovation based on regional and country issues and challenges | a. Pilot frontier innovations at country level  
b. Implement innovation scaling projects  
c. Undertake monitoring & evaluation activities on innovation projects | a. Catalyse others to leverage their comparative advantage to contribute to innovations that impact children, in collaboration with UNICEF or on their own | 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