

Informal Briefing of the UNICEF Executive Board

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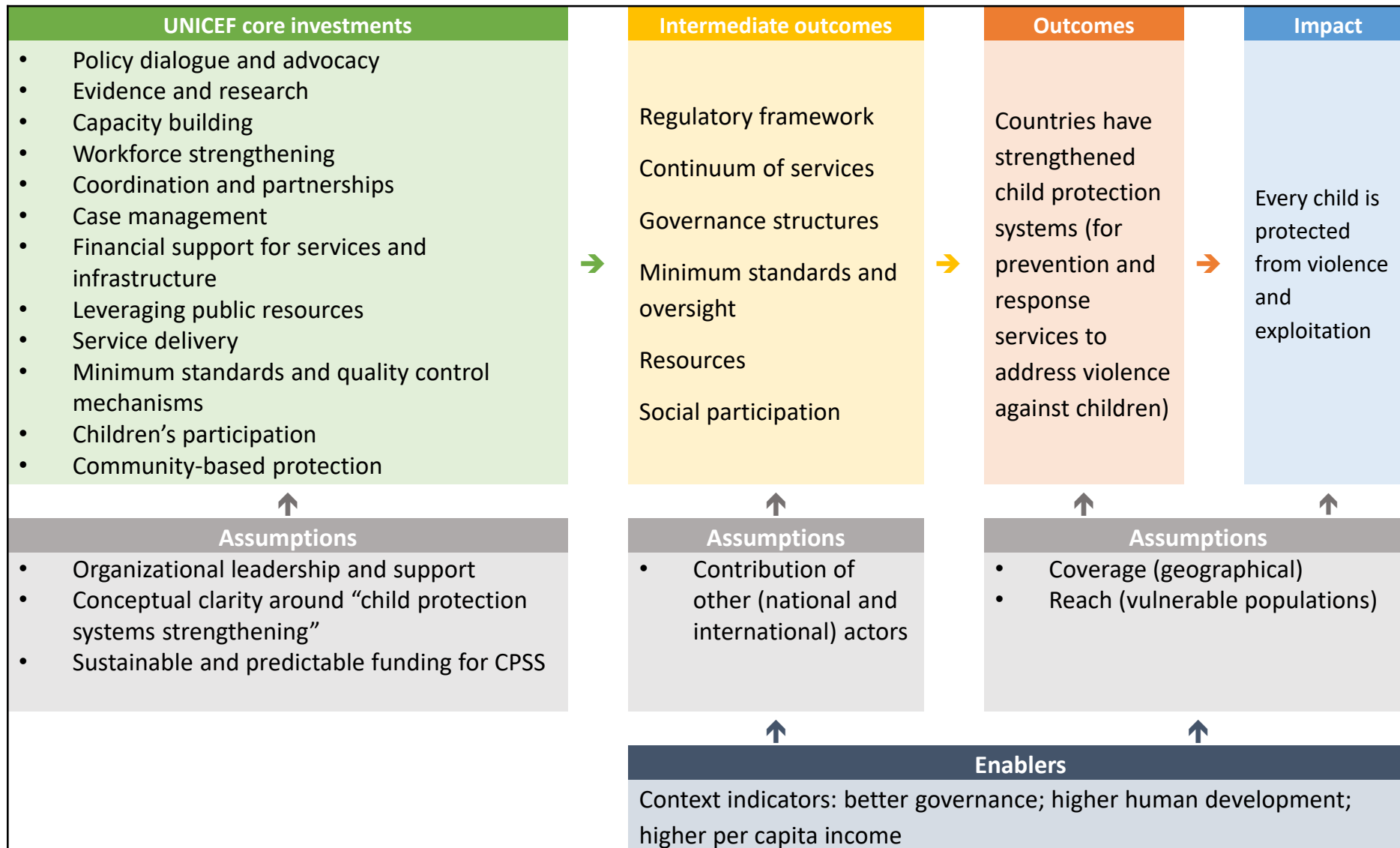
Strengthening Child Protection Systems: Evaluation of UNICEF Strategies and Programme Performance

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Scope of the Evaluation

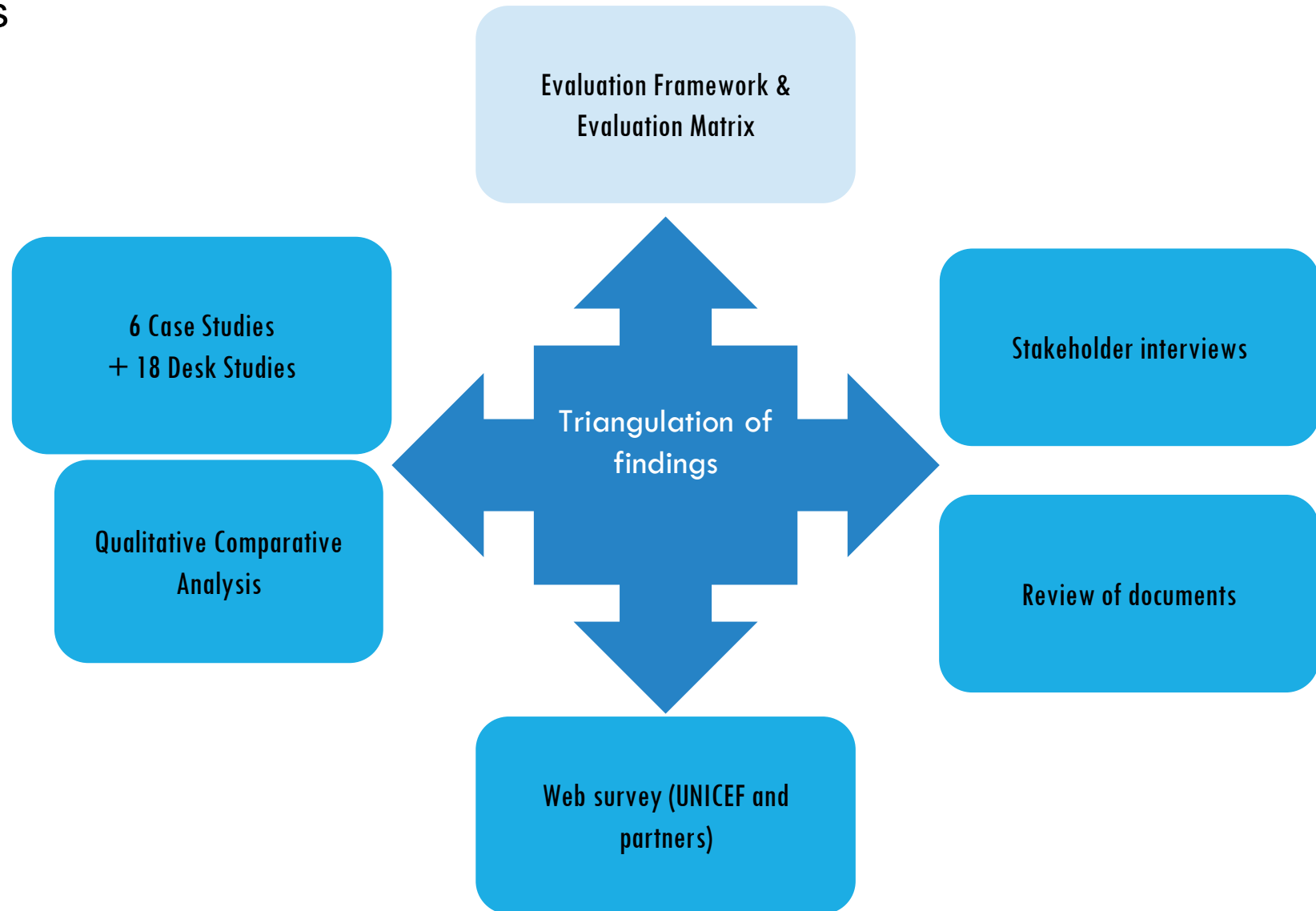
- Considers all levels of UNICEF
- Covers the years 2012 to 2018
- Includes middle income and least developed countries, and fragile settings
- Focuses on strategies and programme performance
 - Coherence of vision, guidance, programming instruments
 - Comprehensive assessment of results achieved in 24 countries

Conceptual Framework



Evaluation Methodology

- Mixed methods
- Participatory



Conclusion: Uneven programme performance

- UNICEF's **programme performance** on CPSS has been **moderate** overall. Progress was **uneven**, with stark **gaps in low-income, fragile and humanitarian contexts**.
- **Strong performance**: Strengthening legal and regulatory frameworks; supporting government-led reform of existing CP systems
- **Weak performance**: Strengthening embryonic systems, especially at the service delivery level

Conclusion: Some highly effective interventions

- The evaluation has identified a number of interventions that are particularly **effective** for strengthening CP systems, including:
 - **capacity-building/social workforce strengthening;**
 - **leveraging public resources;**
 - **evidence and research; and**
 - **policy advocacy.**

Key Results on Gender & Equity

- Many programmes show **adequate attention to the evolving capacities and age** of girls and boys.
- Response services target the **most vulnerable boys and girls** while prevention and early intervention services have a wider focus. Children living with **disabilities** are sometimes overlooked.
- **Gender analysis** on population-level data, needs assessments and impact measurement not widespread.
- There were good synergies (and some competition) between GBV and CPSS programming.

Conclusion: Limited ability to demonstrate results on CPSS

- UNICEF's **corporate reporting systems on expenditures and results** are inadequate to demonstrate the exact level of UNICEF's contribution.

Conclusion: Unclear commitment from UNICEF and donors

- **Donors** have played a largely adverse role in advancing national CP systems by **distributing funding on a narrow issue-by-issue basis and using parallel monitoring and reporting systems**. UNICEF needs to present key donors with a compelling '**business case**' for CPSS.

Conclusion: CPS agenda taken up but national ownership incomplete

- UNICEF has had considerable **success** in advancing the child protection systems agenda at the national level and in raising awareness among national partners. However, by and large, this has **not translated into adequate domestic investments** in CPSS.

Conclusion: Operationalization for different programming contexts unclear

- Staff lack technical support for **operationalizing the CPSS approach in different programming contexts** and against the backdrop of large issue-based initiatives and VAC as the unifying umbrella concept.

Conclusion: Lack of shared understanding

- After a decade of work in this area, **conceptual clarity** on CPSS in UNICEF is still **not complete**.
- As a result, there is a **lack of shared understanding** around CPSS among UNICEF staff at various levels, and with partners.

Recommendation 1: Commitment and Conceptual Clarity

- Make clear the **UNICEF definition** of and **role** in child protection systems-strengthening and ensure that this approach is **prioritized** in organizational strategies, policies and plans.
 - Clarify the desired relationship between **issue-based** and systems approaches and refine the draft **programme-impact pathway** for CPSS.
 - Specify the **phases of the CPSS process** for different contexts and over time (systems-building, system consolidation and system reform, or a similar typology).
 - Reflect this clarified narrative in any future update of the 2008 **Child Protection Strategy**, setting out **accountabilities** among various actors within UNICEF.

Recommendation 2: Operational Clarity

- **Invest** in the most impactful CPSS areas, according to the **UNICEF niche**, to strengthen child protection systems.
 - Prioritize the most effective and sustainable interventions: **social-service workforce-strengthening; the leveraging of public resources; evidence and research; policy advocacy**; as well as child-protection information systems; case management; coordination.
 - **Roll out** a menu of interventions, with a different **package of options** tailored to each phase of the CPSS process, clearly setting out what investments are required at different levels (formal/less formal) of the CP system.

Recommendation 3: Capacities

- **Strengthen staff and partner capacities and learning on CPSS.**
- CPSS requires a **skill set beyond what is typically found in CP staff.** These competencies need to be fostered within UNICEF and among partners. In addition, UNICEF needs to do more to support **learning between countries (and regions)** with similar profiles and challenges. UNICEF should:
 - At HQ level, invest in learning and skills development for staff and partners;
 - At RO level, step up technical assistance for CPSS;
 - At CO level, embrace CPSS as a learning function and a cross-cutting and management responsibility.

Recommendation 4: Partnerships and Resources

- **Leverage partnerships and resources for CPSS.**
- UNICEF should urgently step up its efforts to **revitalize partnerships and advocacy** in favour of CPSS. This should include:
 - Include a **budget line for CPSS programming** and related monitoring and evaluation in large-scale donor agreements on issue-focused child protection work, including in humanitarian action.
 - Develop a partnerships and resourcing strategy for CPSS, assisting donors to open up to supporting systems-strengthening.
 - Improve public finance for CP services and systems.
 - Invest in communications and advocacy, including **business cases** across the range of CPSS contexts.

Recommendation 5: Data and Measurement

- **Address the CPSS data and measurement challenges.**
- Part of what is perceived as lack of conceptual clarity on CPSS is linked to the absence of coherent **corporate-level metrics** for CPSS and the scarcity of **global-level data and evidence** across the steps of the CPSS results chain. UNICEF should:
 - Invest in coherent corporate-level metrics for CPSS;
 - Close evidence gaps along the CPSS programme-impact pathway.

Thank You