Informal Briefing of the UNICEF Executive Board

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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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNICEF core investments</th>
<th>Intermediate outcomes</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Impact</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Policy dialogue and advocacy</td>
<td>Regulatory framework</td>
<td>Countries have strengthened child protection systems (for prevention and response services to address violence against children)</td>
<td>Every child is protected from violence and exploitation</td>
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<td>• Evidence and research</td>
<td>Continuum of services</td>
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<td>• Capacity building</td>
<td>Governance structures</td>
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<td>• Workforce strengthening</td>
<td>Minimum standards and oversight</td>
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<td>• Coordination and partnerships</td>
<td>Resources</td>
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<td>• Case management</td>
<td>Social participation</td>
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<td>• Financial support for services and infrastructure</td>
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<td>• Leveraging public resources</td>
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<td>• Service delivery</td>
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<td>• Minimum standards and quality control mechanisms</td>
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<td>• Children’s participation</td>
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<td>• Community-based protection</td>
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### Assumptions
- Organizational leadership and support
- Conceptual clarity around “child protection systems strengthening”
- Sustainable and predictable funding for CPSS

### Assumptions
- Contribution of other (national and international) actors
- Coverage (geographical)
- Reach (vulnerable populations)

### Enablers
- Context indicators: better governance; higher human development; higher per capita income

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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