

Proposals for the Revised Evaluation Policy for UNICEF

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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)
 - ▶ Ongoing reform agenda on Repositioning the UN Development System
- ▶ In response to review of UNICEF's evaluation function, *inter alia*:
 - ▶ JIU 2014 Analysis of the evaluation function in the UN system
 - ▶ 2015-16 Institutional Assessment of UNICEF
 - ▶ 2017 Peer Review of UNICEF's Evaluation Function
- ▶ To reflect updated best practice
 - ▶ Updated UNEG Norms and Standards 2016
- ▶ Advance the use of evaluations especially at the country level - increasing demand for evaluation at the country level, including in emergencies

Outline of the revised Evaluation Policy

1. Purpose, status and scope of the policy
 2. Rationale for a revised policy
 3. Definition and purpose of evaluation
 4. Evaluation principles
 5. Evaluation procedures and quality assurance
 6. Enhancing the use of evaluations
 7. Complementarity with other accountability and learning functions
 8. Governance of evaluation
 9. System-wide evaluation and Partnerships
 10. National Evaluation Capacity Development
 11. Resources
 12. Risks
 13. Implementation, reporting, and review
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Purpose, status and scope of the policy

- The policy applies to all levels and all parts of the organisation.
- Aligned with UNICEF's mission, United Nations Charter and humanitarian principles, with a commitment to human rights and gender equality.
- Responds to call for “*rigorous evidence, informed by country-led evaluations, that are high-quality, accessible, timely and reliable*” (SDGs); and for national evaluation capacity development (QCPR)
- Guided by the norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG)

Definition and Purpose of Evaluation

- **UNICEF follows the UNEG definition:**

- *“an assessment, conducted as systematically and impartially as possible, of an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector, operational area or institutional performance. It analyses the level of achievement of both expected and unexpected results by examining the results chain, processes, contextual factors and causality using appropriate criteria such as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should provide credible, useful evidence-based information that enables the timely incorporation of its findings, recommendations and lessons into the decision-making processes of organizations and stakeholders”.*

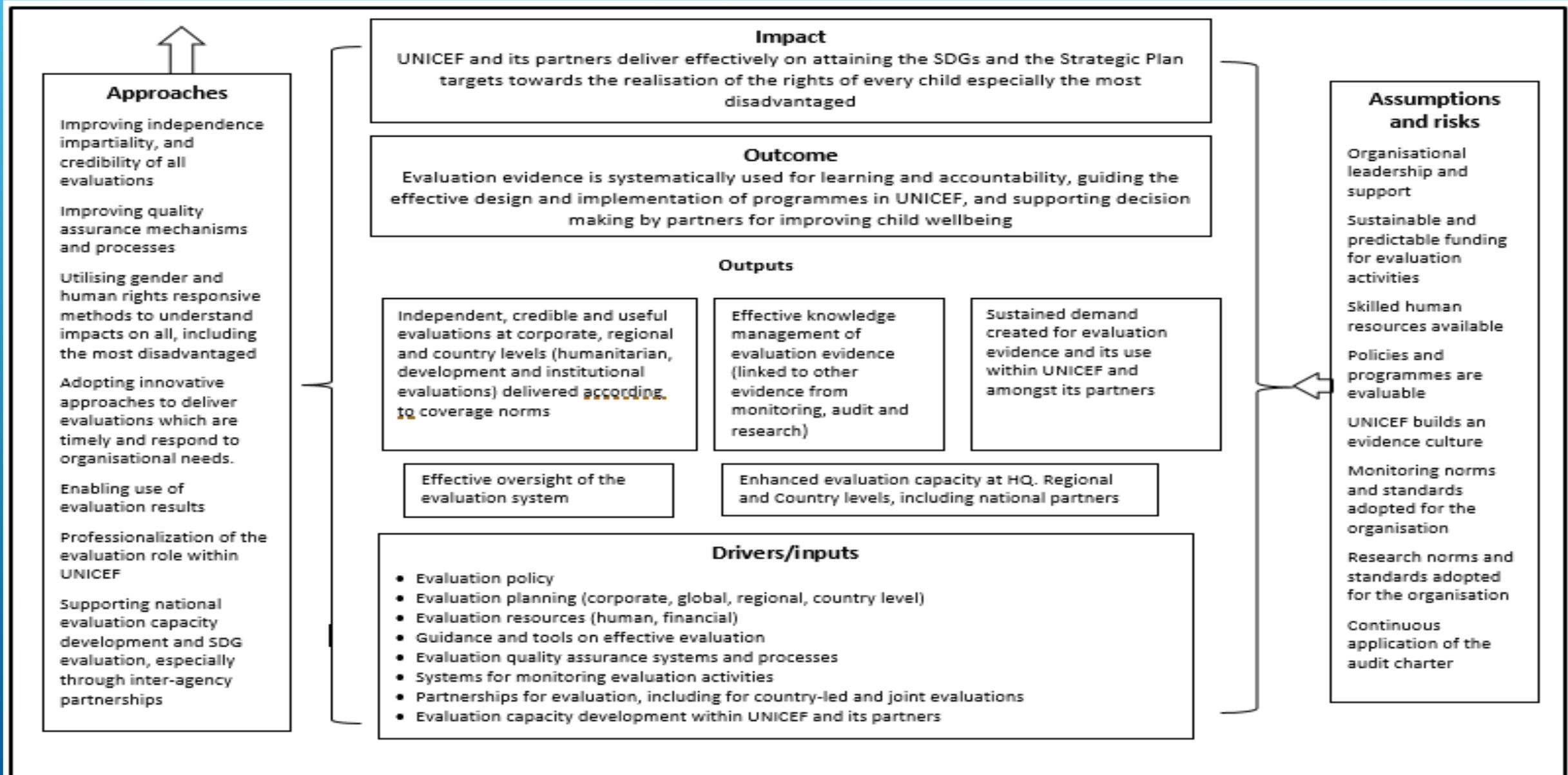
- **Evaluation in UNICEF serves inter-related purposes:**

- ***Learning and decision-making for better results for children***
- ***Promotes accountability***
- ***Supports the development of national evaluation capacity***

What we want the new policy to achieve

- ▶ Delivering the *outputs* of the Theory of Change for evaluation:
 - ▶ Aligning UNICEF evaluation practice with UNEG Norms and Standards
 - ▶ Enhanced capacity and professionalism of UNICEF staff who conduct and manage evaluations
 - ▶ Improved knowledge management and, with other functions (monitoring, audit, data, research) enhanced learning
 - ▶ Support national evaluation capacity development
 - ▶ Enhanced UN partnerships, and contribution the review of progress towards the SDGs
- ▶ Leading to the *outcome* of systematic use of evaluation evidence for learning, decision making and accountability by UNICEF and its partners
- ▶ Supporting the *impact* of UNICEF and partners delivering effectively on the SDGs and SP targets for the realization of all children's rights

Theory of Change



Evaluation Principles

- **UNEG and other international norms and standards**
 - **Provisions in place for upholding these standards are given in Table 1 below**
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UNEG General Norms	Provisions for upholding UNEG Norms	
	Evaluation Office	Regional Directors, Country Representatives
Internationally agreed principles, goals and targets	Plans for evaluations at corporate, regional and country levels should directly contribute to evaluation evidence for the realization of the CRC, SDGs and relevant internationally agreed goals.	
Utility	<p>Terms of Reference should include provisions for timely commissioning and conduct of evaluations and for the dissemination of findings</p> <p>All evaluations should have a management response</p> <p>Evaluation Office monitors and reports on the status of implementation of management responses.</p>	
Credibility	All staff with evaluation responsibilities undergo training in evaluation methods, report writing and analysis	
	A stakeholder reference group and/or a technical experts group is established at the start of an evaluation, including participation of an independent stakeholder.	A stakeholder reference group is established at the start of an evaluation which includes the Regional Evaluation Adviser and/or a member external to UNICEF.
	Evaluation Office provides quality assurance services for evaluations undertaken at Regional level	Regional Evaluation Advisers provide quality assurance services for evaluations undertaken at country level.
		Regional Evaluation Advisers, in consultation with the Evaluation Office, provide quality assurance and technical support to Country Offices in development of the Costed Evaluation Plan
	Evaluation Office ensures independent quality assessment of all evaluation reports	
Independence	Director Evaluation prepares and submits to the Executive Board an independent Plan for Global Evaluations and an independent Annual Report on the evaluation function in UNICEF	
	Director Evaluation is appointed by, and reports directly to, the Executive Director and heads an independent evaluation function in UNICEF.	The Head of Office ensures application of the provisions of the Evaluation Policy in the conduct of evaluations at Regional/Country level
	<p>The budget for the Evaluation Office is approved by the Executive Board in the context of UNICEF's Integrated Budget. The Director Evaluation has full discretion and control over resources allocated.</p> <p>A pooled fund to support the evaluation function will be established and managed by the Evaluation Office to fill funding gaps which may occur and to meet the target of at least 1% of programme expenditure on evaluations.</p>	<p>The budget for the Country level Costed Evaluation Plan (CEP) is approved by the Executive Board as part of the CPD, whose budget includes resources that are earmarked for evaluations identified in the CEP.</p> <p>The financial framework accompanying annual or multi year work plans of Regional and Country Offices should include a line budget for evaluations.</p>
	The evaluation of the UNICEF evaluation function is undertaken by an independent panel (e.g. UNEG/DAC Peer Review)	

UNEG General Norms	Provisions for upholding UNEG Norms	
Impartiality	Evaluation Office	Regional Directors, Country Representatives
	The evaluation of corporate programmes/initiatives is undertaken by the Evaluation Office. Headquarters Divisions will invest in activities that lay the foundations for evaluations, including establishment of baselines, testing new initiatives or pilots for scaling up, and undertaking programme reviews for purposes of continuous improvement in delivery.	Country Programme Evaluations are managed by the Regional Evaluation Advisers with support from the Evaluation Office.
		The Regional Evaluation Advisor or Country Evaluation Specialist manages evaluation responsibilities in line with the principles, norms and standards set out in the Evaluation Policy, reporting to the Head of Office (Regional Director, Country Representative).
	Evaluation managers manage evaluations in line with the principles, norms and standards set out in the Evaluation Policy	
	Evaluations are undertaken by independent consultants/firms and dedicated evaluation staff from the Evaluation Office, or Regional Evaluation Advisers.	
Ethics	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	
	All evaluation consultants sign and uphold the Code of Conduct for Evaluators in the United Nations system.	
	Risks including potential conflicts of interest are assessed prior to selecting evaluation teams.	
Transparency	All evaluations and associated management responses are made publicly available, unless otherwise informed by the disclosure policy of the UNICEF audit function involving instances that include endangering the security of individuals by making a report available (E/ICEF/2012/13).	
Human rights and gender equality	Evaluation design, methodology and analysis should explicitly address issues of gender equality, human rights and sustainability aspects of the programme or policy to be addressed	
	Evaluation practice follows UNEG guidance on integrating human rights and gender equality	
	Key stakeholders, including children (when appropriate), women, marginalized groups, national partners, and governments should be engaged at relevant stages of the evaluation.	
	Evaluation methodology should explicitly address issues of gender equality and empowerment of women	
National evaluation capacities	The plan for global evaluations and country level costed evaluation plans should include provisions for strengthening national evaluation capacities.	
	Evaluations should be planned and conducted in partnership with national authorities, addressing issues relevant to the national agenda.	
Professionalism	Every staff member of UNICEF responsible for managing evaluations undergoes basic training for purposes of upholding the norms and standards of the profession.	
	Evaluators should be recruited or contracted based on their professional knowledge, skills and experience	

Specific provisions to enhance accountabilities for upholding Norms

- ▶ 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

Evaluation Procedures and Quality Assurance

- *Evaluation Planning*

- The multi-year costed corporate Plan for Global Evaluations approved by the Executive Board
- Regional plans for evaluating multi country initiatives
- Country Costed Evaluation Plans (part of CPD package) approved by the Executive Board

- Evaluation plans should:

- Ensure adequate coverage of evaluations, including in humanitarian situations, and appropriate preparation to ensure high quality evaluations.
- Enable evaluations to respond to the critical challenges in the delivery of programmes;
- Make provision for timely delivery of products in accordance with decision-making schedules and programming cycles
- Spell out how use of findings and recommendations will be promoted.
- In especially humanitarian contexts, evaluations should focus on yielding rapid, timely evidence to support decision-making in the fast-changing environment
- Spell out support for country level (national) evaluation capacity development

Evaluation Procedures and Quality Assurance

- *Management and conduct of evaluations*
 - In line with UNEG standards and the standards set out in the Policy – ethics, independence, impartiality, credibility, human rights, gender equality, and sustainability, etc.
- *Quality assurance*
 - Quality assurance happens at key stages of the evaluation and is undertaken by an external entity
 - The quality of all evaluation reports should be assessed by a specialist external to UNICEF.

Evaluation Coverage Norms

Evaluation	Frequency	Evaluation Manager	Quality Assurance Services	Accountability for use of evaluation results
Country Programme Evaluation	At least once every 2 programme cycles, sequenced to feed in to subsequent CPD and UNDAF	Regional Evaluation Adviser	Evaluation Office	Country Representative Regional Directors
	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 thematic evaluations including cross cutting themes	At least one country programme component evaluation and/or thematic evaluation per year	Country Office Evaluation Specialist	Regional Evaluation Adviser/External experts	Country Representative Regional Directors Division Directors
Evaluation of humanitarian action	Evaluation of L1 emergencies must be included in Country Programme Evaluations. Protracted L1 emergencies should be evaluated at least every 3-5 years.	Country Office Evaluation Specialist	Regional Evaluation Adviser	Country Representative Regional Directors Divisional Directors
	Short term L2 emergencies must be evaluated at least once. Protracted L2 emergencies should be evaluated once every three years	Regional Evaluation Adviser	Evaluation Office	Country Representative Emergency Management Team
	Short term L3 emergencies must be evaluated at least once. Protracted L3 emergencies should be evaluated once every three years	Evaluation Office	Evaluation Office/ External experts	Country Representative Emergency Management Team
Corporate evaluations	Each Strategic Plan Goal area is to be evaluated during the SP period, including humanitarian aspects of the Goal, in accordance with the Plan for Global Evaluations	Evaluation Office	External experts	Deputy Executive Directors, Division Directors, Regional Directors
	SP Change Strategies and Enablers to be evaluated according to the Plan for Global Evaluations	Evaluation Office	External experts	Deputy Executive Directors, Division Directors, Regional Directors

Evaluation Coverage Norms

Evaluation	Frequency	Evaluation Manager	Quality Assurance Services	Accountability for use of evaluation results
Evaluability assessments; evaluation synthesis; meta evaluations	Coverage and frequency determined by commissioning office	Evaluation Office; Regional Evaluation Adviser; Country Office Evaluation Specialist	Evaluation Office; Regional Evaluation Adviser; External experts	Division Directors Regional Directors Country Representatives
Reviews in support of policies, plans, strategies	Coverage and frequency determined by commissioning office	Divisions, Regional Offices, country Offices	Evaluation specialists at required level	Division Directors Regional Directors Country Representatives
Regional level multi-country evaluations	Coverage and frequency determined by the Regional Office	Regional Evaluation Adviser	External reference group/experts	Regional Director Country Representatives Divisional Directors
Joint UN and system wide evaluations including UNDAFs and Joint Programmes	Coverage and frequency determined by interagency mechanism	Determined by interagency mechanism	Determined by interagency mechanism	UN Heads, Governments, partners
Country-led evaluation	Coverage and frequency determined by partner governments	Determined by Governments and partners	Determined by Governments and partners	Determined by Governments and partners

Enhancing The Use of Evaluations

- Linking evaluations to planning cycles, and to review and advocacy initiatives
- Credibility, rigor, impartiality
- Timeliness
- Technologies to advance the use of evaluations, including for communication and dissemination
- Formal management response and periodic assessment of the implementation of management responses
- Iterative approaches to the evaluation of programmes in especially challenging contexts
- Knowledge Management
- Complementarity with other accountability learning functions
 - Monitoring and broader results-based management, research, and audit.

Organizational architecture to support evaluation

- ▶ Evaluation at UNICEF works at 3 mutually supporting levels:
 - ▶ Corporate level
 - ▶ Regional and Country level
 - ▶ External stakeholder level
- ▶ The policy seeks to apply UNEG Norms and Standards at each of these levels and to the entirety of the evaluation system
- ▶ Evaluations will support decision making at each of these levels as well as capacity development for governments

Governance of Evaluation (see details in paper)

- *Executive Board*
- *Executive Director*
- *The Audit Advisory Committee*
- *Global Evaluation Committee*
- *Evaluation Director*
- *Evaluation Advisory Panel*
- *Headquarters Division Directors*
- *Regional Directors*
- *Regional Evaluation Advisers*
- *Country Representative*
- *Country Office Evaluation Specialist (or staff assigned to manage evaluations)*

System-wide evaluation and support for partnerships

- UNICEF will work with UNEG to support coordination arrangements for system-wide evaluations that will be established by Member States at global, regional and country levels.
- Contribute to the application of UNEG Norms and Standards in all joint evaluations.
- Actively engage in joint evaluations with other UN agencies, recognizing the benefits of promoting learning in the UN system, shared accountability and reduced transaction costs.
- Joint evaluations will include evaluation of the UNDAF, and joint programmes at country, regional and global levels.
- Engage in joint evaluation of the common chapter in the respective Strategic Plans of UN Funds and Programmes.
- Maintain partnerships in support of the aims of the evaluation policy, at country, regional and global levels with a wide range of institutions, including UN agencies, Governments, IFIs, Foundations, NGOs, private sector, academic institutions
- Support the work of UNEG

National Evaluation Capacity Development

- In line with the GA resolution 69/237 “Capacity building for the evaluation of development activities at country level” and the 2016 QCPR, UNICEF will continue supporting national evaluation capacity development (NECD)
- Support NECD in partnership with other United Nations agencies
- Support national authorities to evaluate their own programmes and to contribute to the strengthening of evaluation capacity
- Partnerships with evaluation units of government departments and government evaluation agencies with a child-focus
- Work with a range of stakeholders including government partners, evaluation associations and networks, other civil society organizations, parliamentarians, other UN agencies
- Support centres of excellence that produce impartial evidence

Resources- Human Resources

- Country office staff
- Regional Evaluation Adviser at P5
- Long Term Agreements or similar arrangements with consultants or centres of excellence.
- The Evaluation Office staff will meet the requirements of the UNEG competency framework.
- All staff with evaluation responsibilities will undergo training
- Training opportunities and technical support will be provided for programme staff managers to be able to fulfil their roles in evaluation.

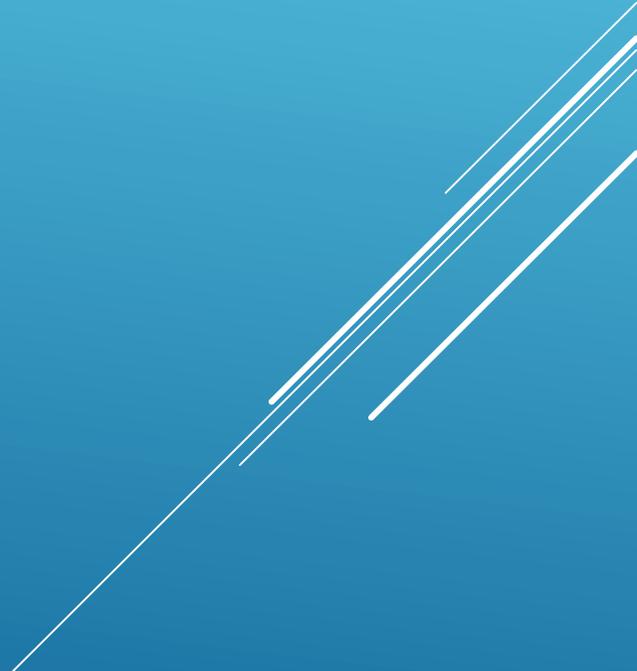
Resources- Financial Resources

- UNICEF will allocate *at least* 1 per cent of its overall programme expenditure to evaluation.
- The Executive Director will establish a pooled fund to support strategic evaluations at all levels, to support evaluations of new initiatives and innovations, and to support evaluation capacity development. This fund will supplement, not replace regular spending on evaluation.
- In country offices, the Costed Evaluation Plan forms the basis for resource allocation decisions. Actual budget allocations for evaluation should reflect the aims set out in the Costed Evaluation Plan and the types of evaluation needed to generate evidence of the required quality.
- Regional Offices and the Evaluation Office should follow similar steps in actively mobilizing support for Regional Costed Evaluation plans and the Plan for Global Evaluations.

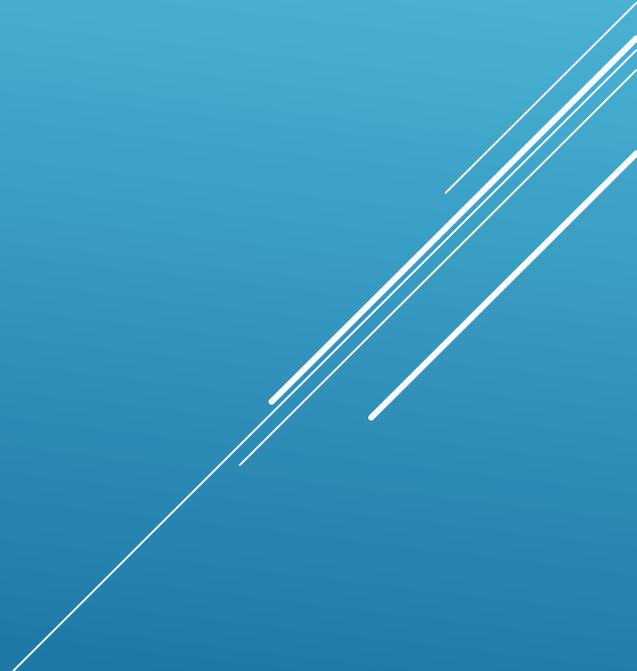
Implementation, Reporting and Review

- An Executive Directive will outline implementation responsibilities
- Guidance will be issued by the Evaluation Office to complement the policy
- Implementation will be reported to the Executive Board as follows:
 - Progress towards achieving the outputs identified in the Theory of Change
 - Achievements during the previous year and programme of work for the year
 - Evaluations undertaken by other parts of the organisation
 - Progress in implementing actions agreed in management responses
 - Synthesis of the main findings and lessons about the performance of UNICEF
- An independent review on the performance of the policy should be undertaken in 2022

Support for the process

- ▶ Executive Board
 - ▶ Evaluation Advisory Panel
 - ▶ Audit Advisory Committee
 - ▶ Global Evaluation Committee
 - ▶ Small Peer Review team
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Next steps

- Feedback on draft evaluation policy from Member States by 12 March
 - Evaluation Office to address feedback in (3rd) draft policy 13-16 March
 - Internal and UN processing to start on 19 March
 - Informal consultation on 22 May
 - Annual session of the Executive Board 11-15 June
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THANK YOU!

