

# **Annual Report for 2016 on the evaluation function in UNICEF**

Evaluation Office UNICEF

Presentation to informal briefing for the  
UNICEF Executive Board

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# Overview

The purpose of this report is to describe the status and performance of UNICEF's evaluation function in 2016.

This report documents progress in the implementation of the evaluation policy, including:

- The governance of the evaluation function
- Promoting evaluation coherence in the UN and beyond
- The performance of the evaluation function within UNICEF itself, as measured against a set of 6 key indicators;
- Recent assessments of the evaluation function.

# Governance of the evaluation function

In 2016:

- The Annual Report on the Evaluation Function 2015 was presented to the Executive Board, accompanied by a management perspective
- The Evaluation Office presented to the Executive Board four evaluation reports, each accompanied by a management response
- The Evaluation Committee considered proposals to strengthen evaluation coverage and implementation of responses to evaluation recommendations
- The external Audit Advisory Committee also requested further improvement in the follow up of management responses to evaluation recommendations.

# Evaluation coherence within the UN system

In 2016, UNICEF supported evaluation coherence in the UN through:

1. Support for activities of the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG)
2. Support for activities under the Independent System Wide Evaluation initiative
3. Activities under the Inter-agency Humanitarian Evaluation Steering Group (IAHE-SG)

# UNICEF support for global level collaboration

UNICEF participation in global evaluation networks in 2016:

- EvalPartners:
  - Launch of the Global Evaluation Agenda 2016-2020
  - Implementation of activities under key sub-networks including EvalSDGs, EvalYouth, and the Global Parliamentarians' Forum, including launch of the Eurasian Regional Parliamentarians' Forum in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
- Humanitarian networks:
  - Continued collaboration with ALNAP, including a hands-on evaluation capacity building initiative for UNICEF staff and partners
  - Evaluation training for civil society organizations at the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Francophone Forum on Evaluation, held in Marrakesh, Morocco



## **UNICEF evaluation function: performance and results**

# The evaluation function in UNICEF: performance and results

- Indicator 1: Coverage of evaluations completed
- Indicator 2: Topical distribution
- Indicator 3: Types of evaluations conducted
- Indicator 4: Quality of evaluation reports
- Indicator 5: Use of evaluation, including management responses
- Indicator 6: Evaluation expenditure
- Indicator 7: Production of corporate evaluations

# Indicator 1: Evaluation coverage

- In 2015, UNICEF offices completed and submitted **90** evaluation reports and **102** evaluations in 2016.
- Geographical coverage: **76%** of countries completed at least one evaluation report in the 3 year period 2013-2015, rising to **80%** for the period 2014-2016.
- For 2014-2016, coverage in South Asia was 100%, and rose to 93% in the East Asia and the Pacific region. CEECIS coverage was 86% and in Eastern and Southern Africa it was 82%.
- But coverage fluctuates from year to year in several regions.

## Indicator 2: Topical distribution

- Evaluation reports submitted in 2015 showed balanced topical distribution between child survival, education and child protection, as follows:
  - Child survival: 29%
  - Education: 28%
  - Child protection: 25%
- Few evaluations focused on cross-cutting themes. Only one evaluation focused specifically on gender equality - but the majority of evaluations address it as a key element.
- Only 2 evaluations focused on humanitarian action – but 17 country level evaluations are under way for delivery in 2016 and 2017.

# Indicator 3: Types of evaluations conducted

For evaluations submitted in 2015:

- The proportion of output level evaluations declined to **10%**. This is good, as evaluations should focus on the higher stages of the results chain.
- Evaluations at impact level (**29%**) and outcome level (**61%**) are at the desired high levels (but the quality of impact-level evaluations was weak).
- **26%** were formative evaluations, **33%** were summative, while **41%** were both formative and summative.

# Quality of completed evaluations, 2009-2016, by percentage

<i>Quality rating</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<b>2016</b>
Outstanding	4	3	6	4	<b>6</b>
Highly satisfactory	32	59	68	49	<b>68</b>
Mostly satisfactory	34	30	23	43	<b>25</b>
Unsatisfactory	30	8	3	3	<b>1</b>

**74%** of evaluations submitted in 2016 were rated “highly satisfactory” or better, in line with the improving trend from 2009.

# Indicator 5: Use of evaluation, including management responses

## Submission of management responses to the Global Tracking System:

- 2009 (baseline): 10%
- 2012: 90%
- 2014: 81%
- 2015: 95%

## Management response commitments “completed or ongoing”:

- 2010-2013 mean: 86% after 2 years
- 2014: 79% after 1 year
- 2015: 76% after 1 year

## Completion rates vary by region:

- MENA: 85% completed with 9% under implementation;
- ESAR: 62 completed, with 33% under implementation

# Indicator 6: Corporate spending on evaluation

By end December 2016, evaluation budget use was reported as **\$50.1 million**, representing **0.8%** of total programme budget use.

UNICEF is advancing toward the **1% target** set out in the revised evaluation policy - but is not there yet.

# Indicator 7: Corporate level evaluations

In 2016, the Evaluation Office completed and published **six evaluations**:

- Global thematic evaluations: **2**
- Evaluations of humanitarian action: **2**
- Evaluation synthesis studies: **2**

The Evaluation Office also undertook two developmental evaluations and engaged in several joint evaluations.

# Assessments of the evaluation function

- UNEG/OECD DAC peer review of the evaluation function
- Self-assessment of the UNICEF evaluation function
- UNICEF Review of development effectiveness: “contribution of M&E”
- MOPAN institutional assessment report 2015-2016

# Conclusion

Overall, UNICEF has an effective evaluation function that continues to develop and improve.

But as the development agenda becomes more complex and UNICEF's role changes, there are opportunities for evaluation to make a still greater contribution to organizational learning, accountability and performance.

A largely decentralized structure supports rapid, localized and informal learning.

However, more formal mechanisms are required for the communication, uptake and application of evaluation evidence and lessons as UNICEF itself grows in size and complexity and engages with wider stakeholder networks.

**Thank you for your attention!**

