

UNICEF Evaluation Management Response - Evaluation of Innovation in UNICEF Work

Evaluation Title: *Evaluation of Innovation in UNICEF Work*

Region: *N/A*

Office: *NYHQ*

Evaluation Year: *January 2019*

Person-In-Charge for Follow-up to Management Response: *Shanelle Hall, DED Field Results*

Overall Response to the Evaluation: *This evaluation sought to assess if UNICEF was, and is, 'fit for purpose' to employ innovation as a key strategy to achieve the outcomes and goals defined in its strategic plans 2014-2017 and 2018-2021 through the development of case studies, an organizational assessment and a synthesis of findings. Senior Management and staff across the organization have responded positively to both the process and the outcomes of the evaluation, noting the inclusive nature of the work, professionalism in the management of the evaluation, and systematic engagement with the reference group and relevant stakeholders at key moments throughout the evaluation. Overall, the quantity and quality of the evidence collected was found to be substantial and responsive to the initial terms of reference. The evaluation concluded that significant progress has been made in several key components of advancing innovation. However, there is substantial ground to cover, and changes are needed, notably in areas identified as barriers or impediments to innovation, if innovation is to bring meaningful and sustainable results for children. Interviews with key staff and senior management feedback point to a concurrence with this overarching finding and the associated recommendations, although differences of opinion have been noted with some of the specific recommendations provided, particularly the proposed organizational structure. Strong agreement has been expressed on a few key findings including: 1) the need for UNICEF to develop an overarching strategy which sets out how it intends to go about innovation, what it intends to achieve, how staff can contribute, and the need to address the key barriers and impediments to innovation noted in the evaluation; 2) greater investment in the function of transitioning innovation work into programmes; and, 3) organizational culture as a barrier. Overall there is broad agreement on the systems assessment findings, and the need for UNICEF to look at the internal processes required to fulfil the ambition of innovation. However, some have noted an HQ-bias in the recommendations, positing that a bottom-up and south-south approach was lacking in the development of the proposed structural options.*

Planned Use of Evaluation: *The analysis and recommendations provided by this evaluation will serve as the foundational document and key input for the Innovation element of the 2018-2019 Organizational Repositioning and Realignment exercise. To this end, a process for apprising staff and senior management of the findings will take place, including through the GMT. Broad dissemination of the report, and a participatory process for development of the management response will be ensured, including via bilateral, group and virtual consultations at all organizational levels (HQ, RO, CO and Field Office). With the resulting consensus across the organization on agreement with the three overarching recommendations, the findings from the evaluation will serve to guide the organization in its process to develop a new vision, strategy, and plan for organization of the innovation function (VSO) across all levels of UNICEF. This process will include key informant interviews on the future state of innovation in UNICEF, a global human-centre design workshop to gather input into the VSO, and a series of engagements with staff and managers to explore implementation modalities for the VSO. With this input UNICEF leadership will be able to work towards a clear, prioritized action plan to implement the strategy and make the requisite changes to organizational structure, people and human capital, technology, and resources.*

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Allowed Editor: *Senior Advisor, Office of the DED, Field Results*

RECOMMENDATIONS and ACTIONS:

Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 1: *Develop a shared strategic vision and approach that directly addresses fundamental constraints in the current approach and drives decision-making across the organization.*

The approach needs to directly address key barriers and impediments to innovation through the development of UNICEF-wide positions on:

- a) Lack of appetite for risk as a major impediment to innovation;*
- b) How different parts of the organization contribute to innovation;*
- c) Commitment to increased transparency of governance/oversight and decision-making roles within dedicated innovation units;*
- d) More standardized approaches and processes, based on good practices already used in parts of the organization, should be adapted for wider use;*
- e) Clarity on medium- and long-term staff requirements to enable implementation of innovation as a core strategy; and,*
- f) Greater attention to and investment in learning and uptake.*

Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree): *Agree*

If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons: *N/A*

Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled	Actions taken	Supporting documents
<i>Constitute a VSO Secretariat comprised of HQ representation and Senior Field Advisor from CO to gather, synthesize, and analyse ideas from within the organization (e.g., whitepapers, draft vision papers, etc) as input into vision and strategy. Input to be gathered via bi-lateral and group interviews, and workshop with HQ, RO, and CO representation.</i>	<i>Office of DED, Field Results</i>	<i>Sr. Advisor, Field Results</i>	<i>March 12-13 2019</i>	<i>Completed</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Terms of Reference Developed for CO representation on VSO Project Team</i> <i>• Field Staff Member Identified and mission to NYHQ confirmed</i> <i>• Terms of Reference developed to solicit vendor support in planning and facilitation of workshop</i> <i>• Vendor Identified and contracted</i> 	<p><i>Terms of Reference for CO Representation</i></p> <p><i>Terms of Reference for Vendor Support</i></p> <p><i>Summary of Consultation Approach</i></p> <p><i>Workshop Report</i></p>

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<p><i>Specific ideas and input are to be gathered around how to address the key barriers and impediments to innovation identified in the recommendation.</i></p>					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Identified list of stakeholders to interview</i> • <i>Developed interview guide</i> • <i>Background information collected from relevant sources to act as input to vision and strategy (i.e., from ICTD, OoI, Field Results etc.)</i> • <i>Individual and group meetings conducted by Sr Field Advisor and Secretariat, and external consultants with a broad array of staff spanning all organizational levels (HQ, RO, CO, Sub-Office), humanitarian and programming areas and relevant functional areas, e.g. PFP, Legal, DFAM.</i> • <i>Workshop complete and staff input provided to VSO.</i> 	
<p><i>Develop and submit draft Vision and Strategy for feedback (workshop attendees, key stakeholders and Global Management Team); Conduct peer review with key external peers (UN,</i></p>	<p><i>Office of DED, Field Results</i></p>	<p><i>DED Field Results</i></p>	<p><i>April 30, 2019</i></p>	<p><i>Underway</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Draft VSO developed and sent to workshop attendees, key stakeholders and GMT for feedback</i> 	

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<i>private sector, funders). Submit for OED approval</i>						
<i>Receive approval of Vision and Strategy from OED</i>	<i>Office of DED, Field Results</i>	<i>DED Field Results</i>	<i>May 17 2019</i>	<i>Not Started</i>		
<i>Share vision and strategy with all staff via Global Broadcast Message and socialize VSO through key engagements with the field, e.g. RMT, DROPS, Thematic Network Meetings</i>	<i>Office of DED, Field Results</i>	<i>DED Field Results</i>	<i>May – September 2019</i>	<i>Not Started</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Develop communication plan to disseminate new Innovation Strategy.</i> 	

Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 2: Act on needed structural change to advance innovation as a means of achieving results for children.

Key elements of this recommendation include:

- In order to provide clear strategic vision and manage the wide-ranging innovation portfolio, a senior management role is needed at the Deputy Executive Director level to oversee the various dimensions of organization's agenda.*
- Innovation Enabling Services teams should also be created, with responsibility for portfolio management and prioritization as well as development and provision of frameworks, tools and processes, monitoring, evaluation, knowledge-sharing, learning and feedback.*
- Leadership for digital innovation should be housed under the ICT Division, which should also bring together various parts of headquarters that are currently working on digital innovation.*
- There is a need for dedicated innovation staff in COs, especially in medium to large programmes, and also in ROs.*

Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree): Agree

If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons: N/A

Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled	Actions taken	Supporting documents
<i>Solicit specific input on organizational structure from key stakeholders and relevant leadership as input into draft options</i>	<i>Office of DED, Field Results</i>	<i>DED, Field Results</i>	<i>April 10 2019</i>	<i>Underway</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Draft organization functions and structure developed and shared with leadership</i> 	
<i>Draft options and solicit feedback on organization of Innovation function from OED as a part of the activities</i>	<i>Office of DED, Field Results</i>	<i>DED, Field Results</i>	<i>April 30 2019</i>	<i>Underway</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Building on existing options, evaluation findings and individual and focus group</i> 	<i>See supporting documents under</i>

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<p><i>listed under recommendation 1.</i></p> <p><i>Options developed will consider how best to address the key elements identified in the evaluation of the need for DED level oversight, creation of an innovation enabling services team, the bringing together of all digital innovation, and the need for dedicated innovation staff.</i></p>					<p><i>discussions, multiple structural options were developed.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>See actions under recommendation 1.</i> 	<p><i>recommendation 1.</i></p>
<p><i>Conduct Programme Budget Review (PBR) for Innovation</i></p>	<p><i>Office of DED, Management</i></p>	<p><i>DED, Field Results</i></p>	<p><i>June 2019</i></p>	<p><i>Not Started</i></p>		
<p>Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 3: Utilize a portfolio management approach for innovation</p>						
<p>Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree): Agree</p>						
<p>If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons: N/A</p>						
<p>Actions planned</p>	<p>Responsible Office</p>	<p>Responsible Person</p>	<p>Expected completion date</p>	<p>Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled</p>	<p>Actions taken</p>	<p>Supporting documents</p>
<p><i>Identify portfolio management approaches currently used by the organization (e.g., ICT Board, SD Innovation Unit) and review against leading practices in innovation portfolio management</i></p>	<p><i>Office of DED, Field Results</i></p>	<p><i>Project Manager, DED FR</i></p>	<p><i>April 12 2019</i></p>	<p><i>Underway</i></p>		
<p><i>Develop approach to innovation portfolio management, including governance, stage-gate processes, suggested balance of resource allocation, who</i></p>	<p><i>Office of DED, Field Results</i></p>	<p><i>Sr. Advisor, DED FR</i></p>	<p><i>30 April</i></p>	<p><i>Underway</i></p>		

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<p><i>manages the portfolio, SOPs, KPIs, etc.</i></p> <p><i>Note: The portfolio management approach will be developed and approved as a part of the activities presented in recommendation 1.</i></p>					
<p><i>Map UNICEF's current innovation portfolio across divisions and levels (HQ/RO/CO)</i></p>	<p><i>Programme Division</i></p>	<p><i>Deputy Director Programme Division</i></p>	<p><i>June 2019</i></p>	<p><i>Underway</i></p>	
<p><i>Implement a portfolio management approach to innovations in the organization to inform decision-making. The implementation of the Portfolio management approach will be one aspect of the broader implementation of the Innovation strategy.</i></p>	<p><i>Office of Innovation</i></p>	<p><i>Director Innovation</i></p>	<p><i>2021</i></p>	<p><i>Not Started</i></p>	