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We sincerely hope that this evaluation complements and meaningfully contributes to regional learning initiatives of humanitarian evaluations. We are confident that the evaluation shall facilitate organizational reflections and enable UNICEF and other humanitarian stakeholders in better humanitarian preparedness.

Nadeem Haider
Evaluation Lead
Managing Director, AAN Associates
### ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BCP</td>
<td>Business Continuity Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C&amp;A</td>
<td>Communication and Advocacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>C4D</td>
<td>communication for development</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCCs</td>
<td>Core Commitments for Children</td>
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<tr>
<td>CERF</td>
<td>Central Emergency Response Fund</td>
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<td>DAC</td>
<td>Development Assistance Committee</td>
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<td>EPF</td>
<td>Emergency Programme Fund</td>
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<td>ETC</td>
<td>Emergency Telecommunications Cluster</td>
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<td>EWEA</td>
<td>Early Warning Early Action</td>
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<tr>
<td>F&amp;A</td>
<td>Finance and Administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>FLP</td>
<td>Fund-Raising and Leveraging Partnership</td>
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<td>HAC</td>
<td>Humanitarian Action for Children</td>
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<tr>
<td>HNO</td>
<td>Humanitarian Needs Overview</td>
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<td>HPM</td>
<td>Humanitarian Performance Monitoring</td>
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<td>HRP</td>
<td>Humanitarian Response Plan</td>
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<td>IASC</td>
<td>Inter-Agency Standing Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>information and communication technology</td>
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<td>INGO</td>
<td>international non-governmental organization</td>
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<td>IRT</td>
<td>Immediate Response Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>L1</td>
<td>Level 1 of United Nations emergency category</td>
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<td>L2</td>
<td>Level 2 of United Nations emergency category</td>
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<td>L3</td>
<td>Level 3 of United Nations emergency category</td>
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<tr>
<td>LTA</td>
<td>Long-Term Agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td>M&amp;C</td>
<td>media and communications</td>
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<tr>
<td>MENARO</td>
<td>Middle East and North Africa Regional Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>MIRA</td>
<td>Multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment</td>
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<td>MOSS</td>
<td>Minimum Operating Security Standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>non-governmental organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCHA</td>
<td>United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs</td>
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<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>OSM</td>
<td>Operational Staffing Matrix</td>
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<tr>
<td>PARMO</td>
<td>Public Sector Alliances and Resource Mobilization Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>PATH</td>
<td>Principled Approach to Humanitarian Action</td>
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<tr>
<td>RAME</td>
<td>Rapid Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>S&amp;L</td>
<td>Supplies and Logistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMART</td>
<td>Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief Transitions</td>
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<td>SMT</td>
<td>Security Management Team</td>
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<td>SSOPs</td>
<td>Simplified Standard Operating Procedures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>TORs</td>
<td>Terms of Reference</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<td>UNEG</td>
<td>United Nations Evaluation Group</td>
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<td>WASH</td>
<td>water, sanitation and hygiene</td>
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<td>WFP</td>
<td>World Food Programme</td>
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<td>YHRP</td>
<td>Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan</td>
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GLOSSARY

Humanitarian Complex Emergency
A multifaceted humanitarian crisis in a country, region or society where there is a total or considerable breakdown of authority resulting from internal or external conflict and which requires a multi-sectoral, international response that goes beyond the mandate or capacity of any single agency and/or the ongoing United Nations country programme. Such emergencies have, in particular, a devastating effect on children and women and call for a complex range of responses (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, or OCHA).¹

L1/L2/L3 Emergency
Since 2010, all emergencies are categorized into three distinct groups based on scale, urgency, complexity, capacity and reputational risk of the emergency. Level (L)1 emergencies are handled by the country office, L2s receive support from the regional office, while L3s involve both regional offices and UNICEF headquarters in the response, as they are considered an institutional priority.

An L3 emergency is declared on the basis of scale, urgency, complexity, capacity and reputational risk to UNICEF and/or the United Nations. In an L3 emergency, UNICEF calls for an institution-wide and global mobilization through its Corporate Emergency Activation Procedure. An L2 emergency is led and managed by a regional office.

Simplified Standard Operating Procedures (SSOPs)
Predefined Simplified Standard Operating Procedures (SSOPs) allow UNICEF to respond effectively and immediately to the situation.

The objective of the SSOPs is to simplify, streamline and clarify UNICEF procedures related to emergencies to enable a more effective response.²

SSOPs apply to all situations in which the UNICEF Executive Director has declared an L3 emergency and activated the Corporate Emergency Activation Procedure.³

Humanitarian Response Plan
The Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) is prepared for a protracted or sudden onset emergency that requires international humanitarian assistance. The plan articulates the shared vision of how to respond to the assessed and expressed needs of the affected population. The development of a strategic response plan is a key step in the humanitarian programme cycle and is carried out only when the needs have been understood and analysed through the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) or other joint needs assessment and analysis processes.⁴

Humanitarian Action for Children
Humanitarian action is at the core of UNICEF’s work, encompassing effective preparedness, early response and recovery to save lives and protect child rights.⁵

² <www.unicef.org/cholera/Chapter_10_UNICEF/01_SSOPs_L3_emergencies_complete.pdf>.
Flash Appeal

The flash appeal is a tool for structuring a coordinated humanitarian response for the first three to six months of an emergency. The United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator triggers it in consultation with all stakeholders. The flash appeal is issued within one week of an emergency. It provides a concise overview of urgent life-saving needs and may include recovery projects that can be implemented within the time frame of the appeal.\(^6\)

Humanitarian Action

Assistance, protection and advocacy actions undertaken on an impartial basis in response to human needs resulting from complex political emergencies and natural hazards.\(^7\)

Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Actions (CCCs)

The Core Commitments for Children (CCCs) in Humanitarian Action outline immediate and long-term actions in disasters.

Guided by the principle that children in the midst of armed conflict and natural disasters have the same needs and rights as children in stable situations, the Core Commitments for Children outline the key accountabilities in response to a humanitarian situation.

The CCCs include a series of immediate and longer-term interventions aimed at providing basic support and protecting children’s rights.\(^8\)

The CCCs constitute UNICEF’s central policy on how to uphold the rights of children affected by humanitarian crisis. They are a framework for humanitarian action, around which UNICEF seeks to engage with partners.\(^9\)

Humanitarian Needs Overview

This is produced on behalf of the Humanitarian Country Team and partners and provides the Humanitarian Country Team’s shared understanding of the crisis, including the most pressing humanitarian need and the estimated number of people who need assistance. It represents a consolidated evidence base and helps inform joint strategic response planning.\(^10\)

\(^6\) For more details on the ‘Consolidated Appeal Process’ please <www.unocha.org/cap/>.


\(^8\) <www.unicef.org/ceecis/emergencies_16528.html>.


\(^10\) <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2016_HNO_Em%20FINAL.pdf>.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The objective of the evaluation is to review UNICEF’s humanitarian operations launched following the escalation of hostilities in March 2015 in Yemen – i.e., the start of a military campaign by a Saudi Arabia-led military coalition. The evaluation balances the accountability and formative purposes, to contribute to better planning and response in complex humanitarian situations. It focuses on assessing the coherence and compliance of UNICEF operation units to the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (often referred as CCCs), for UNICEF’s humanitarian response from March to December 2015. The evaluation took place from July to December 2016.

Background

The current crisis in Yemen has its roots in the political instability in the country, which led to spiralling of violence in 2009. Yemen went through political upheaval in early 2011, when protesters – inspired by the Arab Spring\(^{11}\) – rallied against the rule of President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The protesters forced the President (in office for the past three decades) to resign. However, the violence continued unabated as a result of the Government’s conflict with Al-Houthis, whose southward expansion resulted in the dislodging of the subsequent Government, led by President Hadi, in January 2015.

In February 2015, Al-Houthis declared themselves in control of the government and installed an interim Revolutionary Committee led by Mohammed Ali Al Houthi. The deposed president first escaped to the port city of Aden and subsequently left the country and took refuge in Saudi Arabia.

Yemen remains the most impoverished country in the region. The country was already going through a protracted humanitarian crisis, which became further complicated after the military strikes by the coalition. The escalation in hostilities led to multiplying the humanitarian needs. Reportedly, the crisis resulted in more than 21 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, including 10 million children.\(^{12}\) In view of the worsening humanitarian situation, the United Nations declared an L3 emergency and launched a large-scale humanitarian assistance programme.

The declaration of an L3 or Corporate Emergency (as referred by UNICEF) prompted the United Nations agencies to revise and launch a bigger inter-agency Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan (YHRP) 2015. Significant priorities of the revised plan included saving lives, protecting civilians, building capacities for humanitarian response, reducing vulnerabilities and ensuring equitable assistance. The revised YHRP 2015 sought to raise US$1.6 billion to respond to evolving needs. UNICEF Yemen twice revised the Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC), putting out a second revised financial requirement of US$182.6 million in July 2015.

UNICEF Yemen managed to raise US$143.9 million, equalling 79 per cent of the solicited funds. UNICEF targeted to serve the needs of 7 million people and 5 million children, through a complementary assistance package. Reportedly, it reached out to respond to the needs of more than 15 million people. As per the UNICEF Yemen year-end report, 4,921,830 people, including children, received health services and another 4,178,172 were provided with water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services. An additional 4,248,203 received nutrition services; 843,309 received WASH services; 391,164 received education services; 66,556 received social protection services; and 391,164, received community for development (C4D) services, respectively.

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\(^{11}\) Arab Spring refers to the democratic uprisings that arose independently and spread across the Arab world in 2011. The movement originated in Tunisia in December 2010 and quickly took hold in Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen (<www.sourcewatch.org>).

UNICEF continued operating with a network of five field offices in Aden, Hodeida, Sa‘ada, Sana‘a and Taiz, and a country office in Sana‘a. The humanitarian aid was delivered through a range of partnerships with government bodies, non-governmental organizations (called implementing partners), private contractors and consultants.

**Evaluation Purpose, Objectives, Questions and Scope**

This is a formative cum accountability evaluation. The primary purpose is to ‘learn from the management of UNICEF’s Yemen humanitarian response following the escalation of conflict in March 2015’. It is part of the regional learning initiative of multiple country humanitarian evaluations.

It is expected that the findings, analysis and learning shall form a critical review and consequent revision of UNICEF preparations and responses to future complex emergencies, particularly in the context of its operations. This undertaking also attempts to test the assumption or hypothesis – i.e., if, and to what extent, do efficient and effective operations of UNICEF enable achieving response appropriateness and intended coverage in humanitarian actions.

The specific objectives of the evaluation were as follows:

1. To assess and comment on the level of compliance with the standards of the CCCs across six operational units and two cross-cutting units – i.e., Rapid Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation (RAME) and Supplies and Logistics (S&L);
2. To map and analyse the extent to which UNICEF’s humanitarian assistance was appropriate;
3. To assess and comment on the ability of UNICEF to identify and reach out to the most vulnerable groups;
4. To assess if and to what extent compliance of CCCs (or otherwise) enable or hamper UNICEF Yemen to deliver an appropriate humanitarian response and achieve the desired level of coverage – i.e., reach out to the most vulnerable, those facing life-threatening situations.

The evaluation questions as outlined in the evaluation Terms of Reference (TORs) are as follows:

1. Extent of compliance with CCCs standards in UNICEF’s operational units;
2. Extent of compliance with CCCs standards in UNICEF’s RAME unit;
3. Extent of compliance with CCCs standards in UNICEF’s S&L unit;
4. Assessment of appropriateness of assistance;
5. Assessment of the ability to reach the most vulnerable (coverage);
6. Influence of ‘the management of humanitarian response’ on appropriateness; and
7. Influence of ‘the management of humanitarian response’ on coverage.

The evaluation scope includes the UNICEF Yemen humanitarian response from 26 March to 31 December 2015. The focus is primarily on six operational and two cross-cutting areas. These include security, media and communication, human resources, resource mobilization, finance and administration, and information and communication technology (ICT) and RAME and S&L. The evaluation includes assessment of appropriateness and coverage of assistance, including the influence of management of humanitarian assistance on these two. The assessment with respect

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13 For the purpose of this evaluation, ‘the management of humanitarian response’ comprised the state of compliance with CCCs standards in six operational and two cross-cutting functional units.
to CCCs (for selected areas) covers only the compliance with respect to preparedness and response benchmarks or standards.

**Evaluation Methodology and Assessment Criteria**

The evaluation draws on the qualitative methods. For the particular security situation in Yemen, this evaluation has largely been implemented from a distance. The evaluation relies heavily on secondary information available in the form of reports and other documents. The primary data collected complement the literature review. The primary data collection relied on semi-structured key informant interviews, with a wide range of stakeholders including UNICEF, United Nations agencies, implementing partners, media representatives, third-party monitors and community leaders. All interviews were conducted from a distance while using modern communication mediums and tools such as Skype, phone, emails and WhatsApp. The evaluators conducted 44 key informant interviews in total.

To make the compliance assessment process objective and evidence-driven, the evaluators developed and applied a ‘Three Dimensional Framework’, to assess and rate the level of compliance with the CCCs prescribed normative standards and actions for operations. The three dimensions include; i) performance, ii) documentation and iii) achievement/contribution to the intended result (more details available in the report). It was on this assessment that compliance was assessed or scaled from non-compliant to compliant.

The standard Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)-Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria have been used for assessment of the appropriateness and coverage. The influence of management of humanitarian response on appropriateness and coverage has been done while corroborating the degree of compliance with CCCs standards and the extent which they either positively or negatively affected the results vis-à-vis appropriateness and coverage.

**Findings and Analysis**

This section combines findings and analysis, drawn from both primary and secondary sources – i.e., interviews and documents review, respectively. The assessment for CCCs standards (for unit-based preparedness/response normative actions), where every normative has been rated for level of compliance, is done by triangulating findings from both primary and secondary sources.

In total, the evaluators assessed and rated the level of compliance for almost 100 CCCs standards (normative actions) for 8 operational and cross-cutting units, covered in the evaluation. Overall, the level of compliance is noted to be satisfactory for most units. This is evident from the fact that together these units have complied to 78 per cent of the prescribed standards by achieving the rating of fully compliant or mostly compliant. The others were found to be either partial or non-compliant, hence could be argued as below satisfactory. The units have performed relatively better for preparedness standards compared with the response. This could be attributed to better preparedness, owing to UNICEF Yemen engagement in a protracted humanitarian situation for the past several years. The figure below illustrates the overall compliance and also compliance with preparedness and response standards.
This section presents an overall assessment with respect to compliance with the CCCs for each unit. It also highlights areas for improvement. More details are available in the main body of the report.

**Media and Communication**

There are six preparedness and seven response CCCs standards or normative actions for this unit. For preparedness standards, the unit has been rated fully/mostly compliant with five standards. Similarly, for response it fully/mostly complied with six standards.

These numbers suggest that UNICEF Yemen has delivered largely on the core commitments vis-à-vis timely and accurate information about impact, needs and actions taken by UNICEF. The unit, like others, faced challenges with immediate deployment of surge capacities and faced delays in securing internal clearances for media statements and messages.

**Security**

The unit has four CCCs standards each for preparedness and response. The unit is assessed to be fully/mostly compliant with all preparedness and response standards.

The high level of compliance is noteworthy, particularly in a challenging and fast-changing security environment. The high level of compliance enabled the UNICEF Yemen to operate without any significant security incidents throughout 2015. The unit appeared to struggle in complying with standards related to timely importation and deployment of assets.

**Human Resource**

The unit has nine preparedness and (07) seven response standards. The unit is assessed to be fully/mostly compliant with five standards for preparedness. Similarly, for response it fully/mostly complied with three standards.

For this unit, more focus is required on areas or standards such as an emergency staff mobilization plan, capacity building of UNICEF staff and partners for emergency preparedness and response planning, the well-being of staff with special needs, mobilizing and deploying staff on surge rosters and external staff recruitment.

**Resource Mobilization**

The unit has five preparedness and six response standards. The unit is assessed to be fully/mostly compliant with four standards each for preparedness and response.
The unit has successfully delivered on the core commitment to timely mobilize resources for children in humanitarian crises. Out of all, the evaluators feel that UNICEF Yemen may need to focus more on two key response standards. These include the in-country capacity development for ‘Immediate Needs Documentation’ during a sudden-onset emergency. The other is about the ability to put up an HAC within 5–7 days of the sudden-onset crisis.

**Information, Communication and Technology**

The unit has 11 preparedness and 5 response standards. The unit is assessed to be fully/mostly compliant with nine standards for preparedness. The unit is assessed to be fully/mostly compliant with all response standards.

The unit has been successful in delivering on all unit specific CCCs commitments. This enabled the unit to provide continued quality telecommunications services to the organization, which in turn contributed to efficient and secure programme implementation and information communication. Despite good results, there are two areas (preparedness) where there is space for improvisation and innovation. These include the ability to preposition and immediate import of related ICT equipment, including licensing/rights for radio frequencies. Another area to invest in is simulation exercises which should be carried out periodically, as prescribed in CCCs standards.

**Finance and Administration**

The unit has three CCCs standards each for both preparedness and response. The unit is assessed to be fully/mostly compliant with two standards for preparedness. The unit is assessed to be fully/mostly compliant with all response standards.

The performance vis-à-vis CCCs standards has been satisfactory; however, the evaluators were informed of significant payment delays to partners and vendors. In the future, the unit and UNICEF are advised to explore avenues for availability of liquidity/cash through alternative sources and arrangements in active conflict zones (given suspension of regular banking services), as was the case in Yemen.

**Rapid Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation**

The unit has six preparedness and seven response standards. The unit is assessed to be fully/mostly compliant with six standards for preparedness. For response, it fully/mostly complied with four standards.

The unit has complied with most of the standards; however, there are a few areas that call for improved efforts and investments. The areas for improvement include periodic revision of the Early Warning Early Action (EWEA) system, which, while keeping note of the evolving context (including complexities) and given an eventuality, must have plans in place for immediate deployment of surge capacities. Moreover, some innovative thinking is required around post-disaster needs assessment and one possibility could be involvement of third-party contractors. Moreover, some form of institutional mechanism has to be developed or, if there is one already, it has to be strengthened for timely documentation and archiving within RAME.

**Supplies and Logistics**

The unit has 11 preparedness and six response standards. The unit is assessed to be fully/mostly compliant with five standards each for preparedness and response.

The unit has performed well vis-à-vis CCCs commitments that relate to planning, procuring and deployment of supplies in the programme intervention areas, so that children’s needs and rights are secured. The unit has managed to meet most of the standards well. Those standards that still require significant improvements include partnership agreements for in-kind goods and services,
management of roster of deployable S&L candidates, training of staff in S&L system tools and needs assessment, and training of partners in government, non-government and private sectors (capacity development).

**Appropriateness of Humanitarian Response**

The appropriateness is assessed with respect to relevance to the needs on the ground, implementation strategies, alignment with or coherence to UNICEF’s global strategy and the United Nations system-wide response in Yemen.

The stakeholders shared that no formal (or structured) post-disaster need assessment was undertaken, primarily for security reasons. Nevertheless, UNICEF Yemen was able to adapt to excessively scaled-up humanitarian needs, albeit with some challenges. This is due to the fact that UNICEF Yemen and other humanitarian agencies had been responding to a complex humanitarian crisis in Yemen much before the escalation in hostilities in March 2015.

In the absence of a structured post-disaster need assessment, UNICEF Yemen did face challenges in identifying actual needs (on the ground) and consequently tailoring the assistance. For instance, some communities were provided water filters, whereas they really needed water storage containers. Similarly, some communities even shared reservations on the delivery of child protection training on sensitive issues, such as female genital mutilation and early marriage, when the humanitarian crisis was still unfolding and perhaps without duly investing in community mobilization efforts. The field interaction with beneficiaries suggests that this created some resentment in communities.

The delivery approaches appear relevant to the context. The model to partner with public agencies and non-profit organizations (with a footprint across Yemen), UNICEF Yemen was able to leverage its goodwill, infrastructure and presence to deliver continued (mostly uninterrupted) services such as water supply, provision of fuel and health services, and leverage its outreach and resources.

In terms of corporate alignment, UNICEF Yemen's flash appeal and revised HAC (July 2015) both appear consistent with the overall corporate objectives of UNICEF as outlined in the Strategic Plan 2014–2017. The HAC (July 2015), however, did face implementation challenges vis-à-vis earliest identification of needs and priorities (through structured assessment) and rapid deployment of required human resources. UNICEF’s HAC, which is found to be broadly coherent with the HNO in terms of overall strategy; it strayed in terms of estimation of people needing assistance. According to the HNO, about 7.3 million children needed some form of protection or assistance, whereas UNICEF’s HAC estimated it to be 9.9 million children.

**Situation of the Humanitarian Response Coverage**

The coverage is assessed with respect to who and how different groups were prioritized for humanitarian assistance, adequacy of assistance and ability to reach out to the most affected population. It appears that UNICEF Yemen applied a methodical approach to prioritizing beneficiaries for humanitarian aid. It appears that it was successful in targeting the population most affected by the conflict and escalation in hostilities. These included people and communities stuck in the active conflict zones and groups displaced by the crisis (internally displaced persons). These groups were provided with largely uninterrupted life-saving assistance and protection services, as UNICEF Yemen continued to operate during the active conflict particularly in hotspots such as Aden, Hodeida, Sa’ada, Sana’a and Taiz.

The integration of health and nutrition services enabled expanded coverage and proved useful in terms of providing complementary assistance to mothers, newborns and children. The engagement through a network of community health workers and especially deputed (health)
mobile teams facilitated with the wider coverage, which is evident from the number of beneficiaries reached through these services. The teams referred to achieving cost efficiencies by adopting the twinning approach; apparently, it has not been tracked and documented. The cash assistance interventions prioritized the marginalized groups – i.e., Al-Muhamasheen. This illuminates more inclusive coverage in UNICEF Yemen operations.

The outreach or results (against planned) vary for different components. There are interventions where results exceeded the planned targets, such as for vaccination, micronutrients to children under-5, psychosocial and child protections services, C4D, and prenatal and post-natal services to pregnant and lactating mothers. UNICEF Yemen missed targets for WASH, education, social protection grants and therapeutic care nutrition services for under-5 children.

**Influence of CCCs Compliance on Appropriateness and Coverage**

The evaluation has assessed the influence of CCCs compliance on the appropriateness and coverage of humanitarian assistance through 2015. To the evaluators, the CCCs compliance (in operations and cross-cutting areas) did influence the appropriateness and coverage, and this influence is more evident and striking for coverage than appropriateness.

The evaluation did not find a direct correlation between compliance (or non-compliance) with CCCs standards in six operational units and S&L, with the appropriateness of assistance in Yemen. It appears that only a few RAME CCCs standards relate to appropriateness. To the evaluators, the others relate more to planning and delivery of assistance rather than appropriateness.

UNICEF Yemen had already been responding to Yemen’s protracted crisis, as part of the United Nations system-wide humanitarian response plan. This response, albeit smaller in scale, seems to have contributed to the decent understanding of ground realities (pre-March 2015) in terms of needs, culture sensitivities, pockets of isolation, the scale of needs and delivery mechanisms that have had worked in the past. This has evidently, and as reinforced by the UNICEF Yemen staff, contributed significantly to an immediate scale-up (of the humanitarian response) and adoption/adaptation of culturally and locally relevant approaches and interventions. This was complemented by the comprehensive situation analysis published in 2014, informed by multiple sources, including UNICEF-supported surveys on child rights, nutrition and maternal, neonatal and child health. The available information was used for response planning, as no formal assessment could be carried out for the peculiar security environment.

There are areas where non-compliance affected the operations and consequently the appropriateness. These include the inability to carry out formal need assessment, slow deployment of surge staff, limited community engagement and preparation for specialized assistance and insufficient prioritization of social protection grants.

For coverage, a number of factors or standards either enabled or hindered UNICEF Yemen’s ability to reach out to the most vulnerable people. The most significant of those include immediate reprogramming of UNICEF Yemen resources for emerging humanitarian needs, two-way efficient media and social interface, the presence of a response-ready Business Continuity Plan (BCP), establishing and operating a logistic hub in Djibouti and continued presence and operations through field offices even in conflict hotspots. Another element that gained significance was the establishment of a ‘de-confliction’ arrangement with the Saudi coalition facilitating the safety of staff, offices and supplies.

Moreover, the preparedness-level compliance with the CCCs for operations positively influenced he functions of operations particularly for resource mobilization, strategic messaging and...
advocacy, immediate reprogramming of resources, mobilizing diverse government partnerships, non-government partners, banks, private entities and for immediate scaling up.

The factors that inhibited the intended coverage include the inability to carry out a formal need assessment, inconsistencies in beneficiary targeting, slow deployment of (surge) staff and delays in the processing of payments to implementing partners and local vendors.

**Conclusion and Lessons Learned**

Overall, UNICEF Yemen operations (including for cross-cutting units) achieved a high level of compliance with the relevant CCCs standards, despite a challenging security environment. The assistance provided was found to be largely appropriate. UNICEF Yemen by and large did manage to achieve the desired level of coverage, while prioritizing the most vulnerable regions and groups. The continued presence on the ground, ability to form and manage effective partnerships (with public and non-public sector partners) and integration/twinning of allied services did help in achieving/exceeding the set targets.

The evaluation did not find sufficient evidence to conclude the relevance of the CCCs (for operations and except RAME) and, similarly, the level of compliance with making assistance more appropriate. However, the evaluators can certainly argue that these standards and their compliance do relate to the criteria of coverage. And the level of compliance with the assessed CCCs did enable UNICEF Yemen to achieve the desired coverage.

The Yemen humanitarian operation did contribute to a range of planning and operational learning. This key learning included: twinning/integration of allied services (health and nutrition) for improved appropriateness, coverage and achieving cost-efficiencies. The diverse and informed partnerships (with a variety of stakeholders) helped achieve immediate scale-up, effective integration, and leveraging the spread and resources of partners to achieve desired coverage. There are lessons learned around proactive engagement with Saudis for de-confliction approaches/actions, which facilitated the safety and security of staff and supplies. The management of S&L by establishing a regional logistic hub (the one established in Djibouti) was proven useful. This is a good example not only for UNICEF but for others to consider/replicate in the future. UNICEF could not deploy surge capacities fully, hence there are lessons for country and regional offices to critically evaluate and re-think surge mobilization.

**Recommendations**

The evaluators have listed unit specific recommendations in the findings section. However, this section outlines recommendations of strategic value only.

1. UNICEF may need to demonstrate leadership by taking relevant stakeholders (may be a level of Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)) on board to critically review and revise/adapt CCCs for operation (units), particularly during complex humanitarian situations.

2. For improved compliance and consistent understanding and use of CCCs, UNICEF is advised to produce a series of guidelines (may be unit-based) and related training packages (for basic users and trainers). For the start, the roll-out may entail nomination of unit-based regional and country-level focal points, who may then lead the implementation of training, adaptation/adoptions of standards, and rigorous follow-up.

3. To overcome the security challenges of undertaking immediate/structured post-disaster need assessments in security-constrained environments, as was the case in Yemen, UNICEF may need explore local-term partnerships with third-party contractors (with the ability to operate in insecure environments and capacities to deliver) for such undertakings. UNICEF Yemen demonstrated this by awarding Long-Term Agreements
(LTAs) for media and communications (M&C) functions. This successful implementation would require capacity development of the contractors and rigorous follow-up to be in the state of operational readiness, so that the teams can be mobilized immediately after an emergency.

4. UNICEF may need to either establish parallel mechanisms or embed CCCs operations (benchmarks and actions) within ongoing institutional preparedness planning – i.e., EWEA and Humanitarian Performance Monitoring (HPM). By this, the country offices could improve preparedness-level compliance, which by default would have positive impact on response compliance.

5. UNICEF must promote and create wider organizational acceptance (mainly at the country level) for immediate shifting to SSOPs as soon as a corporate emergency is declared. For this to happen, UNICEF must evolve and implement operations-related humanitarian monitoring mechanisms, similar to those in place for programmatic monitoring. These should be able to map and highlight inconsistencies and challenges (with respect to the compliance of SSOPs and CCCs standards), hence enable country offices to take immediate remedial actions.
SECTION 1: BACKGROUND

1.1 Objective of the Evaluation

This is a (process) evaluation of UNICEF’s humanitarian response in Yemen from March to December 2015 following the escalation of conflict featuring the military involvement of a Saudi Arabia-led coalition. This intervention added further to the existing complex humanitarian situation in Yemen. Readers may note that UNICEF and other humanitarian actors were already involved in a protracted humanitarian response for the past several years.

The post-March 2015 context worsened the situation, resulting in the declaration of an L2 and later L3 emergency by the humanitarian actors. UNICEF Yemen first raised the level to L2 and later to L3. With the declaration of L2, UNICEF revised the HAC in April 2015. The HAC was again revised with the declaration of an L3 corporate emergency, seeking to raise US$182.6 million in July 2015 (from US$88 million in April). It was part of the revised inter-agency YHRP 2015, which sought US$1.6 billion to respond to evolving humanitarian needs through 2015. UNICEF Yemen managed to raise US$143.9 million, equalling 79 per cent of the solicited funds.

The escalation in hostilities led to increasing in the humanitarian needs by manifolds. Reportedly, more than 21 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance, including about 10 million children.\(^\text{14}\) To respond to the emerging needs, the inter-agency YHRP 2015 outlined priorities that included saving lives, protecting civilians, building capacities for humanitarian response, reducing vulnerabilities and ensuring equitable assistance.

The revised HAC (July 2015) complied with the priorities set under the YHRP 2015 and UNICEF’s corporate priorities including the CCCs.\(^\text{15}\) A summary of UNICEF’s HAC 2015 sector-wide targets and achievements including relevant clusters is listed below (refer to Table 1).

\(^\text{14}\) [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/yemen-child-soldiers_us_56a11eece4b0404eb8f09138>](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/yemen-child-soldiers_us_56a11eece4b0404eb8f09138>).
\(^\text{15}\) The CCCs constitute UNICEF’s central policy on how to uphold the rights of children affected by humanitarian crisis. They are a framework for humanitarian action, around which UNICEF seeks to engage with partners. [http://www.unicef.org/publications/index_21835.html>](http://www.unicef.org/publications/index_21835.html>).
### Table 1: UNICEF Yemen Country Office Humanitarian Action for Children 2015 Targets and Achievements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sectors</th>
<th>Cluster 2015 target</th>
<th>Cluster total 2015 results</th>
<th>UNICEF 2015 revised targets</th>
<th>UNICEF total 2015 results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>HEALTH</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children under 5 years old vaccinated for measles and polio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2,730,000</td>
<td>4,685,088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnant women and lactating women provided with antenatal, delivery and post-natal care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>590,000</td>
<td>236,742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affected people provided with access to water as per agreed standards [10]</td>
<td>4,364,179</td>
<td>4,500,489</td>
<td>3,971,800</td>
<td>3,761,851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affected people with access to basic hygiene kit</td>
<td>973,785</td>
<td>501,108</td>
<td>650,000</td>
<td>416,321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NUTRITION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children under 5 years old with severe acute malnutrition admitted to therapeutic care</td>
<td>214,794</td>
<td>158,409</td>
<td>214,794</td>
<td>158,409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children under 5 years old given micronutrient interventions</td>
<td>1,600,000</td>
<td>4,089,794</td>
<td>1,198,059</td>
<td>4,089,794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHILD PROTECTION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cases of grave child rights violations monitored, verified and documented</td>
<td>1,074</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affected children benefiting from psychosocial support</td>
<td>548,168</td>
<td>372,965</td>
<td>328,900</td>
<td>372,965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People (children and adults) reached with information on protecting themselves from physical injury or death due to mines/unexploded ordnance/explosive remnants of war</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>469,270</td>
<td>357,161</td>
<td>469,270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EDUCATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affected school-age children with access to education via temporary learning spaces and school reconstruction</td>
<td>126,748</td>
<td>31,690</td>
<td>77,000</td>
<td>17,677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out-of-school children supported for reintegration into the education system (including the provision of books and supplies and compensational learning opportunities)</td>
<td>904,326</td>
<td>556,849</td>
<td>542,000</td>
<td>373,487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SOCIAL PROTECTION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affected people assisted with cash transfers (including rental subsidies)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>245,000</td>
<td>66,556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of affected people reached through integrated C4D efforts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>834,000</td>
<td>885,235</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UNICEF Yemen continued to operate through a network of five field offices in Taiz\(^{17}\), Sa’ada\(^{18}\), Aden\(^{19}\), Hodeida\(^{20}\) and Sana’a\(^{21}\) along with a country office in Sana’a. In November 2015, a humanitarian hub/guesthouse was also established in Ibb.\(^{22}\) The map below (Figure 1) plots the operational presence of UNICEF Yemen, which facilitated largely uninterrupted delivery of humanitarian assistance. This was aided by establishing an alternate logistics hub in neighbouring Djibouti in March 2015. UNICEF Yemen provided leadership to the Nutrition cluster, WASH cluster, Education clusters and Child Protection sub-cluster, while supporting the work of the Health and Logistics clusters.

![Map of Yemen](image)

**Figure 1: UNICEF Operational Presence in Yemen**

### 1.2 Context of Intervention

Yemen is located at the crossroads of Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Present-day Yemen was formed in 1990 after the unification of traditional North Yemen with communist South, following years of conflict and strife. This desert country is bordered in the west by the Red Sea and the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, in the north by Saudi Arabia and in the north-east by Oman (Figure 2). Yemen has maritime borders with Djibouti, Eritrea and Somalia.\(^{23}\)

The country is ranked among the poorest in the Arab region. This is evident from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report 2015, where Yemen is

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\(^{17}\) Taiz Province is located to the south of the capital Sana’a. It is the most populous province in Yemen; its population represents 12.16 per cent of Yemen’s population ([http://www.yemen-nic.information/](http://www.yemen-nic.information/)).

\(^{18}\) Sa’ada, also spelled Sa’ada, town of north-western Yemen, in the mountainous Yemen Highlands.

\(^{19}\) Aden is situated along the north coast of the Gulf of Aden and on a peninsula enclosing the eastern side of Al-Tawâhî Harbour.

\(^{20}\) Hodeida is centre of the Hodeida Governorate and the fourth-largest city (population 400,000) in Yemen.

\(^{21}\) Sana’a is the capital of Yemen, located in the Yemeni Mountains and generally the first destination for travellers to Yemen.

\(^{22}\) Ibb, city of south-western Yemen, lying in the Yemen Highlands on a spur of the rugged Mount Shamâhî, at 6,725 feet (2,050 metres) above sea level and the fourth-largest city (population, 400,000) in Yemen.

\(^{23}\) [www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/yemen.htm](http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/yemen.htm).
rated low on the human development index. It is ranked 160th out of 188 countries, ahead only to Djibouti in the region. Reportedly, the country’s per capita income was US$3,519 in 2014. Similarly, 34.8 per cent of people were found living below the national poverty line in 2014.24

Figure 2: Map of Yemen

The country saw an escalation of violence in 2009, when government troops and rebels known as the Al-Houthis25 clashed in the north, killing hundreds and displacing more than a quarter of a million people. Yemen was hit by more serious political upheaval early in 2011, when protesters inspired by the Arab Spring26 uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt rallied against the three-decades-old rule of President Ali Abdullah Saleh and forced him to resign. The continuing conflict with Al-Houthis and their southward expansion resulted in dislodging of the government of President Hadi in 2014.

In March 2015, the Saudi Arabia lead coalition started a military campaign to put brakes on Al-Houthi’s southward expansion and eventual retreat/defeat to reinstate President Hadi’s government.27 The campaign, which continued through 2015, destroyed much of the remaining public infrastructure, thus impeding continued delivery of public services. In view of the worsening humanitarian situation, the United Nations declared an L3 emergency and launched a large-scale humanitarian assistance programme. The evolving context made more than 21 million people in

25 The Houthis, officially called Ansar Allah, is a Zaidi Shia-led movement from Sa’dah, northern Yemen. The group was founded by Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi, who started a rebellion in 2004 which led to a Houthi insurgency in Yemen against President Ali Abdullah Saleh (<www.aljazeera.com/news>, https://<www.britannica.com/place/Yemen>).
26 Arab Spring refers to the democratic uprisings that arose independently and spread across the Arab world in 2011. The movement originated in Tunisia in December 2010 and quickly took hold in Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen (<www.sourcewatch.org>).
27 On 27 February 2012, former Vice-President Abed Rabo Mansour Hadi took charge as the new President of Yemen (Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.>.)
need of humanitarian assistance, including about 10 million children. Reportedly, there are about 1.3 million children younger than 5 years of age who are at risk of malnutrition and at least 2 million children who are out of school.\textsuperscript{28} Table 2 shows the change in humanitarian need context before and after March 2015.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Before March 2015} & \textbf{Increase} & \textbf{After March 2015} \\
\hline
People in need of humanitarian assistance & 15.9 million & 33 % & 21.2 million, including 9.9 million children \\
People displaced from their homes & 548,000 & 310% & 2.4 million, including approximately 800,000 children \\
People without enough to eat & 10.6 million & 35% & 14.4 million, including 7.7 million children \\
Children under the age of five malnourished & 850,000 & 52% & 1.3 million, including 320,000 severely malnourished children \\
People without adequate access to healthcare & 8.4 million & 67% & 14.1 million, including 8.3 million children \\
People without clean water or sanitation & 13.4 million & 44% & 19.3 million, including approximately 10 million children \\
Children out of school & 1.6 million & 112% & 3.4 million \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Humanitarian Situation Before and After March 2015\textsuperscript{29, 30}}
\end{table}

1.3 Humanitarian Response Framework

While Yemen was going through a protracted crisis, the country had an inter-agency YHRP in place to assist through 2015. It sought to raise US$757.5 million to assist 8.2 million people (32 per cent of the total population), of 15.9 million needing assistance – i.e., 61 per cent of the total population.

Following an escalation in hostilities, the YHRP 2015 was revised and a second revised appeal was launched in July 2015. The revised YHRP July 2015 sought to raise US$1.6 billion, of which it generated 51 per cent.\textsuperscript{31}

The humanitarian architecture included continued functioning of 11 clusters and sub-clusters besides a multi-sector group led by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, working with refugees in the southern governorates.\textsuperscript{32} The United Nations

\textsuperscript{28} \url{http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/yemen-child-soldiers_us_56a11eece4b0404eb8f09138}.
\textsuperscript{29} United Nations OCHA, Yemen Humanitarian Needs Overview, 2015 and 2016.
\textsuperscript{31} Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan, revised 2015, \url{<https://goo.gl/qBL8f7>}.
\textsuperscript{32} \url{<www.unocha.org>}. 
Humanitarian Country Team provided the leadership and by year-end, there were 106 humanitarian actors represented in the humanitarian clusters (refer to Figure 3).

1.4 Results Chain and Theory of Change

UNICEF Yemen continued to operate without a documented ‘Theory of Change’ for humanitarian response through 2015 (period under evaluation). The discussions between UNICEF Yemen and the evaluators concluded not to develop an ex-post Theory of Change for inherent biases and because this evaluation did not require a deeper programmatic analysis for varying levels of results and pathways of change.

1.5 Key Stakeholders and Contributions

UNICEF Yemen humanitarian response through 2015 involved multiple stakeholders and their offices. The description below summarizes the roles and contributions of the most significant stakeholders.

UNICEF Global, Regional and Country Offices: UNICEF headquarters (United States of America), the Supplies Office in Copenhagen (Denmark, later named the Global Shared Services Centre – GSSC) and the Middle East and North Africa Regional Office (MENARO) provided technical, management and oversight support to UNICEF Yemen for managing an L3 corporate emergency. UNICEF Yemen, including field offices, took the lead in assessments, planning, delivery, coordination, monitoring and reporting of humanitarian operations through 2015.

Implementing Partners: Humanitarian assistance was provided through a network of partners, mainly the national NGOs and international NGOs (INGOs), civil society organizations and community-based groups. These are called implementing partners, and they played a critical role in assessments, planning, delivery, monitoring and reporting of HAC in Yemen through 2015. As per the records available, these operations included 14 INGOs, 58 NGOs and 72 civil society partners, respectively.

Government and Other Power Stakeholders: In the absence of a unified government, UNICEF Yemen responded to the humanitarian situation while working with two power stakeholders belonging to, i.e., Houthi and President Hadi. UNICEF Yemen continued working in partnership with relevant ministries, governorates and public services delivery outlets. For UNICEF Yemen,

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**Figure 4: Status of Territorial Control in Yemen**
the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation worked as a key public-sector counterpart for the Houthi-controlled areas. The country office coordinated the operations with President Hadi’s loyalists in areas controlled by them. Moreover, it coordinated (where required) with other tribal and non-state actors for access and security. Figure 4 illustrates how Yemen is distributed across different power stakeholders.

**Private-Sector Partners:** UNICEF Yemen worked through a series of local and international vendors, including manufacturers, distributors, transporters, clearing agents and other private services providers, to reach out to and deliver humanitarian assistance. Most of these partnerships were formed to leverage private partner’s presence and resources for assistance delivery.

**Donors and UNICEF National Committees:** The relevant units within UNICEF maintained continuous contact with donors by sharing information on the evolving context and UNICEF operations. Where required, the UNICEF National Committees were provided with requisite information and support to keep the committees informed of evolving humanitarian needs, UNICEF work and funding requirements for Yemen operations. The country office maintained contact with in-country donors and kept them informed of humanitarian needs and operations.

**United Nations Agencies and Other Humanitarian Partners:** The Yemen crisis required the entire humanitarian community to respond, including United Nations agencies, INGOs and others. The records suggest that more than 100 humanitarian actors including United Nations agencies, INGOs, NGOs and civil society organizations contributed to the Yemen humanitarian response post-March 2015.

**Communities:** The affected communities contributed in a multitude of ways, such as assessments, identification of vulnerable groups and pockets of deprivation, mobilization of local assistance and voluntary support groups, and delivery of assistance. Furthermore, the communities contributed to holding humanitarian actors accountable by seeking to redress their grievances – e.g., Accountability to Affected Populations and others.
SECTION 2: EVALUATION PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

2.1 Purpose of the Evaluation

This is a process cum formative evaluation. The primary purpose is to ‘learn from the management of UNICEF’s Yemen humanitarian response following the escalation of conflict in March 2015’ (refer to the evaluation TORs in Annex 1). It is expected that the findings, analysis and learning shall inform critical review and consequent revision of UNICEF preparations and responses to future complex emergencies, particularly operations.

Partly, this evaluation shall test the assumption or hypothesis of, if and to what extent do efficient and effective operations of UNICEF enable achieving relevance and intended coverage (including effective targeting) in humanitarian operations.

This evaluation is part of the larger learning initiative comprising a series of complementary evaluations commissioned at the same time within the MENARO region. The evaluation is being seen as a country case study with a distinct focus, which would eventually contribute to drawing a bigger picture around complementarities between programmes and operations for an effective response in varied humanitarian contexts.

2.2 Evaluation Audience/Users

This being a process evaluation, hence it is inward-focused. By virtue of this, it is UNICEF as an organization (with multi-layered management structures, technical and support divisions) which emerges as the key audience and eventually the user of the evaluation. The description below offers a brief note of interests and possible uses of the evaluation within UNICEF.

UNICEF Yemen and MENARO remain the two key audiences and users of the evaluation. This evaluation offers an independent assessment of the level of compliance (for preparedness and response) to relevant CCCs for operations and how management of response either enabled or hindered relevance and coverage of humanitarian response through 2015. Moreover, it provides useful insights into resources and capacities of operations within the country office and its impact on the management of the L3 emergency. The analysis and learning are to inform the planning for future preparedness and response operations, particularly for operations. The evaluation is geared to facilitate critical reflections on internal and external coordination and how it can be improved for the future.

The Middle East and North Africa region is embroiled in a crisis of various scale and complexity. UNICEF MENARO continues to support multiple concurrent humanitarian operations for past several years. First and foremost, the evaluation is to feed into a larger learning initiative of four humanitarian evaluations by presenting the case study for Yemen. Moreover, it is to offer useful insights into the level of operational preparedness at country and regional offices and consequently gauge its impact on the management of L3-level humanitarian response. Moreover, the evaluation flags gaps in in-country preparedness and response planning (for operations) and at the same time sets directions for improved coordination between country and regional offices.

UNICEF technical and support divisions such as the Global Shared Services Centre would get an objective assessment of their contributions in supporting country humanitarian response. Similarly, the evaluation highlights the achievements of communication and fund-raising units. At the same time, it identifies the technical and support needs for these divisions vis-à-vis country offices managing L3 emergencies. The evaluation findings, analysis and recommendations are likely to set directions for these divisions to enable country offices to be better prepared and respond more efficiently and effectively in times of crisis.
Besides UNICEF, the evaluation (including others that are part of the humanitarian evaluation learning initiative) is to give governments, donors and implementing partners (including the wider United Nations system) useful insights into systemic gaps and challenges in managing L3 emergencies. Also, it shall identify areas of improvement for these stakeholders to engage, support and enable UNICEF more and hold it accountable where required.

2.3 Objectives of the Evaluation

As underlined earlier, this is a ‘Process Evaluation’\textsuperscript{33} with an expressed intent to use the findings, analysis and recommendations to improve the management of current humanitarian response (in Yemen) and guide planning and delivery of UNICEF humanitarian responses in complex emergency situations. The overarching evaluation question (can also be translated as larger objective) was, ‘to what extent did the management of UNICEF’s humanitarian response enable the organization to provide appropriate assistance to the affected population?’

The specific objectives drawn from the TORs are as follows:

1. To assess and comment on the level of compliance with CCCs standards across six operational units and two cross-cutting units – i.e., RAME and S&L;
2. To map and analyse the extent to which UNICEF’s humanitarian assistance was appropriate;
3. To assess and comment on the ability of UNICEF to identify and reach out to the most vulnerable groups; and
4. To assess if and to what extent compliance with CCCs (or otherwise) enables or hampers UNICEF Yemen to deliver an appropriate humanitarian response and achieve the desired level of coverage – i.e., reach out to the most vulnerable, those facing life-threatening situations.

2.4 Focus and Scope of the Evaluation

The evaluation is anchored into the assessment of level of compliance with CCCs standards\textsuperscript{34} (in six operations and two cross-cutting areas – i.e., security, M&C, human resources, resource mobilization, finance and administration, ICT, RAME and S&L during the humanitarian response in Yemen through 2015. Moreover, it explores that to what extent does the level of compliance either enable or disable the organization to deliver appropriate assistance and achieve the desired level of coverage.

The evaluation covers the humanitarian assistance provided by UNICEF Yemen from March 2015 to December 2015. The evaluation covers the management of response and compliance with CCCs standards for six operations units (as listed above) and two cross-cutting units – i.e., RAME and S&L. The evaluation covers only the standards for preparedness and response. This remains a formative evaluation, hence it may not be construed as an operational audit.

\textsuperscript{33} Process evaluations aim to evaluate whether a programme’s operational mechanisms support the achievement of the objectives of the programme (\textlangle http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTLACREGTOPPOVANA/Resources/840442-1235414009766/TechnicalNoteProcessEvaluation.pdf\textrangle).

\textsuperscript{34} The CCCs constitute UNICEF’s central policy on how to uphold the rights of children affected by humanitarian crisis. They are a framework for humanitarian action, around which UNICEF seeks to engage with partners (\textlangle www.unicef.org\textrangle).
SECTION 3: EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

3.1 Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation has been guided by OECD-DAC and United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) standards and norms. It is a process evaluation with an expressed focus on the operations side of UNICEF Yemen’s humanitarian response from 26 March to 31 December 2015. This evaluation intended to measure the extent of UNICEF Yemen’s compliance with the CCCs, especially the prescribed standards/actions therein (for six operations units and two cross-cutting units of RAME and S&L, listed in Annex 5). In terms of the humanitarian programme cycle, the evaluation deals with standards/actions only in preparedness and responses phases. The CCCs are at the core of this evaluation. During the assessment, the evaluation has referred to (where required) UNICEF’s Simplified Standard Operating Procedures (SSOPs) and the corporate benchmarks and standards set IASC L3 Humanitarian Response.

Moreover, the evaluation covers two parts of the OECD-DAC criteria for humanitarian operations – i.e., appropriateness and coverage. The assessment has also benefited from global humanitarian assistance and accountability standards, such as Sphere and Accountability to Affected Populations. Furthermore, it has looked into adherence and alignment to the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2014–2017 and priorities and principles such as human rights-based approaches, gender equality and others.

The evaluation entails an independent assessment of the following (for the UNICEF Yemen humanitarian response through 2015):

1. Extent of compliance with CCCs standards in UNICEF’s operational units;
2. Extent of compliance with CCCs standards in UNICEF’s RAME unit;
3. Extent of compliance with CCCs standards in UNICEF’s S&L unit,
4. Assessment of appropriateness of assistance;
5. Assessment of the ability to reach the most vulnerable (coverage);
6. Influence of ‘the management of humanitarian response’35 on appropriateness; and
7. Influence of ‘the management of humanitarian response’ on coverage.

The evaluation has assessed UNICEF Yemen humanitarian operations with respect to the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan36 guidelines, including those for gender equity and empowerment of women, especially for key questions number 2, 4 and 5. The evaluation design and implementation lay added emphasis on gender integration for deeper and distilled analysis, as it was kept in view at different stages of the evaluation, such as literature review, selection of methodology, tools development, selection of respondents, data collection, analysis and reporting.

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35 For the purpose of this evaluation, ‘the management of humanitarian response’ comprised the state of compliance with CCCs standards in six operational and two cross-cutting functional units.
3.2 Conceptual Overview/Evaluation Design

In view of the evaluation expectations, the evaluators used the ‘Case Study’ design for evaluation. There are multiple case study designs and the one used for this evaluation is a sub-type of ‘Explanatory Model’, commonly referred to as ‘Programme Implementation Approach’. This model or approach of case study design investigates operations, often at several sites and mostly normatively (as was required for this evaluation vis-à-vis CCCs). UNICEF Yemen’s humanitarian operation from March to December 2015 has been treated as one case.

The evaluators have used a three-step approach to assessing compliance with CCCs standards. The first step is a detailed description of how the selected eight units have delivered in comparison to relevant CCCs standards/actions as to how they ‘should’ be undertaken (refer to the data analysis section that describes the three-dimensional analysis framework used for objective assessment). As a second step come to the assessment of the extent of compliance with CCCs standards in the light of opinions from senior managers in operations and programme units. Information from the first two steps then helps to shape the operational recommendations for improving the extent of compliance with relevant CCCs standards for achieving greater appropriateness and coverage in response. This procedure or approach has been used to respond to key questions numbers 1–3.

The evaluation question number 4 focusing on appropriateness has been assessed with respect to the assessment of needs (including evolving needs) and the extent to which the package of assistance addressed the emerging needs, contextual relevance and acceptability of delivery approaches and mechanisms and alignment with UNICEF HAC and United Nations-wide YHRP 2015.

The coverage has been assessed vis-à-vis geographic and beneficiary group prioritization, adequacy of assistance and ability to reach out to and provide assistance.

For the last two questions (i.e., 6 and 7), the assessment has been drawn by corroborating the degree of compliance with CCCs standards and their positive or negative influence on the level of appropriateness and coverage achieved.

3.3 Evaluation Approach

The evaluators used a ‘participatory approach’ for this evaluation. This implies that all key stakeholders were consulted and kept engaged in design and implementation of the evaluation. This includes engagement with UNICEF global, regional and country staff, relevant government partners, United Nations agencies, implementing partners, Evaluation Steering Committee (an in-country oversight body) and community leaders – both adult men and women – who received aid from UNICEF.

A phased approach was applied for the evaluation. Each phase included a series of inter-related activities, resulting in achieving the phase-specific outputs leading to the completion of the assignment. Below is a visual description (Figure 5) of various phases/stages and key activities.

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37 A case study is a method for learning about a complex instance, based on a comprehensive understanding of that instance obtained through extensive description and analysis of that instance taken as a whole and in its context. The Programme Implementation Model or Approach aims to explore operations, often at several sites and often with reference to a set of norms or standards about implementation processes (<http://betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/case_study>).

Due to the fact that Yemen still represents an active conflict zone, the evaluators evolved and used a distant or remote management approach. The remote management approach has had its own set of challenges and limitations, which have been deliberated along with mitigation measures in detail in Section 3.8. The availability of a local team in Yemen enabled carrying out beneficiary interviews on-site. To address inherent risks of distant or remote evaluations, the evaluators planned and implemented a host of control and mitigation measures. These included recruitment of a full-time evaluation coordinator, centralized decision-making and the bulk of interviews being carried out by lead evaluators and sector experts.

### 3.4 Data Collection Methods

As this is a qualitative evaluation, it relied on both primary and secondary data. The primary data was gathered through a series of interviews. An extensive literature review has been carried out to deepen contextual knowledge and use this to complement the primary information for assessment and ranking.

The key evaluation methods include:

1. Literature/secondary sources review; and
2. Key informant interviews.

The selection of methods and possible sources (stakeholders and respondents) of primary information was drawn after preliminary discussions with the UNICEF Yemen Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation team. The evaluators used ‘Purposive Sampling Techniques’ for the selection of respondents. Within the purposive sampling, the evaluators have largely relied on ‘Expert’ and ‘Total Population’ sampling techniques. These included all relevant (internal and external stakeholders) through a consultative process with UNICEF focal points.

Evaluators prepared stakeholder specific semi-structure interview guides (*attached as Annex 7*).

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39 **Expert sampling** is a form of purposive sampling used when research requires one to capture knowledge rooted in a particular form of expertise. It is common to use this form of purposive sampling technique in the early stages of a research process, when the researcher is seeking to become better informed about the topic at hand before embarking on a study. Doing this kind of early stage, expert-based research can shape research questions and research design in important ways.

**Total population sampling** is a type of purposive sampling to examine the entire population that has one or more shared characteristics. This kind of purposive sampling technique is commonly used to generate reviews of events or experiences, which is to say, it is common to studies of particular groups within larger populations.
3.4 Primary Data Collection

Primary data were gathered through semi-structured interviews or KIIs. At inception stages the evaluators did plan to hold focus group discussions (FGDs) with beneficiary groups, however, this was abandoned later on for security reasons.

3.4.1 Key Informant Interviews

The evaluators conducted 45 key informant interviews with relevant stakeholders inclusive of representatives from government, communities, UNICEF staff (at varying levels), other United Nations agencies, UNICEF partners and the media. These included different layers of UNICEF staff at country, regional and global levels.

Of all the key informants who were interviewed, 25 were UNICEF staff members, while another four were from other United Nations agencies. One member each has been interviewed from the government, media and third-party field monitors. Four staff members from UNICEF implementing partners and eight community representative leaders were interviewed (both men and women). The community interviews were carried out by national (Yemeni) consultants.

Of all, 67 per cent of respondents were males, whereas 33 per cent were females. The majority of respondents were from Yemen and they had first-hand information to share as they had experienced the crisis. Three of the respondents were from the regional global offices.

To guide the qualitative inquiry, the evaluators developed and used open-ended questionnaires, referred to as Key Informant Interview guide (refer to Annex 7, which includes all – 13 – interview guides used).

3.4.2 Secondary Data Collection

An extensive literature review was carried out as part of the evaluation. This desk review included, but was not limited to, UNICEF’s internal documents and materials. The documents reviewed include UNICEF’s internal documents, government or public-sector documents, databases and other research and media reports. For external documents, the consultants used only those documents that were considered credible and relevant (only those downloaded from the United Nations and other credible sites or sources). The information drawn from the literature review has been related to and assessed for consistency with the views shared by the respondents. The assessment of CCCs took a considerate view to ask for and assess the availability of supporting evidence or documentation produced for a particular action or standard.

The evaluators reviewed a total of 370 documents shared by UNICEF operations and other teams. The evaluators have reviewed a host of additional documents from an advanced web search. The documents received from UNICEF Yemen are listed and the list is attached as Annex 6.

3.5 Data Analysis

3.5.1 Compliance Assessment of CCCs Commitments, Benchmarks and Actions

Although the compliance assessment is drawn based on qualitative analysis to add rigour and objectivity, the evaluators evolved and applied a three-dimensional analysis framework. The three dimensions used for

Operations
- Media and Communications
- Security
- Human Resources
- Resource Mobilization
- Information and Communication Technology
- Finance and Administration

Cross-cutting
- Rapid Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation
- Supply and Logistics

Figure 6: Operations and Cross-Cutting Areas
assessment include: i) performance, ii) documentation and iii) achievement/contribution to the intended result. This framework was used for CCCs compliance assessment in six operational areas and two cross-cutting areas, based on the three-dimensional assessment criteria.

**Performance/Implementation:** This relates to the assessment of whether the prescribed (normative) action was/is performed (either at preparedness or response level). The assessment, however, excludes any judgement on timeliness, quality and comprehensiveness.

**Documented/Evidence:** This relates to if the action is/was duly documented (as per given standards or otherwise) and assessment to be drawn if evidence is shared with/seen by the assessors. It could include plan, report, notification, memo, minutes, executive email and others.

**Contributions/Achievement of Results:** This criteria element relates to if or to what extent did the implementation of a prescribed/normative action facilitate in either achieving or contributing to the intended result (of an individual or collective action).

Each action has been given a rating/rank on a four-point scale (*refer to the matrix below*). For visual presentation, each scale or rank has been given a distinct colour.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Rank/Scale</th>
<th>Colour Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>When all three conditions/criteria found adhered to and the stated/intended result fully achieved</td>
<td>Compliant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>When any two of the three conditions existed, however, the stated/intended result largely achieved</td>
<td>Mostly Compliant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>When two of the three conditions existed, however, the stated/intended result could hardly be achieved</td>
<td>Partially Compliant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>When hardly any or only one of the three conditions existed without achieving its stated/intended result</td>
<td>Non-Compliant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The status of assessment for all individual standards/actions is supported with narrative description and feeds into analysis and formation of an overall opinion for the CCCs set for any operational units (*refer to Annex 5 for details*).

**3.5.2 Assessment for Appropriateness, Coverage and Influence of CCCs Compliance**

As mentioned earlier, while this compliance ranking has been used to explore the degree of compliance with CCCs standards/actions which are represented by the first three of the seven key questions described in 3.1, the next two questions related to UNICEF Yemen's humanitarian programme’s appropriateness and coverage have been explored through OECD-DAC evaluation criterion. The last two of the key evaluation questions have been explored through the degree and nature of the influence of ‘the management of humanitarian response’ on both the extent of appropriateness and coverage.

Throughout the assessment, the evaluators used data triangulation techniques to corroborate and validate the findings.
3.6 Quality Assurance

The evaluators used the following quality assurance mechanisms for timely and quality delivery of evaluation:

1. This evaluation has benefited from the collective wisdom of an inter-disciplinary team of humanitarian and operations experts with complementary training and work experiences. The experts worked as a team and complemented the work undertaken. Members, who could not perform as per the expectations, were replaced by the back-up candidates.

2. A host of different communication means/tools were applied, such as phones, Skype, WhatsApp and e-mail, to overcome the inherent challenges of a distant evaluation. The interviews were recorded for transcription (not to miss any information) after seeking respondents’ consent.

3. Feedback from Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) was solicited at all critical stages of the evaluation. Moreover, the UNICEF Yemen focal points were kept informed of progress on a regular basis. This included sharing of a compliance assessment grid and presentation of key findings to the (ERG).

4. The evaluators remained flexible and open to reviewing/incorporating last-minute sharing of documents and impressions by the respondents.

3.7 Ethical Safeguards

The evaluation followed the UNEG norms and ethical standards. The most significant include:

1. The research team maintained independence and impartiality from evaluation design to presentation of findings and reporting.

2. To minimize the risk of evaluators’ bias, objective criteria for compliance assessment were developed and applied.

3. The exhaustive description of study methodology, procedures and assessment principles reflects a commitment to address users’ obligations, for possible peer review and replication in future.

4. The evaluators sought informed consent before conducting interviews and explained the purpose and use/s of the evaluation. Moreover, the participants were assured of anonymity, confidentiality of information and non-attribution.

3.8 Limitations, Constraints and Mitigation Measures

This being a remote evaluation manifests a series of limitations and constraints, which have been addressed through a range of mitigation actions. The most significant ones are outlined in Table 3 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Limitations and Constraints</th>
<th>Mitigation Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No face-to-face interaction with respondents at all levels, including failure to travel to the field and obtain a first-hand account of beneficiaries’ impressions of assistance.</td>
<td>This limitation was difficult to address the peculiar security situation in Yemen. To address this limitation, the evaluators planned and conducted 45 interviews, to have evaluation informed of views of all key stakeholders. Where possible, video interviews (on Skype) were conducted. The interviews were structured as such to extract the maximum from the responders. An extensive literature review was carried out to deepen understanding of the context and realities. A Yemeni resource was hired for field interviews (all)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
through telephone) and herself interviewed by the team (as she was living in Yemen during the crisis) to share her impressions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The risk of individual biases to dilute CCCs compliance assessment, while ensuring not to make it look as an audit.</th>
<th>To add objectivity and rigour to the CCCs compliance assessment, the evaluators developed a three-dimensional assessment criterion, leading to rating compliance on four scales assessment grid (refer to Annex 4). This proved useful in minimizing evaluators' bias. The composition of the assessment criteria has also worked to make it not look like an audit.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delays in sharing required documents and evidence. Limited advance notice, cancellations and rescheduling of respondents’ interviews.</td>
<td>The evaluators did face challenges to get hold of requisite documents in time. Anticipating the challenge, a unit-based list of documents was prepared and sent earlier. The evaluators remained flexible and accommodated any documents shared, even those post-presentation (during report writing). Similarly, while understanding the environment in which UNICEF Yemen operates, the evaluators demonstrated flexibility in entertaining immediate (e.g., on half-hours’ notice) interview requests. Also, the evaluators accommodated last-minute interview cancellations and rescheduling of interviews.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Risks and Constraining Factors
SECTION 4: EVALUATION’S FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

This section of the report presents the key findings and analysis vis-à-vis seven key evaluation questions as described in section 3.1. This chapter discusses the state and extent of compliance with CCCs standards/actions for each of the six departments/units within UNICEF Yemen’s operation arm and two cross-cutting units of RAME and S&L.

The commentary for each of the eight units assessed for CCCs compliance ends with recommendations, mostly of operational level, to improve CCCs compliance in the respective unit. For each normative action, i.e., CCCs standard/action, the standard number has been given a colour based on its level of compliance, as explained in 3.5.1.

4.1 Compliance in Media and Communications

This operational unit has two defined core commitments to children in humanitarian actions which encompass the functions of M&C, especially humanitarian response situations. These core commitments are achieved through six preparedness and seven response-level standards/actions. The two CCCs are articulated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCCs Commitment No. 1</th>
<th>Accurate information about the impact of the situation on children and women is rapidly provided to national committees and the general public through local and international media.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCCs Commitment No. 2</td>
<td>Humanitarian needs and the actions taken to address them are communicated in a timely and credible manner to advocate for child-friendly solutions, increase support for the response and, where necessary, assist with fund-raising.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to develop an overall opinion on the extent of compliance, issues therein and identification of the areas of improvement, the measurement framework, as explained in 3.5, was applied to each action/standard from preparedness and response levels. The compliance situation is also available in a matrix form (attached as Annex 5) that succinctly sums up the level of compliance vis-à-vis each stated standard/action.

4.1.1 Compliance in Preparedness Standards

P#1 As a part of preparedness standard actions, M&C is supposed to ensure that a communication strategy is part of preparedness planning. Information from respondents suggests as such there was no preparedness plan from pre-March 2015, but an EWEA plan existed. Nevertheless, an M&C Strategy 2013–2014 existed to inform the preparedness and BCP. A Communication and Advocacy (C&A) approach was developed in May 2015, when UNICEF was planning for an L3 humanitarian response.

P#2 Identification of surge capacity needs is an important standard action in preparedness and smooth mounting of any humanitarian response. At UNICEF Yemen level, international-level surge capacity was identified with inputs from MENARO. However, it could not help much, as the

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40 In terms of CCCs compliance within six operational and two cross-cutting units/departments, this section also briefly points out areas of improvement for the respective units.

41 Preparedness-level standards here are identified as P.1, P.2… and response-level standards as R.1, R.2… highlighted in a colour relevant to their respective level of compliance.
deployment of international surge capacity remained very limited due to long processing times at global human resources, restrictions in the number of visa quota and the security situation.

Any evidence on the identification of national-level surge capacity needs is not available. However, UNICEF Yemen had running LTAs with communication and media vendors to augment the response to surged needs. Incidentally, it helped smoother delivery of work outputs. Unlike Special Service Agreement contract holders, which UNICEF offers for temporary services, the LTA vendors did not require following through the United Nations protocol in terms of traveling and other Minimum Operating Security Standards (MOSS)-related requirements.

P#3 In the context of the humanitarian crisis of L3, for M&C it is mandatory to have a list of staff with appropriate language skills identified along with a list of key media contacts. In the C&A plan, the subject lists are available. However, as the conflict escalated post-March 2015, almost 70 per cent of the media contacts identified by M&C had moved out owing to the aerial bombing in Sana’a and other areas.

P#4 In order to materialize the M&C plan, one of the most important actions is that the M&C-related equipment such as satellite phones, video cameras, cameras, posters and banners are not only procured but made available and placed at relevant locations. This requires active collaboration with the S&L unit. Information available from the requesting unit – i.e., M&C – suggests procurement has been hassle-free. However, as no courier services worked during the period of escalated conflict, the staff travelling towards the destination of equipment had to be requested to carry those items. Yet, the movement and placement of cameras and other equipment from outside was cumbersome and not without delays.

P#5 For consistent and standardized communication activities during the crisis, the CCCs standard necessitates the prior availability of a template for media statements, key messages, fact sheets and country profiles on issues related to children and women. It is noted that the C&A plan provides for templates on key messaging, fact sheets, media statements and Situation Reports. Review of the available documents also confirms that the information was updated regularly through Situation Reports, dashboards, media statements and press briefs.

P#6 Another crucial step towards foundations for a swift response in the time of crisis is pre-establishment of contingency contracts with service vendors. It is noted from an interview that the LTAs mechanism was there for photographers, videographers, producers and other media/communication-related services. The pre-qualified vendors were oriented on UNICEF’s vision, mission and programme agenda, especially on M&C priorities through training sessions. Network with journalists was developed and updated. But as mentioned earlier, with the escalation of conflict, about 70 per cent of these service providers had moved out, which added further strain on existing UNICEF Yemen capacities.

4.1.2 Compliance in Response Standards

R#1 At the onset of any humanitarian crisis, the first and foremost action is to disseminate information within 24 hours to the media, the public and national committees to immediately raise awareness of the urgent needs of children and women. The UNICEF Representative was quoted in international media such as *The Guardian* newspaper on the looming crisis on 27 March 2015. However, a formal press statement could not be traced. This inability may partially be explained for the Saudi coalition’s intense aerial bombing over Sana’a and consequent evacuation of the UNICEF Yemen Crisis Management Team, including the M&C unit Chief from Yemen to Amman within 36 hours.

R#2 The standard procedure requires the M&C unit to start producing daily updates, key messages and Q&A’s for internal circulation, as well as regular communication materials for an
external audience within the first week of crisis. Except for the first 24 hours of the crisis, it is noted that M&C was able to maintain daily and weekly media interactions for key messaging through information updates and innovative use of WhatsApp. This could be verified in an evaluation related interview with a journalist too. The Q&A’s for internal circulation were available but only in the C&A plan of May 2015. However, it is noted that at times the chain of clearances within UNICEF hierarchy beyond UNICEF Yemen resulted in delays in the release of timely media statements on the incidence of grave child protection violations.

R#3 The CCCs standards also emphasize aligning M&C materials to United Nations guidelines and compliment messages of the United Nations team. Information from respondents, from available documents and web-based searches sufficiently substantiate that the media work and press relations were done in the light of a United Nations-wide SSOP known as ‘Communicating together in times of crisis’ 2009 and in tandem with and advice from the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) in Yemen. A local United Nations Communications Group led by the UNIC under the overall guidance of the Humanitarian Coordinator frequently met to discuss the emerging issues related to M&C, agree on guidelines and priorities and monitor communication-related activities.

R#4 In situations of grave child rights violations and/or crisis, UNICEF is required to consult within 24 hours with regional offices and headquarters on ways of advocating for the respect and protection of children’s rights and inform the United Nations Country Team. The in-country risks analysis and management should inform communication and, if necessary, support partners in advocacy.

The C&A plan, refreshed in May 2015, describes the protocol to act on grave violations. With regular support through the monitoring and reporting mechanism, the C&A plan was implemented with support from the UNICEF Representative, the regional office and headquarters. This was used for children killed in bombing by Saudis and instances of child recruitment as soldiers by Houthis. Advocacy from lower to highest diplomatic level has been reported. For example, the UNICEF Yemen team met Houthis, the UNICEF Regional Office Chief and Executive Director met with Saudi Arabian authorities and the King Salman Centre to raise the issue of children being killed in aerial bombings of civilian areas. The UNICEF Yemen team contributed to talking points for the Humanitarian Coordinator and the United Nations’ Special Envoy for Yemen. The evaluators could not find an in-country security risk matrix for the time around March 2015. However, the BCP, as updated in August 2015, hints that the risks analysis existed when the conflict escalated in March 2015, to concretely inform and suggest risk mitigation actions for M&C along with other operations units.

R#5 While media attention is at its peak, UNICEF has committed to provide updates on child-related issues and on the humanitarian response to the national committees, media and public through interviews, human interest stories, briefings, photographs and video footage, highlighting the voices of children and youth.

On the basis of the review of documents available, web-based searches, interviews with UNICEF media persons and random journalists, it seems that a regular contact was maintained successfully with media on child rights issues and UNICEF programme response and advocacy. As per the M&C Chief, UNICEF released 22 press statements, most of them on child protection issues such as killing, maiming, abductions and recruitment. About 250 interviews were given to different international and national media by UNICEF teams in six languages. Besides, UNICEF produced 25–30 human-interest videos/documentaries.

R#6 The M&C team has to make sure that during field visits and field missions, UNICEF-branded materials are visible. The evaluators could abundantly notice the visibility of the UNICEF brand in
all activities as covered in document, reports, available PowerPoint presentations, media coverage and information from respondents.

Keeping in view the visibility and advocacy objectives, CCCs standards also require M&C to identify and transmit (needs) to S&L. Based on interviews and documents review, it seems that it was done routinely and found to be hassle-free. The only problem faced was delays in terms of import and transportation to the field areas.

4.1.3 Overall Analysis of Commitments

In terms of complying with preparedness standards, UNICEF Yemen M&C unit is fully compliant with three of the total six standards/actions; mostly compliant with two, and partially compliant with one. When it comes to standards and actions at the response level, UNICEF Yemen M&C is fully compliant with two of the total seven standards, mostly compliant with four, and partially compliant with one. On the whole, the UNICEF Yemen M&C unit seems to have largely delivered in its CCCs standards in a successful manner. Nevertheless, the unit faced challenges in relation to the deployment of surge capacities and delays in clearance of media statements and messages through multiple layers of organizational hierarchy.

![Figure 7: Compliance Graph Media and Communication](image)

Based on the assessment of the CCCs standards, it may be construed that UNICEF Yemen has, for the most part, delivered on the core commitment to provide timely and accurate information about the impact of the situation on children and women to national committees and the general public through local and international media. In addition, UNICEF Yemen has also fulfilled its second core commitment – i.e., to communicate humanitarian needs and the actions taken to address them in a timely and credible manner to advocate for child-friendly solutions and increase support for the response.

4.1.4 Recommendations

The M&C unit seems to have performed reasonably well in compliance with its CCCs standards. It may deliver even better on these commitments if the following recommendations are considered:

1. The capacity and readiness of M&C can be enhanced significantly if M&C is able to augment its mechanisms to identify potential candidates for an internal and external staff
roster in the areas of information, communication and report writing. The roster may then be submitted to the M&C division so that local candidates from the roster can be alternatively deployed when experts from the international roster are unable to join immediately for security or visa restriction/limits, as noticed in Yemen (relates to P2).

2. UNICEF Yemen seems to have faced challenges in the timely clearance of media statements and messages through multiple layers of organizational hierarchy beyond the country office. If the regional office and M&C unit at headquarters can adopt some mechanisms in line with SSOPs, especially for L3s, it may help in delivering time-critical media messaging without any delays (relates to R1 & R2).

4.2 Compliance in Security Unit

The security unit has a defined core commitment to children in humanitarian actions. The CCCs guidelines envisage a security unit to deliver on its commitment to four preparedness and four response-level standards/actions. A security unit is core commitment, as articulated below.

| CCCs Commitment No.1 | Security risks that could affect staff and assets and, subsequently, the emergency response, are identified, assessed and managed |

In order to develop an overall opinion on the extent of compliance, issues therein and identification of the areas of improvement, the measurement framework as explained in Section 3.5 was applied to each standard/action.

4.2.1 Compliance in Preparedness Standards

**P#1** UNICEF’s commitment to ‘stay and deliver’ while responding to humanitarian emergencies requires it to ensure that an assessment is undertaken of all the relevant security risks associated with the humanitarian response plan. With advice and support from Department of Safety and Security (DSS), UNICEF managed to regularly do Security Risks Analysis for the six security regions. The risk assessments covered armed conflicts, terrorism, civil unrest, crimes and hazards. The BCP from December 2014, updated in August 2015, also adequately covers it.

**P#2** The CCCs standards within security demands that the security unit must examine the United Nations Security Risk Assessment for implications to humanitarian programmes and establish and maintain a UNICEF security plan (as an annex/complement to the United Nations security plan) linked to the United Nations humanitarian response plan. Information from respondents and the literature provided suggest that an overall United Nations-wide security plan, developed with input from inter-agency security focal points, is followed by all United Nations agencies. A risks vulnerability analysis was developed and annexed with the UNICEF BCP, as updated in August 2015. The HRP 2015 does not spell out particularly how security-related activities will support the response plan.

**P#3** In order to translate security plans into actions, UNICEF has to maintain and sustain its security plan by, inter alia, securing financial resources and training staff (including testing key aspects of security plan). This also includes procuring equipment related to MOSS, meeting MOSS-related office requirements and establishing MOSS-related procedures. It is noted through this evaluation that the unit was provided with sufficient funds – US$700,000 – to make UNICEF operations safe and secure in 2015 following the conflict escalation. This must have helped in getting more radios, armoured vehicles and other equipment, thereby enhancing the security of assets and training.
It is noted that mandatory security training courses such as Basic Security in the Field, Advanced Security in the Field and the Safe and Secure Approaches in Field Environments by staff were complied with. All United Nations drivers operating in Yemen were given training on how to drive and manage the armoured vehicles. All UNICEF premises maintained MOSS compliance with warden systems and communication trees.

4.2.2 Compliance in Response Standards

R#1 Every humanitarian crisis creates its own unique security situation where UNICEF’s ability to implement a security plan immediately – including establishing the location of all staff members and reviewing with DSS the effectiveness of security measures – is key to launching and continuing its humanitarian response. In this regard, it has been verified from multiple sources that the UNICEF Yemen security team has done all it could in a situation where aerial bombings were still going on, communication infrastructure was dysfunctional at best and humanitarian needs were multiplying with the deepening crisis.

For all office locations and staff residences, Global Positioning System coordinates were maintained on Google Earth mapping. It was regularly updated and shared with the United Nations Department of Safety and Security at Headquarters in New York, as well as with the OCHA de-confliction team in Saudi Arabia. A country-level Security Management Team (SMT) and the field offices-level area SMT meetings were held for guidance to staff on enhanced security measures. These meetings and updates from security, thereafter, continued on a daily, weekly, fortnightly and monthly basis, depending on the gravity of the security situation.

R#2 In situations of emergencies, it is of foremost importance for security teams to ensure that all staff, programmes and offices have proper MOSS-related equipment and follow security-mandated procedures during programme implementation.

It seems that the UNICEF security team has not only provided the necessary support but has gone the extra mile. In addition to international staff, a vast majority of national staff had been issued VHF handheld radios. Satellite phones were issued to key staff. The travel protocol was strengthened and enforced from the highest level; by-road travel was only made through armoured vehicles and for this more armoured vehicles were to be brought into the country. Sandbags were made available to all staff free of charge in order to help them reinforce ‘safe-rooms’ at home. The staff were also provided with a micro solar system for charging laptops and phones, and with fuel to enable them to come to work. In addition, all staff members who had to relocate their homes to secure areas were provided with relocation grants. UNICEF Yemen in Sana’a and field offices’ security measures had to be strengthened with additional measures, e.g., pass-through gates, services provided by armed guards/Njada Police.

R#3 In the context of the changing/evolving situation, which is typical of any crisis situation, UNICEF is required by its CCCs to periodically review in collaboration with United Nations security advisors, the programme implications of security risk assessment. Information from respondent confirms on weekly and fortnightly meetings of SMT and area SMT. The meetings had been held
regularly to review the security situation and its implication on the programme and staff location and movement. The Security Risk Analysis had been conducted regularly as confirmed through documents.

R#4. The security unit needs a great deal of support from S&L in terms of procurement and deployment of assets. It is therefore a standard requirement for security to identify and transmit supply inputs to S&L in a timely manner. The assessment notes that this was done routinely and without any hassle. Importing and deploying equipment inside Yemen, such as radios, armoured vehicles and other emergency telecommunications assets, was not without delays.

4.2.3 Overall Analysis on Commitment

In terms of complying with preparedness standards, the UNICEF Yemen security unit is fully compliant in three of the total four standards/actions, while in one it is mostly compliant. At the response-level actions and standards, the UNICEF Yemen security unit is fully compliant in three of the total four standards, while in one it is at mostly compliant level. On the whole, the security unit has successfully delivered on its CCCs standards, although there were issues related to the very fragile security situation, and delays in importation and deployment of assets.

![Security Compliance Graph](image)

**Figure 8: Compliance Graph for Security**

Based on the assessment of the CCCs standards, it is evident that UNICEF Yemen has, for the most part, delivered on the core commitment to identify, assess and manage the security risks that could affect staff and assets and, subsequently, the emergency response.

4.2.4 Recommendation

None.

4.3 Compliance in Human Resources

There are four defined CCCs commitments when it comes to the human resources function, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCCs Commitment No. 1</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate and experienced staff and personnel with relevant deployment training are provided and rapidly deployed, primarily through internal</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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These core commitments are achieved through compliance with nine standards/actions at the preparedness level coupled with another seven standards/actions at the response level. On the basis of the common framework of measuring the extent of compliance, the situation is as discussed below.

4.3.1 Compliance in Preparedness Standards

**P#1** In order to achieve better preparedness level, the UNICEF country offices are required to establish and maintain a staff mobilization plan for both immediate and medium-term needs, and to identify and communicate staffing needs through established systems and practices. At the regional level, it is also important to produce an analysis to mitigate risks and identify gaps and actions. As such, the staff mobilization plan per se was not available. Yet the UNICEF Yemen human resources unit undertook a review of the rolling work plans to scale up, scale down or suspend certain parts of the programme before the crisis escalated in March 2015. In the context, the upcoming increased level of work with L3 declaration, an additional set of staff surge capacity requests had been identified and is reflected in the Operational Staff Matrix, June 2015.

**P#2** There are a number of important things about the organization that newly recruited staff need to know and be informed about so that they are better equipped to start performing without unnecessary delay. That's why standards make the inclusion of deployment training as a key element in the recruitment process. It is noted through both interviews and documentary sources that a set of online and in-person mandatory trainings, such as UNICEF’s vision and mission and programme objectives, Basic Security in the Field, Advanced Security in the Field and United Nations staff code of conduct are part of the recruitment and deployment process. This was also supplemented with a UNICEF Welcome Booklet and Buddy Programme for newly recruited members.

**P#3** More often than not, the staff deployed in humanitarian situations are tremendously exposed to stress, security and health risks. The organization is supposed to provide all staff with information and support to address their well-being, including information on safety and security measures and procedures, HIV and AIDS, traumatic stress and chronic work stress. UNICEF seems to have fully complied with this standard. The information and guidelines on staff well-being, stress management, standards of conduct and awareness about HIV and AIDS are available on the intranet for staff. The organization also had an informal mechanism of counselling through peer support volunteers, which was supported by a formal UNICEF and United Nations counsellor.

**P#4** United Nations agencies require their staff and contract holders to adhere to a set of standard conduct, especially with reference to sexual exploitation and abuse. Towards this goal, the first and foremost thing is to disseminate to staff members the United Nations rules governing behaviour related to sexual exploitation and abuse, implement a monitoring and complaints
mechanism within the organization as part of the General Assembly victim assistance policy, and train focal points. It is substantially judged that in addition to standards of conduct, information and awareness against sexual exploitation and abuse are provided to staff through e-resources and occasional sessions for staff. The directive from UNICEF’s Executive Director provides for country office-level complaints mechanisms and focal points.

P#5 In order to add real value to preparedness and humanitarian programme planning, the CCCs recommend developing and implementing a training plan that includes capacity building of UNICEF staff and partners for emergency preparedness and response planning, as well as Principled Approach to Humanitarian Action (PATH) e-learning. Here, as far as a staff annual training plan and induction training plan are concerned, it is reported that it existed. However, implementation was substantially missing in terms of time. It is attributed to the ongoing protracted crisis and later to the escalation of the conflict. UNICEF’s e-resources portal has guidelines on EWEA and an online training on PATH for UNICEF and partners. No information was available on how many trainings were conducted for partners.

P#6 The standards also require UNICEF to ensure that all new staff have completed induction training that integrates key emergency elements and establishes processes for the completion of deployment training for relevant staff, experts from standby partners and consultants. It noted from interviews with the human resources and security units that an online safety and security training was mandatory for staff and consultants before joining. As soon as staff report for joining, an initial briefing is given by the human resources unit with advice to go through training and guidelines available at e-resources. Formal and conventional in-person training sessions could not be held for ongoing response to the protracted crisis and became impossible due to the escalation of conflict.

P#7 In the list of preparedness actions, the human resources-related CCCs required ensuring the mandatory completion of e-learning training on sexual harassment by all staff. Here, an online training and guidelines on sexual harassment was available on e-resources and staff were advised to go through these. However, during the evaluation exercise, no formal mechanism could be noted to ensure compliance from staff with this requirement. As per key informant interviews, the periodic sessions on different guidelines including sexual harassment and abuse have been conducted as and when the situation allowed.

P#8 Work in insecure situations, which often characterizes the humanitarian crisis, calls for acquiring organizational ability to continue its operations when routine office business is not possible. For business continuity purposes, the organization has to ensure that critical staff and their alternates are identified and trained in sustaining the critical business processes of the office. Staff who will be working from home will need to be identified to ensure that they are provided with remote access capabilities and vital records to support on-site critical staff. This will include identifying activated key staff when technological support is required for internal recovery.

It is noted from documents and from multiple sources that the BCP document from December 2014 as revised in August 2015 provided for critical, essential and alternate staff along with information technology, power and other operational support required to help them be functional whether they have to work from home, office or elsewhere. However, it could not be confirmed if and how many staff members were provided with training in sustaining the critical business processes.

P#9 Last but not the least of standard normative actions is to ensure that staff members with special needs, afflictions and illnesses are provided with support, in the case of an internal crisis affecting office operation. The BCP identified medical support, well-being and counselling for staff as a critical process for human resources, which would be helpful in a case of need. However,
there’s no specific plan for staff members with special needs in any of the documents related to staff welfare and well-being as reviewed.

4.3.2 Response-Level Standards/Actions

R#1 While the organization mounts a humanitarian response, the human resources unit has to match it by mobilizing staff surge capacity in coordination with the regional office and headquarters. This has to be done through established rapid response mechanisms, using the emergency response team and another internal redeployment, external recruitment and standby arrangements with partners. It is noted from the documents reviewed and interviews that the surge support, Immediate Response Team (IRT) and standard recruitment during 2015 were arranged with the support of the regional office and headquarters. The UNICEF Yemen Operational Staffing Matrix (OSM) was developed with inputs from the regional office and headquarters, which identified and managed the status of surge staff capacities. Although the SSOPs for L3s provide for fast-track recruitment and deployment, the staff recruitment and deployment were, however, very slow. There were frequent instances where different operational and programme units could not get additional resources as required and in a timely manner.

R#2 While the international surge capacities might take a while and those cannot be demanded for all needs in this regard, the country offices are expected to reassign and/or redeploy staff within the country office and regional office to support emergency response, or redeploy staff within the region. Here, the UNICEF Yemen human resources unit was able to do redeployment and reassignment from within the country office in a timely manner and without much operational difficulty. However, the same from the regional office was quite slow and not in as many numbers as required for reasons related to human resources processes and for restricted quota of international staff visa assigned to UNICEF, like other United Nations agencies.

R#3 The human resources from surge and IRT windows immediately fill in to support the soaring humanitarian response for a short period of time, and the human resources unit has to simultaneously identify and recruit external candidates via the global web roster e-recruitment platform, other external sources and standby partners. Initially, the UNICEF Yemen human resources unit managed to bring in additional staff from IRT and surge rosters, and later staff from SBP and e-recruitment platforms were also recruited. However, this could not be done without challenges in terms of a restricted number visa quota and delays. The process of recruitment for positions, especially at the P4 level and onward, was extremely slow, as it had to go to headquarters through the regional office. Similarly, the recruitment of national staff was extremely slow due to the paucity of candidates with suitable profiles and because of time-consuming processes within UNICEF’s bureaucracy at various levels.

R#4 As a measure of compliance and risk mitigation, the CCCs bind the human resources unit to effectively monitor the completion of UNICEF deployment training for staff and consultants deployed for emergency response. For the newly recruited staff and consultants, two sets of pre-deployment trainings were held; online training on Safe and Secure Approaches in Field Environments, Basic Security in the Field and Advanced Security in the Field, guidelines and policies and practical training, which included induction sessions and in-person training. The human resources unit monitored these with support from relevant units such as security.

R#5 Staff well-being and welfare, as per the CCCs, require that the organization provides all staff with contact details of the UNICEF staff counsellor’s office, as well as of any local counselling resources identified, including United Nations counsellors, local counsellors and peer helpers. Although UNICEF Yemen does not have its own staff counsellor, the counsellor’s office in the regional office was available to support staff. The staff were formally informed of the counsellor’s role and services through an e-mail notification. Besides, a peer support volunteer mechanism at
the country office level existed and there was an office of a United Nations counsellor, located at UNDP Yemen, available to all United Nations staff.

**R#6** Standard normative actions within human resources also demand to ensure that all UNICEF staff and partners sign the code of conduct and are made aware of appropriate mechanisms for reporting breaches of its six core principles. It is verified by the key informant interviews that at the time of contract signing, the staff, consultants and contractors were required to sign the code of conduct, which forms the integral part of the contract and also includes six core principles related to conflict of interest, abuse of authority, gifts and honours, United Nations resources, confidentiality of information and post-employment obligations.

**R#7** The CCCs in human resources repeatedly emphasize that in the case of emergency deployment, it must be ensured that UNICEF staff being deployed on a mission, external candidates (including consultants) as well as standby partners, complete UNICEF deployment training before deployment, immediately upon arrival at their duty stations and after completion of the assignment. As noted earlier, it was followed through online and in-person training. However, for in-person conventional training, delays were noted, as it was not possible to frequently remove staff from humanitarian duties for training activities. As far as post-assignment training is concerned, the evaluation did not come across such a mechanism within UNICEF Yemen.

### 4.3.3 Overall Analysis on Commitments

The human resources unit has got the largest number of standards to comply with at preparedness and response levels. The situation of compliance tells us that in terms of preparedness standards, three of the total nine standards/actions are fully compliant, two are mostly compliant, and another four are at partially compliant level. When it comes to the response level, two of the total seven standards are fully compliant, one is at the mostly compliant level, while four are at partially compliant.

![Human Resources Compliance Graph](https://example.com/human-resources-graph.png)

**Figure 9: Compliance Graph Human Resources**

It is understandable that at UNICEF Yemen there were many challenges related to the unique security situation, restricted number of visas allocated to organizations, paucity of national-level staff with right profiles and multiplied scale of work. Nevertheless, the assessment presents a bit of a complex situation, as there are many areas where the human resources unit has either fully or mostly complied with normative action.
4.3.4 Recommendation

The human resources unit has a huge role to support any humanitarian response. Keeping in view the state of compliance within this unit, there are a number of recommendations which may be considered to enhance the performance of human resources function and to achieve full compliance with CCCs standards. Some of the most significant include:

1. Establish and maintain a staff mobilization plan for both immediate and medium-term needs and identify and communicate staffing needs through established systems and practices (relates to P1);
2. Develop and implement a training plan that includes capacity building of UNICEF staff and partners for emergency preparedness and response planning (relates to P5);
3. Develop some formal mechanism to ensure and record that all staff complete mandatory training (relates to P7);
4. Develop mechanisms to support staff members with special needs, afflictions and illnesses in the case of an internal crisis (relates to P9); and
5. Improve the existing mechanisms of a) recruitment during emergencies, b) mobilization of surge capacities from regional offices and headquarters (relates to R1, R2 and R3).

4.4 Compliance in Resource Mobilization

The Resource Mobilization unit is the entity responsible for liaising with donors in international multilateral, bilateral and government agencies. In terms of CCCs, it has just one core commitment, as defined below.

| CCCs Commitment No. 1 | Quality, flexible resources are mobilized in a timely manner to meet the rights and needs of children and women in humanitarian crises. |

This core commitment within the Resource Mobilization unit is achieved through compliance with five standards/actions at the preparedness level and another six standards/actions at the response level. The discussion below is in the light of the measurement framework applied to all CCCs standards, as explained in Section 3.5.

4.4.1 Compliance in Preparedness Standards

P#1 In order to fulfil the organizational mandate, the availability of timely and quality resources plays an instrumental role. This demands a number of measures and actions taken in advance of the actual need. First among such actions is to develop an emergency resource mobilization strategy in conjunction with the strategy for funding the regular country programme. It is observed through interviews and documents that UNICEF Yemen had a formal Resource Mobilization Strategy 2013–2015 in place to guide on directions, approaches and priorities for humanitarian context needs in Yemen. UNICEF Yemen had a significant emergency response ongoing since 2011; however, following the escalation of conflict, UNICEF revised its strategy and funding requirements to reflect the significant changes in context and scale-up of its humanitarian response. This was done in line with the revised inter-agency YHRP.

P#2 Another measure in advance includes close consultation with the regional office and the Public-Sector Alliances and Resource Mobilization Office (PARMO) to review available donor profiles, standard agreements and the processes for accessing and managing emergency funds. The country offices and regional offices are expected to contact PARMO (Brussels, New York and Tokyo) and private fund-raising and partnerships donor focal points to map donor interests and seek other guidance, as necessary. The UNICEF Yemen Resource Mobilization strategy has
references to PARMO in terms of understanding the donors’ priorities. Impressions from interviews also testify that liaison between the country office, regional office and PARMO was working well in terms of donors’ profiles, mapping and focal persons for fund-raising. A Fund-Raising and Leveraging Partnership (FLP) committee was formally constituted and came into full force in 2015, which met twice a month. The FLP included representation from all programme sectors and provided an opportunity to review and share fund-raising goals and areas of potential overlap.

P#3 The CCCs require UNICEF’s country offices to naturally go beyond strategies and structures through continuous liaison with local donors to establish good working relationships, demonstrate UNICEF’s preparedness to initiate action and emphasize the importance of thematic funding as a flexible and efficient mechanism with fewer transaction costs. UNICEF Yemen seems to have clearly delivered on this standard as a constant communication from the level of Representative and Deputy Representative was maintained with key bilateral donors to update them on UNICEF’s preparedness and response readiness, which was operationally further supported by regular updates and communications to donors from the Resource Mobilization unit. As mentioned already, an FLP was formally functioning at UNICEF Yemen to proactively manage the relationships with existing and new donors.

P#4 It is also an important action to familiarize country office management with the procedures, processes and format for accessing the Emergency Programme Fund (EPF) and Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to jumpstart emergency programme response. It is noted through this study that updates on CERF and EPF have been shared by headquarters with the country office. The country office management was on top of information on how and when to mobilize the relevant emergency resources, which is evident from the funds mobilized through CERF and EPF sources of funding.

P#5 Towards the objective of being able to jumpstart resource mobilization efforts, it is pertinent to ensure that staff participate in internal and external training (e.g., public-private partnerships and CERF) to better understand work planning processes and procedures, including resource mobilization in emergencies. Although the evaluation exercise could not find any details or list of external training, online resources on how and when to mobilize resources in emergencies are available on UNICEF’s e-resources webpage. It was felt that within UNICEF Yemen there is certainly a need for training for relevant staff with respect to some particular donors, such as the European Commission’s Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department.

4.4.2 Compliance in Response Standards

R#1 At the outset of a humanitarian crisis, especially at the sudden onset of crisis, while donor funding requests are drafted the country offices are expected to re-programme existing regular resources within the country programme budget, or re-programme other resources; and when needed, prepare an emergency programme fund loan request within 24–72 hours, in close coordination with the regional office and Office of Emergency Programmes. It is noted from documents review and key informant interviews that an immediate re-programming of resources was done with consent from donors. An EPF from headquarters was immediately sought, formally resulting in the availability of US$2 million within 48 hours.

R#2 In order to launch a needs-based response plan, the country offices have to prepare an Immediate Needs Document within the first 24–72 hours of a sudden-onset emergency, to be shared with the government, donors and national committees to seek other alternative emergency resources. Furthermore, through an inter-agency process, led by the Humanitarian Coordinator or Resident Coordinator, the country office has to submit a proposal for CERF funding alongside a flash appeal process, as appropriate. Here it became quite tricky, as owing to the intense aerial
bombings (which started on 26 March onward), the senior management of UNICEF had to be evacuated from Sana’a. Consequently, an Immediate Needs Document could not be produced within 72 hours. An inter-agency flash appeal was launched in April 2015. At this stage, CERF funding was not sought; however, at the time of the HRP revision in June 2015, the funding proposals to CERF were sent for child protection, nutrition, maternal and child health and security. These components were successful in securing funds.

R#3 In line with the United Nations humanitarian programme cycle, UNICEF country offices are supposed to prepare, within five to seven days, an emergency appeal in coordination with other United Nations agencies (flash appeal, as per guidelines) or in the absence of the inter-agency appeal process, a stand-alone UNICEF appeal (crisis appeal). As mentioned for previous standard action, after the crisis escalated on 26 March, the senior management of UNICEF along with that of other United Nations agencies had to evacuate, so the flash appeal could not be made until mid-April 2015. The same applies to UNICEF’s HAC appeal.

R#4 As any humanitarian crisis continues to unfold, it becomes critical to ensure that the continuing/evolving needs of women and children are adequately reflected in the inter-agency Consolidated Appeals Process and, consequently, in UNICEF’s Humanitarian Action Report. The UNICEF Yemen Resource Mobilization unit has performed this action with success by doing it regularly; twice in 2015 the needs of children and women were updated, once in April 2015 and then in June 2015, although the revision and updating of needs in April was done following a delay of almost two weeks. UNICEF’s HAC 2015 was revised in June, targeting 7 million people (double the original HAC in January 2015), including 5 million children.

R#5 In addition to updating the humanitarian needs as time evolves, it is also required by the CCCs to issue regular humanitarian action updates that provide the country office and the regional office with the opportunity to report on results and highlight funding gaps and requirements. UNICEF Yemen, mainly through the Resource Mobilization unit and the Executive Committee, released external and internal Situation Reports and response updates on a monthly and quarterly basis. The Resource Mobilization unit, in collaboration with relevant units, continuously updated the UNICEF Yemen funding matrix to highlight funding gaps and requirements at programme and cluster levels.

R#6 Successful rapport with donors is strengthened through proactive communication and engagement with donors, both locally and at the headquarters level, by providing regular updates on the evolving situation, managing funds and preparing quality reports on contributions according to specified donor conditions and time frames. The UNICEF Yemen Resource Mobilization unit has very ably performed on this measure, as it produced 26 weekly/bi-weekly Situation Reports in English and Arabic, to report on major developments regarding the humanitarian situation and UNICEF response. It is learned that donor reports were submitted on time, as FLP members were in regular connection with different donors.

4.4.3 Overall Analysis of Commitment

The core commitments for the Resource Mobilization unit consist of five standard normative actions at the preparedness level and six at the response level. The situation of compliance tells us that in terms of preparedness standards, four of the total five standards/actions are fully complied with, while one is partially complied with. When it comes to the response level, three of the total six standards have been fully complied with, one is mostly complied, while two are partially complied with.

Overall, the UNICEF Yemen Resource Mobilization unit seems to have made an extraordinary effort to deliver on its operational core commitment in humanitarian situations. Certainly, it was a unique situation in Yemen after the Saudi alliance started intense aerial bombing of Sana’a, which
forced the evacuation of UNICEF’s senior management from the country. Later, when UNICEF Yemen leadership and expatriates returned to the country, security and visa restrictions continued hindering organizational work.

The Yemen crisis after March 2015, in the context of UNICEF’s CCCs assessment, points at mainly two areas of improvement. Both are relevant to response actions; one is about the capacity to document immediate needs within the first 24–72 hours of a sudden-onset emergency and the other is the ability to put up an HAC within 5–7 days of the sudden onset crisis, which could not be done in the case of Yemen in 2015.

4.4.4 Recommendations

The assessment of standards and overall analysis suggests there are a number of areas where the following recommendations may be worth considering for UNICEF Yemen:

1. The Resource Mobilization unit may be better served if the unit’s staff receive formal training on the requirements for resource mobilization from key donors, which are typically complex and detailed-oriented in terms of programme funding – e.g., the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department (relates to P5).

2. For situations where a sudden-onset emergency such as war forces the expatriate colleagues to evacuate, develop capacities within national officers to be able to prepare an Immediate Needs Document within the first 24–72 hours and a flash appeal within 5–7 days (relates to R2 and R3).

4.5 Compliance in Information and Communication Technology

Generally, ICT has a huge role to play when it comes to the flow of information within the organization, communicating with key stakeholders such as field offices, the government, donors, agencies, partners in the United Nations and NGOs. The importance of effective and efficient ICT function is multiplied in a humanitarian crisis, especially one caused by conflict, as witnessed by Yemen in 2015. The conflict has resulted in the destruction of public infrastructure in power generation, telecommunication and roads, which posed a daunting challenge for the UNICEF
Yemen ICT team to keep the electronic connectivity up and running as per its operational core commitment to children. The ICT core commitment is defined below.

| CCCs Commitment No. 1 | Timely, effective and predictable delivery of telecommunications services to ensure efficient and secure programme implementation, staff security and compliance with inter-agency commitments. |

This core commitment within the ICT unit has 11 standards/actions at the preparedness level and another 5 standards/actions at the response level to comply with. The narrative below discusses the situation of compliance as per the measurement framework applied on each prescribed standard/action.

4.5.1 Compliance in Preparedness Standards

P#1 ICT is the entity within UNICEF Yemen which shouldered an immense responsibility to support the functioning of office, operations and programmes in the most challenging times.

However, that necessitates UNICEF Yemen to ensure the immediate availability of essential emergency ICT and telecommunications equipment and services, by having supply contracts in place with an emergency delivery clause, with leadership from headquarters/the regional office. Well before the conflict escalated and the crisis was up scaled to L2 and then L3, the ICT unit had a list of local ICT equipment suppliers available from a local market survey by the S&L section. There were operational LTAs with YahClick and Yemen Net for Internet services (Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line, WIMAX services). In terms of equipment and gadgetry, the UNICEF Yemen ICT unit was ably supported through global-level LTAs by headquarters, for laptops, radios and other items, which also covered emergency delivery clauses.

P#2 Besides LTAs contracts, it is imperative for high-risk offices (regional offices/country offices) to pre-position essential rapid-deployment emergency ICT solutions and put in place licensing and agreements with host governments on importation and licensing of key telecommunications-response equipment and services (country office/inter-agency). The proposition of information technology material and equipment had been kept, although to a limited scale. However, as war broke out and multiple governmental authorities emerged importing the similar equipment, especially procurement of radio equipment has been erratic. At inter-agency level, the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) under the Humanitarian Coordinator worked with authorities on clearance procedures. It faced multiple challenges, such as approval of a new frequency license for partners.

P#3 Presence of skilled and experienced resources at the disposal of an organization, mandated to respond to humanitarian crisis, provides it with an advantage to respond to the situation without any hitches. It is therefore expected that organizations such as UNICEF will ensure the timely availability of trained and experienced emergency ICT responders by maintaining internal and external emergency response rosters (at headquarters/regional office). As per corporate Standard Operating Procedures, the international rosters are managed by the regional office and headquarters. A mission report from May 2015 recommended having one information technology person, with a special focus on skills in radio and data telecommunications, on surge capacity to be on standby for deployment to Yemen. Later on, the OSM developed for the L3 response in July 2015 required and planned for one additional position to augment the existing capacity.

P#4 As for the preparatory measures, the CCCs require UNICEF to ensure that all UNICEF country offices have a minimum of one emergency-trained ICT professional (country office/regional office). During the interviews and documents review, it was noted that UNICEF Yemen had a capable and experienced ICT team. The ICT team then consisted of four, now six,
staff at No Objection Certificate, No Work Experience Required, and General Service 6 and 7 levels. The ICT unit chief who has been heading the unit for more than 10 years has attended training in emergency telecommunications and ICT.

P#5 Beyond conventional training and formal education, simulation exercises provide a controlled encounter with real-time experience to perform in a pressure situation. Therefore, it is required by the UNICEF CCCs to ensure that ICT is included in all UNICEF country and regional emergency-simulation exercises (regional office/headquarters); and that annual emergency ICT training and simulation exercises (with headquarters/regional office/country office) are conducted. Although simulation exercises were planned for at the country and regional office levels, those could not be done for ongoing protracted response in Yemen. Nevertheless, at headquarters level about 30 IRT members and 7 Emergency Response Team members from across the organization were trained and prepared for surge deployments during an intensive week-long emergency simulation exercise.

P#6 ICT teams have a responsibility of running valuable assets, more often, in the most insecure environment. Consequently, it becomes critical for the ICT unit to ensure that country office ICT personnel are trained in MOSS/security telecommunications requirements (headquarters/regional office/country office) and that evaluation of and reporting on MOSS telecommunications compliance is included in regular office ICT activities (regional office/country office). It is noted that the ICT teams at country office/regional office/headquarters are trained in MOSS compliance, especially with reference to ICT in emergencies. Periodic assessment and evaluation of MOSS compliance were reported to be a regular part of the ICT activities.

P#7 For UNICEF’s high stakes in humanitarian response, especially at L3 level, its country offices are required to support the implementation of inter-agency and NGO emergency ICT/telecommunications working for groups at the field-office level (country office/regional office/headquarters). Here, it is noted that UNICEF Yemen is an important player within the ETC led by the World Food Programme (WFP). Delivering of this expectation, UNICEF Yemen had provided leadership support to the ETC cluster in Ibb and Sa’ada through infrastructure and expert resources for at least two months in 2015.

P#8 Organizational data and communication must be on a secure network. Besides intricacies of licensing, the ICT cluster and ETC need to be fully supported to ensure an inter-agency standardization of emergency ICT/telecommunications equipment, services and procedures. As learned during this study, this particular action is led at UNICEF headquarters level, where it is coordinated and discussed with the WFP (ETC lead agency) to deal with inter-agency standardization-related issues. At the national level, the UNICEF Yemen ICT unit has actively participated in setting and pursuing the inter-agency ETC agenda, which is evident from UNICEF Yemen’s contribution to the ETC in Ibb, Sa’ada and Sana’a.

P#9 In situations of crisis, sometimes continuing with routine office work modality is not recommended for security or other reasons, and staff have to work either from home or distance. One of the few things that can keep operations running is support from ICT through virtual workstations. Therefore, in order to help the purpose of business continuity, ICT has to ensure that critical staff have the requisite remote connectivity and access to UNICEF core systems (regional office/country office), as per individual office requirements and established from Information Technology Solutions and Services Division and BCPs. Here, the ICT team had exceptionally generous support from UNICEF management, which enabled the team to provide critical and essential staff with Internet dongle, back-up batteries and radios. Given the situation in Yemen, the staff could not run the equipment provided, as there was no electricity and there was a paucity of fuel to run generators. Consequently, the staff were also provided with small solar power systems to operate from home.
Stringent regime of regular maintenance and upkeep of the ICT assets is a prerequisite to seeing the services running without breaks. Towards that objective, one of the measures is to conduct remote connectivity tests as per individual office requirements and establish policies and guidelines from Information Technology Solutions and Services Division and BCPs. This also includes ensuring remote execution of office-critical processes, where applicable. Periodic tests and maintenance of ICT assets were carried out regularly for the country and field offices, under guidance from the regional office and headquarters. Shortly before the L3 was announced, a mission from the regional office was also conducted in May 2015, which provided guidance and support for quick and remedial action to improve connectivity and power for the country office in Sana’a and in field offices.

Preparedness for keeping operations functioning in situations of crisis also requires ICT to ensure, where applicable and as per individual office requirements, remote access to vital records requirements to execute critical processes for critical staff on-site and for those working from home (regional office/country office). As most of the business processes in UNICEF are done online over the web, relevant critical staff received access to those online records, applications and systems as identified in the BCP. The availability of this capacity played a crucial role in keeping the business processes up and running as staff had to work from home/distance.

4.5.2 Compliance in Response Standards

Despite having preparedness plans, every emergency and crisis situation comes with a unique set of challenges and limitations, as it did in the case of Yemen in 2015. One of the first acts put together includes performing of an immediate emergency ICT and telecommunications gap assessment to identify critical gaps in MOSS/security telecommunications compliance and data communications (Internet, e-mail, etc.) service availability; determine resource requirements and need for eventual external support (regional office/country office). Conversations with relevant people and documents demonstrated that the UNICEF Yemen ICT unit was able to estimate detailed quantities and budget required for emergency telecommunications and ICT equipment, along with a distribution list. The mission from the regional office, which was held in May 2015, also helped in reviewing of emergency ICT and highlighted actions needed to be taken by the country office/regional office.

UNICEF has a significant stake in the overall United Nations-wide humanitarian response anywhere. It is therefore required by its ICT-related operational core commitment to children, that it has to proactively collaborate with cluster partners to identify opportunities for shared telecommunications and data communications service delivery and to take responsibility as cluster lead at the local level, if required and as per inter-agency agreements. As noted earlier at the preparedness level, UNICEF Yemen is an important player within the ETC led by WFP. The UNICEF Yemen ICT unit provided leadership support to ETC in Ibb and Sa’ada through infrastructure and expert resources for at least two months in 2015.

In the wake of any humanitarian crisis of the scale of L3, the volume of work increases for the whole organization, and this also applies to the ICT unit. To meet the organizational expectations and objectives, the ICT unit has to request, without a delay for deployment, trained emergency ICT/telecommunications responders and emergency telecommunications project coordinators, as required. The ICT team in UNICEF Yemen had developed an OSM for L3 response in July 2015, when it requested one additional international position of ICT specialist. Deployment, however, has been very slow for reasons mentioned in the human resources section.

As soon as there is a crisis, it becomes equally important for the ICT unit to produce a consolidated supply plan covering identified ICT and telecommunications equipment and service
requirements. It is noted that the unit had developed a detailed consolidated plan of equipment required for scaled-up humanitarian response. It is also verified from documents that the plan was tracked for execution with supplies and logistics so that inventory was not only procured but also distributed to relevant units and staff.

R#5 While the crisis is still unfolding, the regular work routines become unviable, hence making it necessary for teams to work from a distance (relatively safer places) or home. For this, the ICT unit is expected to provide key UNICEF users with remote access to corporate applications using secure connectivity solutions such as virtual private networks. It is assessed that post-March 2015, the ICT unit managed to provide adequate support to the staff to have continued access to corporate online systems for finance, administration and procurement, to perform tasks.

4.5.3 Overall Analysis on Commitment
In order to meet its core commitment of ‘timely, effective and predictable delivery of telecommunications services to ensure efficient and secure programme implementation, staff security and compliance with inter-agency commitments’, the ICT unit has to comply with 11 standard normative actions at the preparedness level and 5 at response levels. The situation of compliance informs that in terms of preparedness standards, 9 of the total 11 standards/actions are fully complied with, while two are partially complied with. When it comes to the response level, four of the total five standards are fully complied with, while one is at mostly complied level.

![Information, Communication & Technology Compliance Graph](image)

Figure 11: Compliance Graph for Information, Communication and Technology
The ICT unit seems to have made considerable efforts to deliver on its operational core commitment in a successful manner. There are, nevertheless, two areas in terms of preparedness actions where more innovative efforts and investment could be made. These include UNICEF Yemen’s ability to preposition and import ICT-related equipment and rights such as the licensing for radio frequency without unnecessary delays. Another area is simulation exercises; UNICEF Yemen will be better equipped for emergency responses if periodic simulations are carried out.

4.5.4 Recommendation
The ICT unit has seemingly delivered on most of its CCCs standards with success. However, there are still a few recommendations to take the unit’s success to the next level, as follows:
1. For high-risk offices, as was UNICEF Yemen for an ongoing protracted civil conflict which was about to turn into an international conflict, it will be exceptionally useful to augment a routine level of preposition in essential rapid-deployment emergency ICT solutions; and to put in place licensing and agreements with host governments on importation and licensing of key telecommunications-response equipment (relates to P2).

2. ICT-level simulation exercises should be planned for at country and regional office levels to keep the staff well equipped and hands-on with emergency situations (relates to P5).

4.6 Compliance in Finance and Administration

F&A is responsible for managing office financial and accounting services covering accounting control, recording, liabilities and income. It ensures the office’s funds, including financial transactions and disbursement of funds, are effectively managed and monitored with guidance from the regional office and headquarters and in compliance with the organization's policy, procedures, rules and regulations for the achievement of programmatic results. The administrative aspect is accountable for the delivery of efficient and cost-effective administrative support services. F&A aims to deliver all that through the fulfillment of its operational core commitment as articulated below.

| CCCs Commitment No. 1 | Effective and transparent management structures are established, with support from the regional office and UNICEF headquarters, for effective implementation of the programme and operational CCCs. This is done in an environment of sound financial accountability and adequate oversight. |

The core commitment within the F&A unit is achievable through compliance with three standards/actions at the preparedness level and another three standards/actions at the response level. The narrative below discusses the situation of compliance as per the measurement framework applied on each prescribed standard/action.

4.6.1 Compliance in Preparedness Standards

The F&A unit is certainly among the most important support function in UNICEF. It has a make-or-break consequence when it comes to preparing for and then launching of and uninterrupted continuation of the humanitarian response. Delivering on its crucial function at the time of humanitarian crisis demands that systems, controls and capacities are kept meticulously updated.

P#1 In order to achieve a better preparedness level in the context of F&A capacities, organizations are required to make sure that through the emergency preparedness and response plan, they gauge financial and administrative capacity in the country, including a) internal control system—segregation of duties and readiness for manual accounting; b) physical security – office and residential premises, inventory and other assets. During the interviews and review of documents such as the SSOP tracker of UNICEF Yemen, it was found that an assessment was done for the finance and administration capacity of the office. It was also learned that a scheme of delegation of authority, with segregation of duties, was done with approval from the Chief of Operations as per corporate guidelines from the regional office and headquarters. In terms of physical security of the office and assets, the BCP outlined the capacity, MOSS requirements and measures to work from alternate locations or home.

P#2 The availability of funds and cash in a timely manner to country and field offices is of crucial importance when an organization has a humanitarian crisis to respond to. It is therefore required
as a normative standard action for the F&A unit to ensure that liquidity is assured at all times and that the alternative sources and arrangements are made for business continuity purposes. The F&A unit at the country office had an arrangement with banks for priority services in terms of funds transfer and availability of liquid cash. It was also mentioned in the BCP. At the preparedness level, however, it did not cater for other arrangements in case of a collapsing banking system, as happened after 26 March 2015.

P#3 As UNICEF’s humanitarian responses are more often located in those countries which are relatively more exposed to disasters and political disorder and conflict, where its own operations are also at risk, the CCCs require country offices to have a BCP in case an alternative recovery location for the office is identified for purposes of business continuity. Moreover, country offices must ensure that: a) the site is ready to receive critical staff and provide appropriate administrative, information technology and telecommunications support facilities to allow for operational continuity; and b) there are sufficient supplies and provisions, taking into consideration both gender and special needs. It was confirmed from multiple sources in addition to the BCP of UNICEF Yemen, which identifies a Diplomatic Transit Facility in Sana’a as a recovery location. The organization had a formal agreement with the facility for this, and it was fully equipped with power, ICT and telecommunications facilities, and other survival supplies.

4.6.2 Compliance in Response Standards

R#1 At the response level, F&A has to do several things in tandem, which then enables the organization to not only smoothly mount a humanitarian response but also keep going until the situation has stabilized. This includes constant review, operationalization and monitoring of: a) appropriateness of delegated authorities (including those of review committees) given the changes in staff, geographic location and programme activity; b) accessibility of UNICEF corporate financial systems – and alternatives, if appropriate; c) requirements for additional residential and office premises and security of inventory and other assets; and d) methods of obtaining liquidity and making disbursements.

The evaluation team noted that a scheme delegation of authority exists for both programme and operations units. It was adjusted in 2015 keeping in view the programme needs and risks. The facility of remote access to UNICEF corporate financial, procurement and administrative online applications was continuously provided and monitored during the time when staff had to work from home/distance.

The issues of additional security and ICT assets, residential facility and office premises are dealt with in the BCP and were reviewed and adjusted in December 2014 and subsequently in August 2015. These were very useful when expatriate staff had to relocate immediately after the bombing on 26 March 2015. While banks were identified and arrangement for the availability of liquidity was there, the escalation of conflict virtually destroyed the banking system. So, for cash needs in the field offices, money exchange companies were innovatively used to transfer funds to field offices to the country office.

R#2 At the time of responding to any sizable humanitarian crisis, as there is a surge in volume of financial, procurement and administration-related transactions, the offices may be exposed to fiduciary risks. In order to mitigate such risks, a close co-working relationship with the regional offices and headquarters has to be maintained, which entails responding rapidly to queries regarding finance and administration from the regional and country offices (Division of Financial and Administrative Management). As per key informant interviews and the documented guidelines, the regional office and headquarters were in regular and close contact with UNICEF Yemen’s F&A unit, almost on a daily basis. Keeping in view the importance of this collaboration
and unreliable communication system, F&A senior officers were provided with satellite phones to enable communication without interruption.

R#3 To augment the existing capacities within country offices during a humanitarian response, it is expected that the Division of Financial and Administrative Management will consult with the regional and country offices and the Division of Human Resources on the deployment of finance and administration staff to emergency duty stations, as required. As understood from interviews with different people in UNICEF Yemen and the region, the relevant units in headquarters and the regional office were in close contact with UNICEF Yemen leadership and F&A colleagues to support the response planning and need for additional staff capacities. One post of finance and administration was identified in OSM from the surge roster so that UNICEF Yemen’s capacity is augmented to meet the demands of humanitarian response.

4.6.3 Overall Analysis of Commitment

The F&A services are considered to be the backbone of any corporate entity, but played a more important role in the case of UNICEF while responding to the needs of women and children devastated and displaced by disasters. The F&A colleagues have put up a remarkable demonstration of how efficient support services can help programmes achieve their humanitarian objectives.

![Figure 12: Compliance Graph for Finance and Administration](image)

In terms of complying with preparedness standards, two of the total three standards/actions are fully complied with and one is partially complied with. When it comes to standards and actions at the response level, all three standards are fully complied with. Based on the assessment of the CCCs standards, it is evident that the UNICEF Yemen F&A unit has for the most part delivered on the core commitment of effective and transparent management structures, with support from the regional office and UNICEF headquarters, for effective implementation of the programme and operational CCCs, and this is done in an environment of sound financial accountability and adequate oversight.
4.6.4 Recommendation

The situation of compliance in F&A seems satisfactory. Yet one thing that UNICEF Yemen must have learned is related to challenges in keeping the liquidity available. So just one recommendation here, as follows:

1. The F&A unit will be better able to deliver its role if an arrangement for continuous availability of liquidity from not only banks but from money exchanges too is planned for in advance in the BCP, as the banking system may collapse following a crisis, as occurred after 26 March 2015 (relates to P2).

4.7 Compliance in Rapid Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation

The Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation unit plays a leading role in spearheading both preparedness and response actions. It is mandated to carry out a rapid assessment of the situation analysis of children and women, in consultation and collaboration with partners. This situation analysis determines the exact nature of the crisis, including potential developments, implications for the rights of children and women and the required programmatic response, operational modalities and security. Towards this objective, the data compiled in the preparedness phase help a great deal.

For its pivotal role in shaping up the programme, understandably it has three defined core commitments, as shared below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCCs Commitment No. 1</th>
<th>The situation of children and women is monitored and sufficiently analysed and rapid assessments are carried out whenever necessary.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCCs Commitment No. 2</td>
<td>Systems for performance benchmarking regularly monitor UNICEF's humanitarian action, enabling CCCs implementation to be measured.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCCs Commitment No. 3</td>
<td>Humanitarian action is regularly assessed against CCCs, policies, guidelines, UNICEF quality and accountability standards and stated objectives of humanitarian action through evaluative exercises, with partners whenever possible.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These two core commitments within the unit are achieved through compliance with six standards/actions at the preparedness level and another seven standards/actions at the response level. The narrative below discusses the situation of compliance as per the measurement framework applied on each prescribed standard/action.

4.7.1 Compliance in Preparedness Standards

Beyond routine developmental programme objectives, in the context of humanitarian crisis; the Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation unit has to provide a high frequency and broad coverage of data. It is being commonly observed that local information systems do not help much with previously available information, often becoming irrelevant. The number of actors in humanitarian scenario increases, thereby making coordination and standardization of data collection more difficult. Therefore, a great deal of work has to be done with a series of actions at the preparedness level.

First and foremost is to track and analyse all potential and existing humanitarian situations, including areas not covered by country programmes with sufficient rigour to trigger rapid
assessments when necessary. Through this evaluation, it was observed that an EWEA system already existed and had been updated in the recent past. It was supplemented by the BCP in order to initiate early actions such as assessments at the inter-agency level or at UNICEF level. However, when the war broke out, it was not anticipated by the EWEA or BCP. The Monitoring and Evaluation colleagues were supporting information collection on child rights, nutrition and maternal and child health in the preceding years, which was then put into a comprehensive situation analysis published in 2014.

P#2 While having preparedness as an important component of emergency responses, it must not go without due monitoring of the country office preparedness, including the completion of emergency preparedness and response planning and implementation of programme preparedness activities, using the EWEA system. UNICEF Yemen had an EWEA, which entailed potential risks, vulnerabilities, sectoral actions and timelines. The EWEA was being updated and monitored with support from the regional office. As mentioned previously, it was further supported with a BCP under the leadership of the Head of Field Operations/Emergency Coordinator. The BCP was last updated in December 2014, before the March 2015 crisis hit Yemen.

P#3 As a part of key actions towards CCCs, all country offices are expected to regularly identify existing hazards, vulnerability and capacity data to inform baselines, response and recovery. The EWEA document identifies potential hazards and vulnerabilities in Yemen. Some of the areas identified include conflict/civil war, drought and acute nutritional crisis. However, it had not anticipated the situation in Yemen to turn into an international conflict, affecting more than 21 million people, including more than 9 million children. Information in the form of studies and surveys for Demographic and Health Surveys, nutritional status, and status of child rights was available. A broader composite situation analysis from 2014 also existed to inform preparedness and response planning.

P#4 In line with United Nations humanitarian reforms and the programming cycle, UNICEF country offices are required to proactively collaborate with other agencies to develop the methodology, tools and information management systems needed and to identify the trained capacity required to conduct timely inter-agency rapid assessments. It was noted that UNICEF Yemen leads three humanitarian clusters and was an active member of Assessment Technical Working Group in Yemen. It is through this group that inter-agency-level agreements, guidelines and templates are developed and agreed. At the preparedness stage, UNICEF had sectoral Information Management Officers to contribute to the design conduct of Multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA) to get an initial understanding of humanitarian needs.

P#5 In the wake of any disaster, the organization has to move swiftly, without wasting any time and as there is a surge of immediate work ahead, it becomes invaluable if country offices can identify qualified staff beforehand, to ensure that performance monitoring can be undertaken in each sector. At regional office and headquarters level, surge capacities in information management were identified and available for deployment. The OSM also identified two additional international resources from the surge roster. Due to the security situation, visa restrictions and lengthy process of deployment, the mechanism, however, could not function as smoothly as expected.

P#6 The CCCs also require country offices to ensure in advance that benchmarks for performance monitoring are in place at the country level, including through clusters. UNICEF Yemen was found fully committed to the HPM mechanism, which included prioritized CCCs-aligned coverage indicators for high-frequency monitoring in every programme sector. As a protracted response was already going through the original HAC launched in January 2015, the HPM indicators were already monitored, but as the conflict escalated it was revised by updating the HAC in April and July 2015.
4.7.2 Compliance in Response Standards

R#1 When it comes to responding in the wake of a disaster, the first normative standard action for the Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation unit ensures that a rapid assessment is made regarding affected populations, including children, adolescents and women, as a joint inter-agency mechanism (or independently if necessary) in order to determine initial humanitarian response. It is observed that no inter-agency rapid assessment such as MIRA could be conducted because of intense aerial strikes on Sana’a which started on 26 March 2015, and consequent evacuation of expatriates. The flash appeal and then revised YHRP and UNICEF’s HACs were drafted on the basis of existing information from various sources within UNICEF Yemen, United Nations agencies, clusters and partners in government and NGOs.

R#2 While conducting rapid assessments, it is important to ensure that a gender analysis is reflected. Since no formal assessment could be done either at the flash appeal level or YHRP revision level, it could not be identified. An estimate was made, however, on the basis of statistical information on demography and needs such as in the case of nutrition and other sectors.

R#3 In terms of development and revising of flash appeals and response plans, the standard normative actions also demand to ensure that the flash appeal and response are based on Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief Transitions (SMART) objectives and available baseline information, and that they are designed to facilitate monitoring. The SMART approach is also a corporate requirement for the organization. In 2015, UNICEF implemented nutrition SMART surveys in 5 out of the 10 highly affected governorates in Aden, Albaida, Hajja, Hodeida and Lahj. Data from previous SMART surveys (2014) have apparently been used to produce the updated response plans and later used to track progress for relevant monitoring indicators.

R#4 Another measure towards fulfilling the CCCs in terms of the Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation unit’s work is to always be able to identify the objectives and scope of the evaluation based on the scale and severity of the humanitarian crisis. In UNICEF Yemen, four evaluations and studies were carried out in 2015. Impressions from reporting in relevant documents and SMART surveys suggest that factors such as scale and severity were catered to whenever an evaluative study was planned.

R#5 The Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation unit, which is also known as Planning Monitoring and Evaluation, acts as the repository of all information that may be required for any programmatic review and evaluation. It is therefore required by CCCs to systematically collect all documentation relevant to the response for monitoring and evaluation purposes. In the context of the humanitarian programme in Yemen, the unit had mechanisms to collect and record information on needs, targets and delivery statuses. However, during this evaluation exercise, it was observed that timely availability of documents and information from different programmes and operational units is a challenge.

R#6 The Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation unit is expected to ensure that key performance information (not just general information only) for all sectors is systematically collected, easily accessible and used in review processes to improve performance, and that it serves as a basis for future evaluative work. It was learned through key informant interviews and documents review that the unit had developed an implementation plan for HPM, which was tracked through in-house capacities and third-party monitors, as the situation did not allow UNICEF staff to travel to the field areas in interior Yemen. In addition, indicators were identified for each programme sector for high-frequency monitoring and reporting through Situation Report updates and dashboards. To further strengthen this, all Programme Cooperation Agreements required partners to report on the above-mentioned indicators on a monthly basis.
All humanitarian responses offer some organizational learning; it is therefore required that country offices ensure that evaluations of humanitarian response produce organizational ‘lessons learned’. This particular assessment covered the period between 26 March 2015 and 31 December 2015. Within this period, no humanitarian evaluation was conducted. However, a real-time evaluation of UNICEF’s humanitarian response in Sa’ada in 2010 shows that ‘lessons learned’ is part and parcel of evaluation activity at UNICEF Yemen.

4.7.3 Overall Analysis of Commitment

For its instrumental role in programme planning, monitoring and evaluation, the Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation unit has three defined core commitments. The unit has a number of standard normative actions, which include six actions at the preparedness level and another seven at the response level. The situation of compliance informs that in the case of preparedness standards, five of the total six standards/actions are fully complied with, while one is at mostly complied level. With reference to response standards, four of the total seven standards are fully complied with, two are partially complied and one is not complied with.

![Figure 13: Compliance Graph for Rapid Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation](image)

The Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation unit had to perform in the most insecure and fluid situation in Yemen, especially after 26 March 2015. Yet, on the whole, the team has delivered on its core commitments to children in humanitarian action.

For the unit and UNICEF Yemen, there are two areas for improvement in terms of preparedness actions where more innovative efforts and investment could be made. These include undertaking and revising EWEA in the light of political developments and their ramifications on the nature and scale of conflict. The other area is related to surge capacity and speed in deployment. At the response level, some innovative means and mechanisms have to be developed so that the country office can have most accurate information possible when a routine MIRA is not possible. The other area is related to documentation and archiving within the unit. Some form of institutional mechanism has to be developed or strengthened so that the unit can archive and record information without delays.
4.7.4 Recommendations

There are just two recommendations here, as follows:

1. In cases where the nature of crisis and security does not allow United Nations/UNICEF teams to collect first-hand information on needs and vulnerabilities, UNICEF must develop some mechanism to get structured information on needs and vulnerabilities through, perhaps, third-party arrangements in order to determine an initial humanitarian response (relates to R1 and R2).

2. It will serve institutional learning purpose manifolds if it can be made mandatory through some executive instruction that all information/documents relevant to humanitarian responses be systematically shared and archived with the Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation/Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation units for ease of monitoring and evaluation purposes (relates to R5).

4.8 Compliance in Supply and Logistics

In all humanitarian responses, there are many supplies which are required to be transported and then distributed to the affected people. The S&L unit provides leadership here, so that overall objective of the organization can be achieved without any issues of breaks in the supply line. The S&L has two CCCs, as shared below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCCs Commitment No. 1</th>
<th>Essential supplies necessary to alleviate humanitarian suffering in women and children are deployed by UNICEF and partners.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCCs Commitment No. 2</td>
<td>The supply response by UNICEF and partners is appropriately resourced.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These two CCCs are achieved through 11 preparedness and 6 response-level standards/actions. The narrative below discusses the situation of compliance as per a measurement framework applied on each prescribed standard/action.

4.8.1 Compliance in Preparedness Standards

P#1 In humanitarian situations, the S&L is expected to identify and compile all supplies required to implement a humanitarian response and to create and maintain LTAs with suppliers at the global, national and regional levels. It was found that supply contingency requirements for each programme activity were calculated by activity owner as per the Emergency Preparedness Plan threshold and shared with the S&L unit for supplier planning purposes. All necessary LTAs for S&L services at the local level were in place. At the regional level, there are no LTAs, but UNICEF Yemen was supported by UNICEF regional hubs to meet emergency stocks requirements. At UNICEF headquarters level, information constraint was faced by the evaluator to identify if such LTAs exist to support UNICEF Yemen.

P#2 The CCCs standards require the S&L unit to arrange adequate and cost-effective stockpiling strategies for emergency supplies and, where appropriate, to establish and maintain LTAs (with service providers or other agencies) for the provision of transport and freight services and evaluate procurement processes of prospective local partners. Here, the UNICEF strategy for contingency stockpiling with government/partner warehouses seems quite efficient to ensure that product availability is closer to beneficiaries, thereby reducing response time. As a preparedness measure, about 15 LTAs with suppliers (procurement of goods & services), including 4 LTAs for inland logistics, were prepared. A local supplier evaluation was also carried out by the
In this regard, the procurement unit in January 2015 by making different categories according to their capabilities and capacities.

For humanitarian programming, it is always helpful to establish partnership agreements for the provision of in-kind goods and services. At UNICEF Yemen level, no partnership exists for in-kind donations of goods or services, as it falls out of country office scope. However, a respondent clarified that all such agreements exist at the Supply Division at headquarters level. For the purpose of evaluation, no relevant document or information was received. The S&L colleagues thought this particular standard was not relevant in UNICEF Yemen’s humanitarian context.

Towards better preparedness, the S&L unit is required to identify member(s) of the S&L team to receive inter-agency, emergency supply simulation, certification and/or other forms of training. At UNICEF Yemen, staff members’ training needs were identified and training opportunities were provided to eight relevant staff members in areas prioritized for training. No opportunities were identified for inter-agency emergency supply simulation exercises.

With operational support from human resources, the S&L unit has to identify/source potential S&L candidates for internal and external staff rosters, and submit the list to the Supply Division. During the preparedness phase, no local emergency staff roster was prepared at the country office level. Local surge capacity for internal and external staff rosters can be vital during the initial response phase. However, deployment of international surge capacity remained very limited due to long processing times at global human resources, the restricted number of visa quota and the security situation.

The standard actions also include ensuring that S&L staff are familiar with tools and templates available through the supply intranet and sensitize key programme staff regarding emergency processes, freight budgeting and estimation and inland logistics costs. Based on interviews and documents review, relevant S&L staff members are familiar with available tools, templates and various procedures either through an intranet or on-the-job training. No formal knowledge sharing sessions were made for programme staff on S&L emergency procedures; however, such information was shared on a case-by-case basis.

For business continuity purposes, the S&L unit is required to ensure that emergency arrangements with vendors and suppliers are established in the case of crisis. This will include the development of service-level agreements with these entities, ensuring preferred customer status for UNICEF. Sufficient emergency S&L arrangements were put in place in line with the market assessment of January 2015. Available arrangements do not suggest any special/preferred customer’s status for UNICEF.

Another strategic action in preparedness is to identify alternative strategies in the event that vendors and suppliers are unable to comply with these agreements. In this regard, the establishment of Djibouti Hub, as the forward base, was an appropriate alternative to respond to the fluid security situation in the country. Alternate strategy against each agreement and taking appropriate risk mitigation measure remains an integral part of contracting arrangements. UNICEF Yemen’s market survey in January 2015 appropriately addressed such alternate arrangements.

In order to bolster the readiness, the S&L unit is required to conduct supply planning exercises to identify medium- and long-term supply inputs and investigate possible local and regional sources. It was observed that the supply chain exercise conducted in February 2015 intended to address medium- and long-term suppliers’ arrangements and required logistics infrastructure. Another document/market survey conducted in January 2015 and its subsequent one-year-long Service Level Agreement arrangements for all local resources augmented the
supply planning strategy. Immediate and long-term supply needs are addressed through regional hubs and headquarters Supply Division, respectively.

P#10 One of the normative actions in CCCs for the S&L unit includes assessing the procurement capacity of government counterparts and operational partners for specific product groups, including construction materials. However, at the UNICEF Yemen S&L unit, no procurement capacity assessment of government counterparts and operational partners was conducted prior to L3. The absence of such assessment does not help UNICEF to identify partner’s needs and priorities to be addressed, including construction projects. The evaluator was told about the last assessment carried out in 2014, but one for 2015 was not done due to the outbreak of the crisis.

P#11 The S&L unit is also expected to identify capacity gaps within government counterparts and operational partners and prepare a plan for capacity strengthening for possible transfer of identified logistics activities following a response. It was noted that capacity gap analysis for all partners was not conducted during the preparedness phase, thus no concrete information exists which can be used as a foundation for capacity building and the augmentation plan, including the transfer of logistics activities or infrastructure. No capacity-building activities like training/workshops were planned/executed.

4.8.2 Compliance in Response Standards

R#1 Among the response actions it is of foremost importance to ensure early collaboration with all logistics partners; ensure UNICEF’s presence within the logistics cluster and actively engage with UNICEF-led clusters, providing guidance on supply activities within those clusters, including the potential provision of free or pooled transport, storage or other service provision. The evaluators noted that indeed UNICEF was part of logistics cluster at the outset of cluster activation and actively engaged/used available common services catering about 10–15 per cent inside Yemen and about 15–20 per cent of her needs in Djibouti. UNICEF, being a logistics cluster common services user itself, did not provide any logistics services to UNICEF cluster partners.

R#2 The response-level standards also demand S&L to provide supply input for programme implementation at the onset of the emergency; ensure that a first-response supply plan is created and that product costs (including freight and inland logistics costs) are calculated and factored into budgets and appeals. At UNICEF Yemen, the first-response supply plan was not prepared and made available to evaluators. However, evidence (like business continuity plan) from operational plan indicates that supply & logistics information was incorporated into relevant budget heads. Required information is shared with relevant units through regular meetings such as Programme Coordination Meeting and programme supply meeting.

R#3 At the corporate level, it is imperative for the S&L unit to design an S&L concept of operation with the Supply Division and regional support, detailing supply sources, border crossings, warehouse requirements, corridors, partners and potential routing bottlenecks, and ensuring the availability of adequate and acceptable management storage facilities. It is noted that a Supply and Logistics Concept of Operations (which is more of a supply and logistics strategy 2015) was shared with evaluators, which included set-up of Djibouti to accelerate offshore deliveries into Yemen. However, it was shared that S&L conops is prepared at the headquarters Supply Division, but not at the country office level.

R#4 In the humanitarian response context, it is also important to ensure adequate supply chain management, particularly for tracking and inventory. At UNICEF Yemen, a SAP-based corporate S&L tool known as VISION is in place to support supply chain management including tracking of consignments/shipments and inventory levels. During the course of evaluation, delay in data capture into VISION was observed varying between 1-3 days, which has trickling effects throughout the supply chain line and may affect relevant supply chain management decisions.
R#5 Equally important is to monitor all logistics and procurement activities from inception to final distribution and provide regular updates on the status of receipts and deliveries. Here too, S&L online tool i.e. VISION provides monitoring of all logistics and procurement activities throughout the supply chain by generating various multi-purpose reports for different users. VISION-based stocks, receipt and inventory status/reports facilitate increased visibility to relevant managers for appropriate decision-making.

R#6 Response actions also require the S&L unit to request for additional staff resources within 72 hours on the basis of a logistics concept of operations and the initial supply plan. At UNICEF Yemen, the Supply and Logistics Concept of Operations (resemblance to supply and logistics strategy) documents (two sets), one each before and after crises, were shared with the evaluator; however, they lacked information on any additional staffing requirements. Further, it was identified through other non-S&L documents that an additional staffing request was made to the IRT on 7 July, after 168 hours of the L3 declaration.

4.8.3 Overall Analysis of Commitments
As mentioned earlier, the S&L unit has a leading role in providing the programme units with required supplies not only procured, but subsequently transported and stockpiled for eventual distribution to people in need. Here, most of the work and effort is required at the preparedness level. That is why one sees 11 standards to be met at preparedness. The assessment of the compliance with CCCs standards tells that at the preparedness level, two of the total standards are fully complied with, three are mostly complied, another two are partially complied, while four are in the category of non-compliance. At the response level, one of the total six standards is fully complied with, while four are mostly complied and one is partially complied with.

![Figure 14: Compliance Graph for Supply & Logistics](image)

In the S&L unit, there are a number of areas which need attention and investment into capacity enhancement. These fall mainly in the realm of preparedness-related actions, but also include a few response level actions.
4.8.4 Recommendations

On the basis of compliance assessment and analysis, the following recommendations may be useful for not only course correction but for improvement of the overall system:

1. Inbound logistics contracting/ LTAs should be reinforced or restructured to better absorb the fluctuations in the market’s situation of supply and demand during emergencies. Strong contracting arrangements with service providers will give increased efficiency, operational flexibility and protect UNICEF’s interest against service providers (relates generally to P2).

2. It seems that the process of cash flow for logistic services fell short, thereby hampering full operational potential. UNICEF Yemen operations will be better served by increasing cash flow for logistics services providers, which may reduce the invoice processing time by 40–50 per cent. Ultimately, this will also contribute to saving around 3–5 per cent of the in-bond logistics service costs to UNICEF (relates to P8 and P7).

3. UNICEF’s programme implementation on the ground is carried out by diverse partners in government, NGOs and other service providers. At the preparedness level, for sustainable capacity development of government counterparts and operational partners, S&L’s Capacity Development and Augmentation) activities should be prioritized to strengthen the response phase (relates to P10 and P11).

4. At the onset of an emergency and response planning, it will benefit timelines in programme implementation if the S&L unit can instantly develop and share a first-response supply plan with programme teams (relates to R2).

5. Programme implementation can be augmented through enhanced S&L unit’s operational efficiency in terms of, for example, availability of timely and accurate information from existing corporate tools such as VISION. In this way, more informed and timely decision-making at various levels will be ensured in the face of demands from a time-critical humanitarian response (relates to R4).

4.9 Appropriateness of UNICEF Assistance

This evaluation has assessed the appropriateness of UNICEF humanitarian assistance (post-March 2015) with respect to: i) evolving needs and package of assistance being relevant to those needs; ii) delivery approaches and mechanisms; and iii) alignment with UNICEF’s strategic plan (principles and approaches) and larger United Nations’ YHRP 2015 (revised in July following escalation of hostilities). As explained earlier, OECD-DAC criteria of evaluation has been applied while examining the appropriateness of UNICEF’s response.

4.9.1 Appropriateness vis-à-vis Needs and Services

The assessment is for a multitude of reasons. First and foremost, UNICEF Yemen included additional services and, where required, either adapted or scaled up response to address emerging needs. The new services included the provision of cash handouts as part of a social protection package for the most vulnerable, such as the Al-Muhamasheen community. Similarly, a package of new child protection services was introduced, particularly monitoring of grave child rights violations, reporting and advocacy on emerging issues. This assertion is drawn irrespective of the outcome of such interventions.
In view of the crumbling public services delivery apparatus – e.g., health, water, sanitation, education and other services, UNICEF Yemen provided strategic support, particularly generators and fuel, to keep the services functional. Services which were supported include health, water pumping and distribution stations, water trucking and solid waste disposal in selected cities (by providing fuel for waste collection vehicles). Furthermore, mobile or outreach mother and child health services were scaled up – i.e., the number of mobile teams increased from 25 before March 2015 to 94 later in the year. This looks particularly relevant in view of the exponential increase (from HNO it appears to be approximately sevenfold to eightfold – i.e., more than 300,000 in early 2015 to 2.3 million by November 2015) in displaced population.

The assessors want to highlight that a larger proportion of assistance package comprised pre-designed services that UNICEF was providing prior to March 2015. As outlined above, no formal needs assessment had been carried out in view of the precarious security situation. In most cases, the beneficiaries’ needs were met in a largely relevant manner. However, there are a few noted instances wherein support provided at the time mismatched the needs; for example, some communities referenced the provision (assistance) of water filters, whereas what they really needed was water storage containers. Similarly, some communities even shared reservations on the delivery of child protection (behaviour change communication) training on sensitive issues such as female genital mutilation and early marriages, when the humanitarian crisis was still unfolding, and that too perhaps without duly investing in community mobilization efforts. The field interaction with beneficiaries suggests that this created some resentment in communities.

The equity integration in the assistance package is evident at varying levels. For instance, the cash assistance was provided only to women (mothers) on the assumption that recipients are more likely to make judicious use of support and support would be used for the larger families including children. The twinning of mother and child health and nutrition services again highlights prioritization of age and sex considerations. The provision of water services worked in saving women and children from additional workloads. The child protection monitoring and advocacy with parties involved (irrespective of the results) contributed to profiling of child protection issues in emergencies.

4.9.2 Appropriateness vis-à-vis Delivery Approaches

Overall, the evaluators view the approaches evolved for services delivery as responsive to the context on multiple counts, such as enabling immediate scale-up, resources optimization and laying foundations for recovery work. First and foremost, the delivery approach whereby UNICEF prioritized working with the government agencies to keep relevant services functional and leverage their outreach and resources proved useful and manifests the relevance of the delivery approach. UNICEF Yemen made several partnerships with government entities at central and governorate levels (worked with 15 government partners) to lend support (e.g., mainly in fuel, power generation, etc.) to keep public services functional.
These partnerships enabled immediate scaling up of operations – e.g., the partnerships for water provision (fuel was provided to local water corporations) helped reach out to more than 3.7 million people in 11 cities and governorates. Although it has not been systematically recorded, it is quite evident from discussions that these partnerships with a range of public agencies such as the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, ministries and departments of health, education and social welfare, local water corporations and Yemen Petroleum proved useful in providing an appropriate response, which resulted in uninterrupted services delivery and achieving resources optimization.

4.9.3 Appropriateness vis-à-vis Alignment to UNICEF and United Nations Humanitarian Objectives and Strategies

Seen from the angle of alignment and relevance to broader frameworks, UNICEF’s Strategic Plan 2014–2017 emphasizes that humanitarian action will have to ensure faster scaling up and better results in response to major humanitarian crises, including early identification of priorities and strategies, rapid deployment of qualified staff and clear accountabilities. UNICEF Yemen’s flash appeal and revised HAC have an obvious allegiance with overall corporate objectives of UNICEF as outlined in the Strategic Plan. The HAC, however, even when it was implemented, lagged behind in terms of earliest identification of needs and priorities and rapid deployment of required human resources.

An inter-agency HNO was prepared for revising the United Nations-wide inter-agency HRP 2015, and UNICEF’s HAC was integrated to this inter-agency HRP. The HNO estimated that 21.1 million people were in need of some form of humanitarian protection or assistance. UNICEF’s HAC as revised in July 2015 is broadly in line with the HNO in terms of overall strategy; however, whereas according to HNO about 7.3 million children needed some form of protection or assistance, UNICEF’s HAC estimated it was 9.9 million children who needed this. Of this, UNICEF planned to reach out to 5 million children with its mandated set of humanitarian services and activities.
4.10 Coverage and Reaching the Most Vulnerable

The question on coverage has been assessed primarily on the basis of how well UNICEF identified and prioritized (including scale-up) population groups facing life-threatening situations/risks and the extent of response outreach. This entails who and how different groups were prioritized for humanitarian assistance, adequacy (in terms of quantity) of assistance and ability to reach out to them.

As the humanitarian crisis aggravated after March 2015, UNICEF with its partners decided to scale up its efforts to reach the most vulnerable children and their families. The beneficiaries’ prioritization criterion applied was to target the most affected population, preferring those in active conflict zones and internally displaced persons for life-saving assistance and protection services. The continuity of UNICEF field operations (during the worst crisis) particularly in Aden, Hodeida, Sa’ada, Sana’a and Taiz (these locations represented maximum displacement, host populations and groups caught up in active conflict) proved useful in mobilizing standby emergency partners, to mount a humanitarian response.

The situation of health services in Yemen was already poor and so were the nutrition-related statistics. The escalated conflict had a dire consequence on children. For example, as per UNICEF reports from 2015, children under 5 years at risk of severe acute malnutrition had tripled in 2015, with 537,000 children at risk compared with 160,000 children before the conflict escalated. Similarly, almost twice as many children under 5 years – a total of 1.2 million children – were projected to suffer from moderate acute malnutrition in the same year, compared with 690,000 before the crisis. The decision to integrate health and nutrition services (for mothers, newborns and children) through community health workers and mobile teams proved useful to achieve expanded coverage (4,089,794 children under 5 years given micronutrient interventions for a target of 1,198,059. In addition, 4,685,088 children younger than 5 years were vaccinated for measles and polio, compared with a target of 2,730,000. Though not adequately documented, it seems obvious that this must have contributed to resource optimization. The integration not only helped to reach out to women and children (being the most vulnerable groups), but it also helped (outreach approach through mobile teams) reaching out to the displaced and transient population (one of the prioritized groups for UNICEF humanitarian assistance), including those hosting them. This assistance included nutrition support for districts with serious levels of wasting and stunting.

The approach to keep public services functional, particularly for water (through local/public water distribution system), positively impacted on reaching out to a maximum number of people. The water trucking enabled reaching out to mobile and displaced populations, again representing the vulnerable groups. The analysis applies to assistance provided through public agencies in other domains such as education, health and solid waste management. The partnership with implementing partners was equally useful to scale up and reach out to most difficult locations. Overall, the diversified and innovative partnerships UNICEF Yemen developed with multiple stakeholders in government, NGOs and the private sector multiplied the office’s abilities to reach people and children in need of WASH, nutrition and health.

UNICEF was already working with the most marginalized group of untouchables called Al-Muhamasheen in Yemen. The escalation in conflict had led to a disruption in the income of this group, which earns its livelihood through menial work and cleaning services. The idea to extend humanitarian cash transfers (planned for 15,000 families) to Al-Muhamasheen and other poorest households in Sana’a and Taiz augments the assertion that UNICEF prioritized the most vulnerable groups and reached out to them. By the end of 2015, about 8,000 households were reached.
A critical assessment of revised HAC vis-à-vis numbers of people received assistance, the evaluators noted that UNICEF Yemen over-achieved on planned targets for vaccination, micronutrients to children under-5, psychosocial and other child protections services, C4D, and prenatal and post-natal services to pregnant and lactating mothers. However, the performance has not been that good for others (where it achieved less than planned), such as WASH assistance, children under 5 with severe acute malnutrition admitted to therapeutic care, education and social protection grants remained short of a full achievement. The evaluators did not find much evidence and analysis as to differential progress for different sectors.

The interaction with communities and monitors suggest gaps in assistance delivery. These include lack of coordination and consultation with communities and local authorities, the ‘not enough’ quantity or inadequacy of handouts/assistance packages, breaks in cycles of assistance and services, complaints of inconsistent criterion of beneficiary’s selection and favouritism. These concerns were common from the communities interviewed from Aden, Hodeida, Sa’ada, Sana’a and Taiz.

4.11 Influence of the Management of UNICEF’s Humanitarian Response on Appropriateness

One of the sub-questions was to explore the influence of the management of UNICEF’s humanitarian response on the appropriateness of its programme action. For the purpose of this evaluation, ‘the management of UNICEF’s humanitarian response’ has been defined as CCCs standard actions in six operational units, RAME and S&L. As such, this exercise also assessed to what extent compliance with CCCs standard actions has influenced the appropriateness of the humanitarian response. 

The situation of the compliance with standards had both positive and negative influences. Some of the most significant positive influences from compliance with CCCs standards are discussed below.

4.11.1 Positive influences

Ongoing humanitarian response and original HAC 2015

Yemen has suffered from political instability and local infighting since 2012, which has displaced thousands of families and households from the regions affected by civil conflict. Although just before March 2015 the crisis situation was generally tapering, there were almost 16 million people who needed assistance and just short of 600,000 people were still displaced. UNICEF was responding to this protracted crisis through its HAC 2015, as a part of United Nations-wide humanitarian response plan, developed in January 2015. This response, albeit smaller in scale, must have helped in knowing the kinds of needs, cultural context and appropriate delivery mechanisms for an augmented and larger humanitarian response following the escalation of the crisis in March 2015.

Availability of EWEA and baseline data on sectoral indicators

UNICEF Yemen had an EWEA plan updated as a part of routine corporate preparedness, which is also emphasized within CCCs. The EWEA identified potential hazards and vulnerabilities in Yemen. Some of the areas identified included conflict/civil war, drought and acute nutritional crisis. However, an international war, started on 26 March 2015, was perhaps not anticipated by many in UNICEF or the global community. The EWEA was supplemented by the BCP in order to keep UNICEF Yemen operations running uninterrupted for early actions to mount a response.

In addition, the M&E colleagues had already collected information on child rights, nutrition and maternal and child health in the preceding years, which was then put into a comprehensive situation analysis published in 2014 to inform preparedness and appropriate response planning.
Strategic messaging for resource mobilization and advocacy
A constant communication at the level of Representative and Deputy Representative was maintained with key bilateral donors to update them on UNICEF’s preparedness and response readiness, which was further supported by updates and communications to donors from the Resource Mobilization unit. This was internally further helped by an FLP Committee formally functioning at UNICEF Yemen to proactively manage the relationships with existing and new donors in relation to needs on the ground and funding gaps across different sectors.

In addition, external and internal Situation Reports and response updates were done at monthly and quarterly levels through the Resource Mobilization unit and M&C unit. UNICEF Yemen produced 26 weekly/bi-weekly Situation Reports in English and Arabic, to report on major developments regarding the humanitarian situation and UNICEF response.

In-country trained and qualified staff
The CCCs standards urge to retain and develop in-country staff through training, career planning and team building. UNICEF Yemen seems to have greatly benefited from the experience and expertise of national officers who had been working for the office for many years. This must be useful in those cases where the heads of UNICEF field offices were Yemeni nationals and were there for multiple years. It was noticed that national officers at a senior level had been working with UNICEF Yemen for 3 to 10 years. Similarly, the international staff from 2013–2014 were still there with their understanding of the local context and programme indicators when the crisis escalated. It can be safely concluded that the availability of in-country trained and qualified staff must have contributed in designing and implementing an appropriate response.

Immediate reprogramming, EPF and CERF
Within CCCs standards for emergency resource mobilization, the reprogramming of ongoing activities, applying for emergency programme funding loans and mobilization of funds from the United Nations’ CERF window have been outlined as the most significant tasks in order to launch a timely humanitarian response to the needs on the ground. It is not only instrumental in launching an appropriate response but also in increasing the coverage of the response. The UNICEF Yemen management and colleagues in the Resource Mobilization unit and programme units seem to have taken all the right steps in a timely manner. In the wake of escalation in crisis in March 2015, the UNICEF Yemen management supported by relevant units not only reprogrammed the funds from the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development and other donors towards humanitarian activities, but also requested for an EPF loan from UNICEF headquarters within 48 hours of the crisis. Later on, UNICEF Yemen also mobilized about US$11 million from the CERF window of emergency funds.

Presence of field offices in most affected areas
The CCCs standards related to keeping the organizational business process working in case of total breakdown of security or war required UNICEF Yemen to keep a robust BCP. A great deal of credit goes to the BCP planning and then to UNICEF Yemen’s ability to implement it successfully. As a result, the field offices kept operating even at the height of aerial bombings from the Saudi coalition. Operating closer to the places such as Aden, Hodeida, Sa’ada, Sana’a and Taiz where most of the people were affected as a result of escalated crisis, would have certainly helped more in knowing about the needs of affected people on the ground.

Innovative diverse partnerships
Every humanitarian crisis is unique in its own way, and the crisis in Yemen is no exception. For uniqueness of every crisis, the CCCs standards require the organization to be innovative and versatile in terms of programme partnerships and delivery. UNICEF Yemen must be credited for coming up with innovative partnerships with, for example, local banks for emergency cash assistance, with local water corporations to help them provide and restore water to more than 3.7
4.11.2 Negative Influences

There were a number of negative influences too, which may have hampered the full extent of the appropriateness of the response. Some of the most important ones are discussed below.

Inability to gather first-hand information on needs
The CCCs standards demand that country offices get first-hand information on the needs and vulnerabilities of the affected people. This may be done through an inter-agency MIRA or a stand-alone assessment by UNICEF. Owing to the evacuation of expatriates from all United Nations agencies, no formal assessment was done to inform the flash appeal or later the revised HRP and HAC.

Predetermined service package for all regions
In the absence of a first-hand situation analysis of needs and vulnerabilities, UNICEF Yemen had to rely on its predetermined routine humanitarian interventions. It is for this absence of first-hand situational analysis that one sees at local levels instances of, e.g., water filters distributed in those locations where rainwater was the only source of water, and the importance of water storage was not considered for assistance. Similarly, it seems trainings, especially on health subjects such as female genital mutilation and early marriages, were conducted without due investments into community mobilization and awareness raising.

Lacking in identification and speedy deployment of surge staff
While in-house emergency response teams across various functions were there, additional roles/capacities were not fully identified for emergency responses. The surge rosters at the regional office and IRT at headquarters level had different experts on their rolls. However, deployment of staff was very slow and for a very short period. Therefore, services provided could not be as useful as could have been in case the process was done timely and rapidly, and if the deployment period had had been extended to at least three to six months. This limitation may have kept the value addition from international experts in terms of programme design quality and delivery at a low level.

Lack of community participation at different levels
As first-hand information in the form of a formal assessment of needs and vulnerabilities of the affected communities was missing, UNICEF Yemen had to design its response plan (much like other United Nations agencies) on the basis of existing information or from what government and media sources were providing. This would have further been affected by the lack of community mobilization on the part of UNICEF’s implementing partners in the field. All this adversely affected UNICEF’s role in terms of providing required assistance, which at times ended up being inconsistent with local context and beneficiaries’ priorities, e.g., water filters and training on female genital mutilation and early marriages.

Lack of prioritization and funding for social protection grants
It appears that a lack of timely prioritization of resource mobilization targets for different sectors also hampered the objective of coming up with an appropriate humanitarian response in view of different/evolving needs of diverse regions and beneficiaries’ type. Here, a case in point are the humanitarian cash grants for social protection, which were underfunded by about 72 Per cent. It could, therefore, not be taken to the level of the needs on ground, as it remained limited to about 8,000 beneficiary families only.

Extent of Correlation
After going through the assessment of CCCs standards compliance across six operational units and S&L, it seems that there is no direct or primary correlation between their CCCs standards compliance and the appropriateness of the response. These standards certainly do play a role for overall programme design.

However, compliance with CCCs standards or otherwise within the RAME unit plays an instrumental role in designing and implementing an appropriate response. It is through RAME that the organization gets hold of first-hand information on the scale of impact, needs, humanitarian hotspots and the vulnerable groups. Consequently, the RAME, along with relevant thematic/sectoral programmes, has a make-or-break role in the context of designing an appropriate response.

4.12 Influence of the Management of UNICEF’s Humanitarian Response on Coverage

The last of the key questions of this evaluation was to explore the influence of management of UNICEF’s humanitarian response on its coverage. For the purpose of this evaluation, ‘the management of UNICEF’s humanitarian response’ has been defined as CCCs standard actions in six operational units, RAME and S&L. This means it was also to be assessed as to what extent the compliance was met or not to CCCs standard actions and its consequential influence on the coverage of the humanitarian response.

The situation of the compliance with standards had both positive and negative influences. Some of the most significant positive influences from compliance with CCCs standards are discussed below.

4.12.1 Positive Influences

Immediate reprogramming, EPF and CERF

In the context of humanitarian programming, coverage or reaching out to the most vulnerable groups is assessed in terms of the obligation to reach to the population groups facing life-threatening situations, wherever they are. The ability of the UNICEF Yemen management to immediately re-programme funds and mobilize other emergency funding windows, which is also required as per CCCs standards in Resource Mobilization, seems to have positively influenced the ability of UNICEF Yemen in reaching out to affected populations. This mobilization of resources helped not only in immediately launching a befitting response, but also in escalating its scale.

Proactive media interface with communities and the public at large

UNICEF Yemen was able to keep an effective liaison with media and communities. Review of available documents, web-based searches and interviews with different respondents indicate regular contact was kept with the media regarding humanitarian needs, child rights issues, UNICEF response and advocacy. UNICEF Yemen colleagues had successfully issued 22 press statements, most of them on child killings, maiming, abductions and recruitment. UNICEF Yemen management and staff appeared in 250 interviews for different international and national media by UNICEF teams in six languages. Some 25–30 human interest videos were produced to sensitize stakeholders on the gravity of the situation and need for a response to many more still suffering across the country.

Social media platforms, in the form of Facebook and Twitter pages in English and Arabic, played a great role in two-way communication with those affected on the ground and helped in increasing the response coverage with the right kind of interventions.
BCP and establishment of Djibouti Hub for supplies
This remains a critical preparedness and response-level action, which served as a backbone of UNICEF Yemen’s supply chain, after the closure of international air services to Yemen. The BCP was available with guidance and actions necessary for activating alternative operational support mechanisms for a variety of stakeholders, such as agreements with vendors, service providers, etc. It was the successful implementation of the BCP that teams kept working from homes or distance when working from the office was not possible due to the worsening of the crisis. The establishment of an S&L hub in Djibouti made it possible to keep an uninterrupted provision of supplies for nutrition, health and WASH-related humanitarian assistance.

Diverse and innovative partnership
As shared in the appropriateness section, the ability to come up with innovative and diverse partnerships also helped in reaching out to the most vulnerable populations including children. If it was not for UNICEF Yemen’s collaboration and partnerships with local banks for emergency cash assistance, the office would not have been able to reach out to so many affected people and children. Similar assertions could be applied to partnerships with local water corporations to help restore services and provide water to more than 3.7 million people and Yemen Petroleum for continued fuel supplies to local water corporations and hospitals.

Presence of field offices in most affected areas
Compared with how the field presence helped in putting up an appropriate response, it was in fact here where that field presence across Yemen played a critical role in enabling UNICEF to reach out to the most vulnerable populations of men, women and children with humanitarian assistance. This presence at a systemic level was made possible through implementation of a robust BCP. As a result, the field offices in Aden, Hodeida, Sa’ada, Sana’a and Taiz kept operating even at the height of aerial bombings from the Saudi coalition. Incidentally, these were the areas where most of the humanitarian caseloads were located.

De-confliction acts from security for activities and assets
The security team performed a number of activities, enabling them to identify, assess and manage the security risks that may have harmed the staff and assets and subsequently the delivery of humanitarian aid. One of the most important activities includes putting in place requisite de-confliction arrangements by sharing information with Saudi coalition forces to save UNICEF staff, offices, assets and supplies from strikes. This arrangement enabled continuity of services and safe and secure delivery of supplies.

4.12.2 Negative Influences
There were a number of negative influences too, which may have hampered the full extent of coverage and ability to reach out to the people and children in need. Some of the most important ones are discussed below and most of these are common from an appropriateness viewpoint. However, in the case of coverage, the impact of the extent of CCCs standards compliance was more, as seven of the eight units assessed for CCCs standards compliance functionally led the operations of UNICEF Yemen.

Inability to gather first-hand information on needs
As mentioned in the case of appropriateness, the CCCs standards demand that country offices get first-hand information on the needs and vulnerabilities of the affected people. This may be through an inter-agency MIRA or a stand-alone assessment by UNICEF. Owing to the evacuation of all United Nations agencies’ expatriates from Yemen, no formal assessment was done to inform the flash appeal or later the revised HRP and HAC. This must be one of the reasons for the delay in implementing a response and a delay of at least four weeks in reaching out to people in need.

Predetermined service package for all regions
In the absence of a first-hand situation analysis of needs and vulnerabilities, UNICEF Yemen had to come up with its predetermined routine humanitarian interventions. It is for this absence of first-hand situation analysis that at local levels one sees that people with more pressing needs, for instance, in social protection cash grants were missed out, although the same was made available in the form of WASH, health and nutrition.

**Identification and deployment of surge staff**
As seen before, the in-house emergency response teams across various functions were there, but their additional roles/capacities were not fully identified for emergency responses. The surge rosters at the regional office and IRT at headquarters level had different experts on their rolls. However, the deployment was very slow and for a very short span, making it not as useful as it could be in case it was done timely, rapidly and for at least three to six months. Lacking here in getting a sufficient number of expert staff on the ground must have hampered the speed and scaling up of response coverage.

**Delays in payments to implementing partners**
The importance of timely payments and financial transactions can hardly be overemphasized to launch any humanitarian response and then continue it without any hitches. The F&A unit’s core commitment and standards require that mechanism and arrangements and capacities have to be developed in advance to deliver on its standard actions and thereby its commitment. It was noticed that delays in payments to partner agencies slowed down the pace of work on the ground – for example, in WASH and health-related activities.

**Inconsistencies in beneficiaries’ registration**
The concerns on registration criteria were constantly raised by community leaders who were interviewed as a part of this evaluation. The community leaders were of the view that because of unclear beneficiary selection criteria, a number of families and people in their respective locations could not get assistance from UNICEF. Key informants shared similar concerns in terms of reaching out to all of the most affected people.

**Extent of Correlation**
Unlike what one can see, the extent of influence in the case of appropriateness here is evident from the fact that the compliance with CCCs standards (or otherwise) within operations units, RAME and S&L have a direct correlation with the extent of coverage and ability to reach the most vulnerable groups. This is quite apparent, as the operations units (security, S&L, ICT or F&A) functionally play a decisive role in operationalizing the planned programme response in far-flung areas affected by the crisis.

The operations units seem to have played a decisive role in enabling UNICEF Yemen to maximize its ability to reach out to the people in need of humanitarian assistance or enhanced humanitarian programme coverage.
SECTION 5: CONCLUSION AND LESSONS LEARNED

The results on CCCs compliance suggest encouraging levels of compliance and adherence to respective standards and benchmarks. The performance is largely similar or equal for both preparedness and response-level standards. Such a high level of compliance by UNICEF Yemen colleagues, as discussed in relevant sections, during a fluid security situation in Yemen is indeed appreciable. Overall, on the basis of findings of this evaluation, it may be opined that the humanitarian assistance provided through 2015 was largely appropriate and UNICEF did manage to get closer to the desired level of coverage. The inability to do post-disaster needs assessment did hamper the appropriateness in a few respects. The continued presence on the ground, ability to form and manage effective partnerships and integration of services helped achieve and, in some cases, exceed the targets. UNICEF Yemen seems to have reached out to the most vulnerable – i.e., women, children, the displaced and people caught up in active conflict.

The evaluators are of the opinion that CCCs compliance (six for operations and one for S&L) does not have a lead role in planning and delivering appropriate assistance. However, it is learned that they have a decisive role in reaching out to the most vulnerable groups – i.e., coverage.

From a systemic perspective, the UNICEF emergency preparedness and response planning and monitoring mechanisms, such as EWEA, assessments, humanitarian performance monitoring and humanitarian action for children, all appear to have a programmatic bias. This seemingly over-emphasis on programmes has a potential to relegate the importance of preparedness, response planning and monitoring for operations units. This may have a bearing on the ability of operations to comply fully with respective CCCs commitments and standards. To the evaluators, the extent of differential human resource capacities between programmes and operations at the start of Yemen operations is another reflection of systemic bias for programmes.

Despite the availability of simplified procedures guidelines – i.e., SSOPs – for efficient processing, the evaluators are left with the impression that UNICEF Yemen could have done an even better job with its overall humanitarian response if the SSOPs were widely adhered to in letter and spirit.

The key lessons learned – some may be taken as best practices too – from the UNICEF Yemen humanitarian response through 2015 include:

1. The use of ‘Twinning Approaches’ for health and nutrition services in Yemen contributed to the improved appropriateness and greater coverage (especially with respect to reaching out to mothers and children – the most vulnerable groups in complex emergencies), and eventually helped to achieve resources optimization.
2. The diversified partnerships, particularly with government entities such as local water corporations, Alamal Bank and Yemen Petroleum, facilitated immediate up-scaling, achieving cost efficiencies and syncing well with the integration of recovery principles.
3. De-confliction arrangements for UNICEF Yemen’s staff movement, programme activities and assets played a significant role in making the UNICEF Yemen operations safe and secure.
4. The establishment of an S&L hub in Djibouti (at a safe and accessible point) has worked well and paid back heavily in ensuring uninterrupted supplies to Yemen.
5. Deployment from IRT and surge rosters emerged as one of the key challenges in timely availability of experts/capacities. Other than visa and ceiling (for deployment of international staff in-country) challenges, the bureaucratic processes (requiring approvals at varied levels) constrained immediate deployment. This is despite the fact that SSOPs were already invoked.
SECTION 6: RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluators have listed unit-specific recommendations in the findings section. However, this section outlines recommendations of strategic value only.

1. UNICEF may need to demonstrate leadership by taking relevant stakeholders (may be at the level of IASC on board) to critically review and revise/adapt CCCs for operation (units), in particular during/for complex humanitarian situations.

2. For improved compliance and consistent understanding and use of CCCs (for operations), UNICEF is advised to produce a series of guidelines (unit-based preferably) and related training packages (for basic users and for trainers). For the start, the roll-out may entail nominations of unit-based regional and country-level focal points, who may then lead the implementation of training, adaptation/adoptive standards, and rigorous follow-up.

3. To overcome the security constraints around undertaking immediate/structured post-disaster need assessments in security-constrained environments (as is the case in Yemen), UNICEF must explore long-term partnerships with third-party contractors (with ability to operate in insecure environments and capacities to deliver) for immediate deployment and carrying out field-based needs assessments. UNICEF Yemen has examples available – e.g., LTAs for M&C functions. The successful implementation would require capacity development of the contractors and rigorous follow-up to be in the state of operational readiness, so that the teams could be mobilized immediately after an emergency.

4. UNICEF may need to either establish parallel mechanisms or embed CCCs operations (benchmarks and actions) within ongoing institutional preparedness planning – i.e., EWEA and HPM. By this, the country offices could improve preparedness-level compliance, which by default would have a positive impact on response compliance.

5. UNICEF must promote and create wider organizational acceptance (mainly at country level) for immediate shifting to SSOPs as soon as a corporate emergency is declared. For this to happen, UNICEF must evolve and implement operations-related humanitarian monitoring mechanisms, similar to those in place for programmatic monitoring – i.e., HPM. The application of these systems and mechanisms should enable tracking compliance, and mapping/highlighting inconsistencies and challenges (with respect to the compliance of SSOPs and CCCs standards), and inform on timely remedial actions.