Formative Evaluation of the UNICEF WASH regional and country programming strategies in the East Asia and the Pacific Region 2014-2017/8

Final Report
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACRONYMS</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF BOXES</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose/Objective</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Findings and conclusions</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1. Evaluation purpose</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2. Evaluation object</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3. Evaluation scope</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. EVALUATION CONTEXT</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1. Regional setting</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1. Approach</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2. Changes from Terms of Reference</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3. Methodology</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4. Evaluation Framework</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5. Limitations and constraints</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. FINDINGS</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Relevance</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2. Effectiveness</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3. Sustainability, equity and scalability</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. CONCLUSIONS</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1. Relevance</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2. Effectiveness</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3. Sustainability, Equity and Scalability</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4 Theory of Action</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. LESSONS LEARNED</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANNEXES</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CO</td>
<td>Country Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPAP</td>
<td>Country Programme Action Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPD</td>
<td>Country Programme Document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPF</td>
<td>Country Partnership Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAC</td>
<td>Development Assistance Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAP</td>
<td>East Asia and the Pacific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAPRO</td>
<td>East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSM</td>
<td>Fecal Sludge Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHM</td>
<td>Menstrual Hygiene Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OD</td>
<td>Open Defecation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODF</td>
<td>Open Defecation Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RO</td>
<td>Regional Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROMP</td>
<td>Regional Office Management Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDG</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ToA</td>
<td>Theory of Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ToC</td>
<td>Theory of Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ToR</td>
<td>Terms of Reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNEG</td>
<td>United Nations Evaluation Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASH</td>
<td>Water and Sanitation Hygiene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WiE</td>
<td>WASH in Emergencies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Three pillars for effective and sustainable WASH programmes as per 2006-2015 Strategy ................................. Error! Bookmark not defined.
Figure 2: UNICEF 2016-2030 WASH Strategic Framework ........................................................................................................ 16
Figure 3: Indicative Intensity of Application of WASH Programming Approaches ................................................................. 17
Figure 4: Evaluation timeline and methodology, including data collection tools, key deliverables and phases of evaluation .......................................................................................................................... 20
Figure 5: EAP Country Strategy cycle ........................................................................................................................................ 34
Figure 6: Country Program coherence against Global WASH strategy Results areas ......................................................... 37
Figure 7: Country Program coherence against Global WASH strategy programming modalities ................................. 38

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Strength of Evidence to answer evaluation questions ........................................................................................................... 29
Table 2: Mapping of results areas from the 2016-2030 global strategic framework by country ........................................ 36
Table 3: WASH staffing in the region .............................................................................................................................................. 44
Table 4: UNICEF’s contribution to sustainability factors .................................................................................................................. 49

LIST OF BOXES

Box 1: SD6 targets and indicators around WASH ............................................................................................................................ 11
Box 2: Proposed Regional level UNICEF Theory of Action ........................................................................................................ 22
Box 3: An example of inter-sectoral working in the Pacific Islands ............................................................................................... 43
Box 4: An illustrative example of bringing about sustainable change: WinS, China Error! Bookmark not defined.
Box 5: UNICEF’s Partnerships in Indonesia ............................................................................................................................... 51
Box 6: Going to scale in the Philippines ........................................................................................................................................ 53
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The evaluation team would like to express their thanks to UNICEF EAPRO for their help and support throughout the engagement of this assignment.

The team of consultants initially proposed by IOD PARC for this evaluation changed and the evaluation delayed due to the illness of one key team member and a change in employment for the team leader. The evaluation team would like to thank the UNICEF team for their understanding in providing time to allow IOD PARC reconfigure the evaluation team and to adapt the proposed approach. They would also like to thank all UNICEF staff at HQ, RO and COs levels who took time to comment on versions of this report and other deliverables, all UNICEF staff and other stakeholders who participated in the survey and/or were interviewed and the WASH teams in Cambodia, China and Indonesia who facilitated country visits.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

UNICEF’s East Asia and the Pacific Islands (EAP) region is a fast-changing region, composed of countries that are home to two billion people. 580 million are children, representing 1/4 of the world’s young population. Accounting for over two fifths of global economic growth, the region is one of the main drivers of the world economy. A consequence of growth and progress is that countries in the region have moved to Middle Income status and there has been a corresponding reduction in funding available through ODA.

In WASH, many governments have improved their financial, technical and human capacities to deliver water supply, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), and invested in many basic services. The population using basic drinking water facilities increased from 78 per cent to 94 per cent between 2000-2015, and three quarters of the population now use basic sanitation. These averages mask significant differences across and within countries. Regional variations and disparities still persist, as do significant differences between rural and urban household provision. 8/14 countries in UNICEF EAP region report high levels of rural open defecation and unsafe drinking water.

Outstanding challenges on the quality of service, sustainability and inequities in service provision and access are the three most critical WASH challenges in the region, and they represent an unfinished development agenda for governments and their development partners, including UNICEF. The impact of poor access to safe and sustainable WASH contributes to high child mortality, under-nutrition and stunting with large disparities between urban and rural households.

The East Asia and Pacific Region is one of the most disaster-prone regions of the world. The increased impact of natural hazards and emergencies which are exacerbated through climate change make the challenge of addressing them more complex, time and resource consuming. In addition, countries and regions within them face challenges of conflict and fragility.

UNICEF plays a key role as lead of the WASH cluster in emergency situations and must adapt to manage an increase in the number of responses, longer sustained responses, and manage the linkages between meeting emergency needs and sustainable long-term programming.

Purpose/Objective

UNICEF Regional Office commissioned an independent Regional Evaluation of its WASH Programming. The focus is on relevance, effectiveness and sustainability, for the purpose of guiding WASH programming in the Region at a strategic level.

The purpose of the evaluation is to:

- Assess the extent to which UNICEF’s WASH programmes in the region are well adapted to the rapidly changing context and new challenges,
- Inform any re-positioning efforts deemed necessary at the country level, by suggesting priority areas to focus on and ways of tailoring strategic approaches depending on the country/local context,
- Identify what strategic approaches, programmatic components and intervention modalities at the Regional level can help better position the East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO) to support country programming in achieving the SDG agenda within the strategic framework outlined in the new UNICEF Global WASH Strategy.

---

2 Cambodia, China, DPR Korea, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pacific Islands, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Thailand, Timor Leste, Vietnam,
3 Statistics drawn from WHO/UNICEF JMP https://washdata.org/data
4 Cambodia, China, DPRKorea, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Myanmar, Timor Leste report >30%+ rural unimproved or open defecation and poor water quality
The findings, conclusions and recommendations will be used by Country Offices (COs) to inform the
development or implementation of their country programme documents and inform their WASH strategies
and implementation when necessary. At regional level, it will inform the regional WASH strategy and action
plan, the new and future WASH rolling work plans, and regional policy advocacy and partnership
leveraging efforts.

Methodology

This regional evaluation covers the 12 countries within the region where UNICEF offices have a WASH
programme. As a formative strategy evaluation, it was challenging to clearly define the evaluation ‘object’,
partly as there is no explicit regional strategy for WASH.

Therefore, the object of this evaluation is a synthesis and analysis of the 12 country strategies and the
role/input the Regional office plays in supporting them. The evaluation ‘looked back to look forward’
focusing on past and current strategic documentation and evaluative work to review UNICEF’s approach to
WASH within the region.

The evaluation scope covers WASH Programming carried out from 2014 – 2017, with a particular focus on
countries with new Country Program Documents. The design is non – experimental, formative and draws
from ‘theory-based’ approach with a case study and utilisation focus.

The evaluation has taken a mixed methods approach, with the primary tool being secondary data analysis
of UNICEF documentation. This data has been triangulated with semi-structured qualitative stakeholder
interviews and online survey with both quantitative and qualitative elements. Short country visits were also
undertaken to 3 countries (Cambodia, China and Indonesia).

As well as looking at country specific strategies, the evaluation considered the role of the Regional Office,
how they contributed to the development and implementation of country strategies and provided
opportunities for cross country learning and collaboration. As the Region does not work to a set of regional
WASH specific development outcomes (and there is no Regional Theory of Change -ToC - for the period
of this evaluation)5 a Theory of Action was constructed to provide a framework of the logic of support to
country office performance from the regional office and how this could contribute to SDG level WASH
outcomes.

Findings and conclusions

Relevance

Overall, UNICEF strategies are seen to be well aligned to local context and national government
strategies; UNICEF is a valued partner who listens to what national governments want, and designs
programmes that fit with a locally driven agenda. They are also well aligned to the global WASH strategy.
However, it would be difficult for any WASH programme/set of activities to not fit within this framework as it
is extremely broad. There are some clear patterns that have emerged, with EAP countries collectively
more aligned to certain elements of the framework than others. In terms of areas of focus, UNICEF is
doing more work in ‘Sanitation’ and ‘WASH in Institutions’ and less in ‘Water Supply’ and ‘Hygiene’ across
the region.

UNICEF are only partially aligned to the SDG agenda. The greatest area of challenge is a limited focus on
SDG 6.1. and 6.2 indicators which focus ‘safely managed’ water and sanitation for all. In sanitation, this
requires a shift away from focusing on the achievement of ODF as a key outcome measure. Instead, a
more integrated demand and supply based model with a greater focus on improved latrines, faecal sludge
management, the role of the private sector, and access to finance for safely managed services is required.
In water, greater focus on water quality and the effective provision and finance for operations and
maintenance and developing the private sector. The 2018-2021 Regional Office Management Plan and the
2019-2020 WASH EAPRO Strategic Framework continue to not address this transition towards safely
managed services and provide little, if any, direction as to what intervention models might be developed at
a country level to address this gap.

5 A ToC exercise was undertaken for the 2018-2021 Regional Office Management Plan which does identify some outcomes and outputs though a complete ToC
is not presented.
UNICEF responds well in WASH in countries where there are emergencies. In terms of programming modalities, the highest degree of coherence is in delivering services and supplies and in strengthening enabling environments. There is limited evidence of programming in leveraging financial resources and building sustainable markets.

The Global WASH Strategy outlines areas in which it wishes to do better (areas where it already works but wishes to improve in) and new areas in which it wants to work. Although there is evidence of movement from service delivery towards upstream work influencing the enabling environment and intersectoral working, at present there is only limited programming in Urban WASH, working with the Private Sector and Climate resilient WASH. There are more programmes focused on sanitation and sanitation in schools and this reflects UNICEF’s local capability and perceived comparative advantage as well as local need.

**Effectiveness**

It is challenging to assess the effectiveness of UNICEF’s Country WASH strategies as often don’t provide a clear link between project or programme outputs and overall WASH strategic goals. Underpinning UNICEF’s strategy are two key elements: the need to support change at scale and to be able to support the achievement of the SDGs. At present there are no clear operational models/modalities of how scale up is achieved, or tested programmatic models where UNICEF achieves sustainable, SDG-level change.

The move to more ‘upstream’ working and alignment with SDG 6’s core indicator of “safely managed services” requires a significant operational shift for COs in both the programme design and implementation and in how performance and success is measured. This will require mindset change towards inter-sectoral working, as well as a broader set of skills, technical knowledge and organisational practice (such as M&E). From evaluations undertaken, community-based interventions, particularly CATS/CLTS, are effective, and there is some evidence that upstream advocacy is contributing to positive change though the evidence is less strong. Approaches which don’t include exit strategies or post project follow up are seen as least effective and limited staff numbers affects what UNICEF is able to achieve.

The Regional office supports country programmes, in particular through the provision of technical advice and it is very much valued in particular when it provides access to timely, high quality technical advice and training. Countries want more help on cross-sectoral working and learning and networking across the region and globally.

There are clear limitations in UNICEF’s technical knowledge, skills and experience – and staff resources - at a country level which constrain the focus of programmes, and the way in which they are effectively designed and implemented.

**Sustainability, Equity and Scalability**

The evidence that UNICEF’s WASH work in the region is sustainable is limited. All of the UNICEF evaluations that the team have reviewed highlight this as an issue. Community focused sanitation interventions (CATS/CLTS) are seen as the most sustainable but there are question marks over ODF slippage and lack of progress up the sanitation ladder towards safely managed services. This was supported in country level interviews.

The key factors identified, which are believed to support sustainability, are mainly institutional rather than technical; those which lead to non-achievement focus on limited post-implementation follow up and lack of an exit strategy. There is internal debate as to whether UNICEF should be focusing on the SDG 6 targets – which include ending open defecation – or the indicators, which measure safely managed services. Given that in the region country governments are committed to safely managed services, an approach which provides a pathway towards this level may be appropriate in these contexts.

There is limited focus on equity and the assumption that CATS is equitable because of its methodology needs to be challenged given that ODF slippage tends to occur amongst the poorest and most vulnerable. There are promising examples of scale up approaches, but these are not sufficiently advanced to be validated. While CATS/CLTS delivers good examples of equitable programming, this is primarily due to the inclusive, participatory methodology. Questions remain as to whether results are equitable, given levels of slippage are highest amongst the poorest and most marginal.

Partnerships are central to UNICEF’s operating model. Evidence suggests that UNICEF’s strongest partnerships are with local and national governments. Partnerships with NGOs and CSOs are mixed, with some examples of effective partnership working, but others where they are just seen as transactional contractual relationships. At present examples of good operational relationships with the private sector or
financial organisations are more limited. However, UNICEF uses “partnership” as a blanket term to describe a range of quite different relationships with very different dynamics. Developing a model of partnership, and an associated framework with clear levels of mutual accountability for different types of partnerships alongside an effective monitoring framework, would help facilitate and track effective partnership working.

There is limited evidence of effective models for taking pilots to scale, with exceptions being China and Philippines (and to a lesser extent Indonesia) where approaches have or are in the process of being delivered. At present, though, there is limited detail as to how this actually works and whether change is based on replication or involves more systemic processes. In addition, there is no systemic model that guides scale up – type, form and ways of understanding success - across the Region.

Recommendations

The evaluation team suggest the following recommendations. These are all strategic but aim to provide some guidance as to how these can be operationalised. Recommendations 1 to 4 should be complete within 1 year, recommendations 5 – 9 should be complete within 2 years.

The evaluation team recommends:

1) **UNICEF EAPRO and Country Offices to review their WASH strategies and areas of focus - in terms of ‘continue learning and adapting’, ‘do better’ and ‘move in new directions’ - as per country needs and context and in line with the Global WASH Strategy and SDG 6.1 and 6.2.**

The WASH EAPRO Strategic Framework 2019-2020, in particular, does not currently sufficiently outline or provide guidance as to how countries should address the challenge of meeting SDG indicator 6.2.1.

The evaluation team recommend all countries in the region have explicit WASH strategies which include clear Theories of Change. This is a regional evaluation and the team do not feel (outside of the three country offices visited) that it is appropriate to make specific programmatic recommendations for each country or generalisations for specific groupings or clusters.

The evaluation team support the use of a rigorous country-led strategic planning process to ensure strategic decisions are nuanced and have country level commitment and engagement. Reviews should be undertaken by country teams and align appropriately to existing strategic planning processes. If possible, reviews should happen within the next 6 months and prior to the development of the next CPD.

Engaging in some ‘new directions’ where UNICEF does not currently have technical expertise or experience, such as FSM and engagement with the private sector for example, may be critical for UNICEF to remain relevant in the future. Other areas, such as urban sanitation may not be the best way for UNICEF to leverage their comparative advantage given likely resource levels and comparative advantage in different country contexts.

The evaluation team suggest that UNICEF set up working groups from across the region looking at methodologies for addressing FSM and urban programming which aim to provide recommendations as to how UNICEF can improve its capabilities in these areas. These groups should report within a 6-month period and should include representatives from relevant organisational units such as the private partnership team. The Regional Office should then provide support to assist country Offices in integrating new/emerging programme areas into new Country Programme Documents.

---

6 The team recognise that a few countries have already worked on developing strategies(at different stages) and recommend that it is still important to review them against an explicit theory of change.
2) UNICEF Headquarters and the Regional Office review the existing M&E framework to ensure it so it can a) effectively track system level change and b) is aligned with SDG 6.1. and 6.2. indicators so can assess progress towards safely managed services.

Currently UNICEF’s M&E framework as applied to WASH is focused on service delivery and capacity building and often tracks activities without any overarching system level change framework. While UNICEF has a number of higher-level frameworks which assess the enabling environment, these should be reviewed, and a set of indicators developed, which track the necessary conditions for sustainable change (such as government commitment or access to finance).

These indicators should not just be designed around what it is possible to count, for example, counting number of policy changes does not identify the contribution UNICEF makes or whether those policy changes were crucial for improving WASH services. This will also require UNICEF to start seeing ODF, for example, as an intermediate outcome towards a higher level of service delivery rather than as an outcome. Country Offices should review their WASH M&E frameworks – even if they are nested within a broader intersectoral programme - to ensure they are aligned. This process should be led by the EAP WASH and M&E advisers working with the HQ M&E team.

3) The Regional Office WASH section, with the support of the HR section, should develop a framework of core skills and competencies needed to deliver WASH programmes within the region. This should be led by the EAPRO WASH adviser.

Skills and competencies should cover not just technical WASH skills but also programmatic approaches and working at both downstream and upstream level. Country Offices should undertake assessments, given their country specific context and country WASH programme, of the skills and competencies they have and where there are gaps which may impact on them achieving effective programme results. This mapping should inform CO and RO capacity development strategies, future WASH staffing structures within CPMP, future recruitment and partnership development. It should also consider skills and competencies required in the field offices and at provincial/district levels. The Regional office should also identify any potential opportunities for "multi-country" support models for increased efficiency. The framework development should include working with HQ and other regions to see where there is overlap and to determine the helpfulness of a global framework.

4) The Regional office and Headquarters should initiate the development of a partnership framework which outlines the range of partnerships UNICEF has, their characteristics, what makes them successful and what role UNICEF and its partners are expected to play.

It is particularly important that this framework distinguishes between ‘transactional’ partnerships where UNICEF works with smaller sub-contractors and the range of partnerships which involve more complex power relationships. This evaluation does not have sufficient data to propose a framework. The evaluation team feel it is important for UNICEF to do this analysis themselves (not to outsource the development of this framework to external consultants). It is important to include structured inquiry processes where UNICEF staff engage with existing and future possible partners. The Regional Office should support Country Offices to review their own partnerships and ensure they have a mechanism to monitor their effectiveness and give and receive feedback on how well they are working. It is suggested that this process be led from HQ who should create a global task force, including advisers from a range of countries and sectors to work on this.

5) The Regional Office should review and revise both the content and the process by which it develops its regional Knowledge Management (KM) Strategy and its regional WASH Knowledge Management. It should ensure the Regional WASH KM plan is part of an integrated cross sectoral Strategy

The current 2018 EAPRO KM strategy is weak - it makes no attempt to focus on capturing tacit knowledge and focuses primarily on external reviews, products, evaluations and training rather than balancing this with internal monitoring, sharing, organisation development and reflection. It has no Theory of Change to identify the process or the challenges that the KM strategy aims to address and does not provide an integrated overview of how KM supports cross-sectoral working. The WASH KM plan does include some useful and pertinent activities and sections but there are significant gaps both in terms of the content areas suggested but also in suggested processes. At present it is not clear how activities have been prioritised and it seems more focused on approaches UNICEF already takes (e.g.
CLTS) and much more limited in areas which UNICEF needs to develop (e.g. Fecal Sludge Management, Sanitation Marketing, urban work, how to go to scale). Measuring SDG 6.1 and 6.2 are identified as priorities yet there is no clear sign as to a) how measuring fits with developing and supporting interventions which reach the safely managed level of service required by the indicators for 6.1 and 6.2; and b) limited activities in the pipeline which seem to be focused on these areas. The section on capacity building focuses only on training and does not look at broader capacity issues such as required staffing and who needs to know what given their context. Neither the Regional KM Strategy nor the WASH KM plan includes a clear section on resources or budgets required.

6) UNICEF Headquarters and the Regional Office should purposefully support the further development and critical review of scale up models which show potential for achieving SDG indicator level service delivery.

These models should include an appreciation of whether going to scale involves replication (horizontal scale up) of small-scale improved service delivery models, or changes in operational approach as UNICEF aims to influence the expansion of demonstrated WASH approaches at different institutional levels (vertical scale up). This should build on experiences to date and move beyond designing and implementing demonstrations or pilots and then presenting them to the government to take to scale. The Regional Office should then work with Country Offices to help them enhance, adapt and operationalise these models as part of country programmes.

7) Given increasing demand for inter-sector programming approaches, the Regional Office should review experiences of inter-sectoral programming to date and document/assess which have been most effective and of benefit to the delivery of SDG 6.1 and 6.2 - for example reviewing the impact on programmes and performance of the theories of change joint planning undertaken between nutrition and WASH. This review should be led by the EAPRO sector adviser team and include a focus on the alignment of internal systems, processes and workplans across sectoral groupings and also the identification of intersectoral working entry points.

8) Country offices should place an increased level of emphasis on reporting and generating evidence on equity and inclusion, and ensuring they are targeting the ‘hard to reach’ population and areas. This work should include advocacy to national and local governments to ensure that evidence can where possible be drawn from government managed M&E systems. The evaluation team suggest that WASH leads and heads of COs be brought together at the next regional meeting to create an action plan on how to take this forward.

9) The Regional Office should initiate a regional meeting or workshop amongst key development partner WASH actors in the region. This meeting should look to compare strategic approaches and look to see where there is synergy or potential overlap in approach. The Regional WASH adviser should talk to country and HQ colleagues as to who to invite but the evaluation team recommend that at a minimum, the World Bank, Asia Development Bank, WaterAid, DFAT and Plan international should attend.
INTRODUCTION

This is the final report from a formative evaluation of the UNICEF WASH regional and country programming strategies in the East Asia and the Pacific Region (EAPRO). The EAPRO region covers 14 Country Offices (COs) including a Pacific Islands office that supports 14 different island states. This evaluation covers 12 of the 14 offices who have WASH programmes and does not cover Thailand and Malaysia. The evaluation Terms of Reference are attached in Annex A.

The evaluation report is structured as follows:

- **Evaluation Context** is split into three sub sections: the regional setting and WASH conditions in which EAPRO operates; the global institutional WASH arena, in particular the impact of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on WASH targets and intervention approaches; and UNICEF’s positioning within this arena as outlined in the 2016-2030 Global WASH strategic framework.

- **Approach and Methodology** outlines how the evaluation has been undertaken, the object of study, the evaluation framework - including evaluation criteria, questions and data collection methods – and the evaluation limitations.

- **Findings** are structured around the three evaluation criteria and focused on answering the specific evaluation questions.

- **Conclusions** focus on interpreting the findings and reflecting reasonable evaluation judgments based on the answers to the evaluation questions.

- **Lessons Learnt** provide reflections from the findings and conclusions which may be applicable to WASH sections in the region and UNICEF globally.

- **Recommendations** suggest actions for UNICEF to consider in developing their strategic approach to WASH in the region. The recommendations were refined and validated by the regional WASH team during a workshop held in March 2019.

1.1. Evaluation purpose

UNICEF Regional Office commissioned this independent Regional Evaluation of its WASH Programming, with a focus on relevance, effectiveness and sustainability (including equity and sustainability), for the purpose of guiding WASH programming in the Region at a strategic level. Its timing reflects UNICEF’s strategic assessment, that it needs to evolve its WASH programming from a service delivery model to providing more upstream support and feed into the 2018-2021 regional development plan.

The purpose of the evaluation is to:

- Assess the extent to which UNICEF’s WASH programmes in the region are well adapted to the rapidly changing context and new challenges,

- Inform any re-positioning efforts deemed necessary at the country level, by suggesting priority areas to focus on and ways of tailoring strategic approaches depending on the country/local context,

- At a regional level, identify what strategic approaches, programmatic components and intervention modalities can help better position UNICEF in the EAP region to support country programming in achieving the SDG agenda within the strategic framework outlined in the new UNICEF Global WASH Strategy.
The evaluation objectives are to:

- Provide evidence on whether regional and country WASH strategies are relevant, effective and sustainable in each context (considering country social-economic status, capacity, fragility etc.)
- Help adapt and tailor relevant strategies to the specific diverse country contexts
- Define the most relevant priority area to focus on
- Contribute to country, regional, and global learning and UNICEF’s accountability

The primary target audience of the evaluation is the UNICEF Regional Office and EAP Country Offices (COs). The secondary audience is the national governments with which UNICEF partners in the countries, UNICEF in HQ and other regions as well as the broader WASH sector.

The findings, conclusions and recommendations will be used by Country Offices (COs) to inform the development or implementation of their country programme documents and adjust their WASH strategies and implementation when necessary. At regional level, it will inform the WASH component of the new Regional Strategy, the new and future WASH rolling work plans, and regional policy advocacy and partnership leveraging efforts.

1.2. Evaluation object

A major challenge in this evaluation has been to clearly define the evaluation ‘object’. Strategies in themselves are often difficult to evaluate as they operate in dynamic environments, and to be effective, they need to evolve and adapt. Assessing strategy by saying ‘have we achieved what we set out to in a strategy document’ can often be counter to effective strategy development. There is also no explicit EAP Regional WASH strategy and country ‘WASH’ strategies are often either aspirational and informal or nested within broader strategic documentation.

1.2.1. Strategy development and use in UNICEF

UNICEF has a range of WASH strategy documentation at different organisational levels which cover different time frames. The Global WASH strategy sets out a framework of what change UNICEF wishes to see and its role in the sector, recognising differences in country contexts. There is no direct link though to resource allocation as this is formulated by COs (to a range of priorities, including national governments) and then approved at a regional level. Country Programme Documents (CPDs) outline plans for country engagement and follow a different format. In many of the CPDs WASH is a sub-sector of a broader objective area, so a ‘WASH’ strategy may not be explicitly described. These documents are also quite ‘high level’ as they are broad rather than deep so may not outline all WASH activities being undertaken and may not cover ‘legacy’ activities from previous strategic periods. Some countries do have WASH ‘strategy’ notes, but these don’t always completely ‘fit’ with CPD outlines. Sometimes this is because they don’t follow the same programming cycle and may include adaptations made after CPDs were written, or they describe activities in different ways, especially in terms of the results they are trying to achieve.

Results frameworks included in CPDs have limitations, specifically performance indicators for ‘upstream work’. There is an understandable desire to keep strategy level indicators broad, but indicators such as ‘number of policies changed’ do not explain UNICEF’s strategic contribution, or how specified policy changes link to impact level results. This makes it difficult to identify what an effective and sustainable strategy looks like. Other indicators such as ‘number of people engaged’ or ‘number of innovations supported’ provide insight into what activities have been conducted but don’t help assess the strategic positioning of these or the causal chain linking them to strategic objectives.

UNICEF publishes an annual results report on WASH which discusses results achieved by programme area in relation to the overall organisational strategy. This report focuses primarily on ‘positive news’ stories and does not systematically collect or present data from all countries which have a WASH programme. In the 2017 report there is limited mention of examples from EAP countries. The EAPRO office produces a Regional Office Annual Report (ROAR) which includes a section on WASH.

8 These have become compulsory since 2016
1.2.2. Our approach to defining the ‘object’ of the evaluation

The evaluation has taken a broad view of the ‘strategy’ object, trying to build a picture of the country strategies from a range of sources. The Country Programme Documents (CPDs) were used as the initial evidence base and a consistent coding process was used to build a picture of how the countries compared in terms of the results areas they were focused on and the modalities being used. This process built around coherence to the Global 2016-2030 Strategic Framework. This was then cross referenced with other programme documentation and evaluations and triangulated with interviews which provide greater depth in understanding UNICEF’s enacted strategy at country level, including how it has changed and evolved.9

This evaluation is at a regional level and covers all of the countries within the region where UNICEF offices have a WASH programme. As there is no explicit regional strategy document for WASH, the object of this evaluation are the 12 country strategies individually, where possible a synthesis of common issues and findings across the region, and the role/input the Regional office plays in supporting and enhancing country offices.

1.3. Evaluation scope

The evaluation initially ‘looked back to look forward’ focusing on past and current strategic documentation to review UNICEF’s approach to WASH within the region. The scope as per the ToR was on countries in the region that had a Country Programme ending and a new one starting during 2014-201710. The evaluation draws from published material from the period 2014-2017, or evaluations/further documentation that is based on this period11 paying particular attention to countries where recent evaluation evidence is missing. WASH is a current priority in 12 countries in the EAP region12. The evaluation covers WASH interventions at both upstream (enabling environment and system strengthening work) and downstream WASH programming strategies and approaches, in sanitation, water supply, WASH in schools and health centres. In-country geographical coverage is at national, sub-national, rural and urban levels. UNICEF’s performance in emergency responses will not be included in the evaluation, but the WASH emergency preparedness of the country office was, in terms of risk and evidence-informed strategy, programmatic priorities, and resources including staff capacity.

As well as looking at country specific strategies, the evaluation also considers the role of the Regional Office and how it can effectively contribute to the development and implementation of country strategies and provide opportunities for cross country learning and collaboration.

As a framing context for this evaluation, it is important to recognise that, while it is formative in nature, it relies on strategies and result frameworks set for the 2014-17 period. The first half of the 2014-2017 period fell within the MDG era. The SDGs, made live in 2015, hold significant strategic and operational implications for UNICEF. Global focus and attention is shifting towards the concept of shared responsibility across all countries for achieving the SDGs, embedding total inclusion and poverty eradication. This additionally has shifted concepts of success within the WASH sector, and a change in what is measured against global indicators.

---

9 For some of the analysis we have had to take strategy at a specific point in time. This is particularly the case for in assessing alignment against the global strategy results areas and modalities. The evaluation team recognise that alignment is likely to have shifted as strategies have evolved.

10 Cambodia, China, DPR Korea, Pacific islands, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Myanmar, PNG, Timor-Leste, Vietnam, Malaysia, Thailand

11 The evaluation has included some evaluations, reviews and other documentation from 2018 where relevant though this is based on what the RO and country teams have provided, but this has not been systematic.

12 All the above countries excluding Malaysia and Thailand, and also in Philippines. Malaysia and Thailand do not currently have a WASH programme so have not been a focus of this evaluation.
2. EVALUATION CONTEXT

2.1. Regional setting

UNICEF’s East Asia and the Pacific region is composed of countries that host about half of the global population, and around 580 million children. It is home to the high economic growth ‘Asian Tiger’ economies, having experienced significant accelerated economic growth in the last two decades and significant falls in poverty. This has been accompanied by a significant fall in extreme poverty (from 80% in the early 1980s to just 4% in 2015). All countries within the region other than DPR Korea are now classified as middle-income countries by the World Bank (including lower-middle income). The majority of countries in the region are considered ‘lower middle income’ such as Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Vanuatu and Viet Nam rather than ‘upper middle income’. Inequality levels within countries is highly varied (China is one of the fastest growing economies in the world). The region demonstrates diversity across countries in terms of policy, socio-economic context, governance and programmatic environment.

The Gini coefficient, which measures inequality, shows a mix of decreasing or static inequality in some countries in the region since 1990, while in others, it has significantly increased. Most notably, China’s relative inequality has increased from scoring 30 in 1990 to near 50 in 2013 according to the International Monetary Fund. In WASH, as reported in the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP), the region has made good progress; the population using basic drinking water facilities increased from 78% to 94% between 2000-2015 and three quarters of the population use improved sanitation.

Regional variations and disparities still persist, with some countries reporting high levels of open defecation and unsafe drinking water. Cambodia has the highest inequities in terms of wealth quintile for rural basic sanitation; Papua New Guinea with the lowest overall basic sanitation at 36.6%, Lao where half the schools lack access to WASH facilities and in the Pacific Islands, there are few functional toilets and limited information on sanitation and hygiene in schools. There are also urban-rural imbalances and disparities in WASH infrastructure, such as in China where there is less access in the rural western parts.

Despite these differences there are some clear patterns. Coverage is better in urban areas than in rural, and water services are in general stronger than sanitation. East Asia experiences strong internal migration from rural to urban, which has led to the emergence of the highest number of megacities in the world. Cities in Middle Income Countries do not always have proper services and facilities to absorb such a population influx, so urban provision is coming under increasing pressure.

Countries such as Lao, PNG and the Pacific Islands are very culturally diverse in themselves, comprised of numerous ethnic groups and languages; Lao and Timor-Leste are also categorised by having very young populations.

2.1.1. Natural hazards and impacts of climate change

The East Asia and the Pacific Region is one of the most disaster-prone regions of the world. The increased impact of natural hazards and emergencies which are exacerbated through climate change make the challenge of addressing them more complex, time and resource consuming.

Countries such as Viet Nam and Philippines are particularly prone to natural hazards such as typhoons, flooding and landslides. The number of typhoons hitting Viet Nam per year is rising, and both countries are...
ranked in the top 5 countries most affected by climate change. Recent natural hazards include Typhoon Damrey in Viet Nam and Typhoon Haiyan in Philippines. 2018 saw a wealth of natural disasters in Indonesia, such as the Lombok earthquake, Sundra Strait tsunami and South Sulawesi floods. Mongolia is becoming drier due to climate change, and coupled with its extreme winters, the types of toilets feasible in the country are limited and poses problems for FSM.

The Philippines and Myanmar face challenges of conflict and fragility as well as natural disasters; particularly in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) in the former, and Shan, Kachin and Rakhine states in the latter. Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Micronesia and Timor Leste are also considered fragile states. UNICEF plays a key role as lead of the WASH cluster in emergency situations and must adapt to manage an increase in the number of situations, together with longer response periods, as well as develop approaches where the more ‘downstream’ requirements of meeting emergency needs are effectively and dynamically linked with sustainable long-term programming.

2.1.2. Shifting WASH focus around SDG 6

New targets, measures and expectations set out in SDG 6 are challenging organisations to respond to WASH issues in new ways, including in the context of natural hazards and increasing climate change.

The SDG 6 targets confirm the need for equitable access to services; emphasize safe and affordable water for all and an end to open defecation. The indicators of progress are safely managed services. The challenge here is that ensuring equitable access requires looking cross-sectorally (WASH in education, health, nutrition and gender) as well as expanding the area of focus beyond provision of WASH. These differences are important as the measure of success used can impact on the approach to change taken and programme design. For example, in sanitation if the indicator of safely managed services is taken this means a shift away from measuring Open Defecation Free (ODF) as a key outcome measure. It implies a need to move towards a more integrated demand and supply based model with a greater focus on appropriate technologies, faecal sludge management (FSM), the role of the private sector, and access to finance to enable the construction of improved latrines. In water it means more focus on water safety and the effective provision and finance for operations and maintenance and developing the private sector. Particularly in urban areas, it will mean a major shift to developing surface water sources, requiring large and long-term support and investments.

Other shifts in emphasis from the SDG agenda include more focus on urban provision, WASH in emergencies and a more prominent equity lens. The challenge for UNICEF is how they develop these technical capabilities recognising that existing staff may not be familiar with these new discourses and ways of working.

Box 1: SD6 targets and indicators around WASH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SDG 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.1:</strong> Target: By 2030, achieve <strong>universal and equitable</strong> access to <strong>safe and affordable</strong> drinking water for all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator: Proportion of population using <strong>safely managed</strong> drinking water services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.2:</strong> Target: By 2030, achieve access to <strong>adequate and equitable</strong> sanitation and hygiene for all and <strong>end open defecation</strong>, paying special attention to the needs of <strong>women and girls</strong> and those in <strong>vulnerable</strong> situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator: Proportion of population using <strong>safely managed</strong> sanitation services including a <strong>hand washing facility with soap and water</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strong regional economic growth is resulting in major reductions in levels of ODA. Countries that have transitioned from Low to Middle Income status (such as China, Indonesia, Thailand) have seen their levels...
of ODA cut drastically. The challenge here is that countries defined as ‘Middle Income’ are hugely diverse with many still grappling with large structural deficits and significant vulnerabilities. Challenges to further growth include the costs and risks of transforming their economies, for example moving towards renewable and ‘greener’ energy sources. In addition, there are the challenges of effectively supporting the increasing numbers of people trapped in persistent poverty. In response to the cuts in ODA, multilaterals such as UNICEF are focusing their interventions more on ‘pilot to scale’ work and supporting ‘upstream’ system strengthening.

In addition, finance for WASH in the region varies hugely. Although there is increased investment including the emergence of new players such as philanthropic donors and private sector actors, the overall picture is of a major financing gap. At present no country covered by this evaluation is estimated to have sufficient funds to reach its national targets or to cover its basic operating and maintenance costs through the collection of tariffs. Countries in general can develop plans and budgets and report on what level of funding is received against budget; however, budgets are seldom fully realised or achievements against them fully reported. Donor funding is falling to middle income countries, so this funding gap will remain unless traditional development agencies carry out a strategic repositioning of their financing and additional finance can be found from the private sector or other sources. China’s Belt and Road initiative is a major infrastructure investment in the region, although this is not targeted at those “left behind”. Annex B provides an overview of the status of key elements of finance from the 2017 UN GLAAS Report.

2.2. Global Institutional WASH Arena

UNICEF’s mandate is guided by the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child which stipulates, amongst other things, that WASH is a precondition for child survival and development. Rights to water and sanitation were also recognised in the 2010 UN General Assembly 64/292, and WASH featured in the MDGs as part of MDG 7 of which there is now an ‘unfinished agenda’ and subsequent Agenda 2030.

The major factor in the global approach to WASH has been the new targets and expectations set out in the SDGs of Agenda 2030. With SDG 6 focused specifically on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, the sector has an increased profile and expectations have also changed with SDG 6 requiring a shift in terminology and measures of success, away from basic and improved levels towards a focus on ‘safely managed’ water and sanitation for all. SDG 4a, also sets similar objectives with universal access for schools. The SDGs also emphasize equity and “reaching the last mile” with provision of at least a basic level of service to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged populations.

These shifts are having a major impact both on how success is measured and in shaping the approaches and strategies of major development partners.

2.2.1. Development Partners Working in the Region

UNICEF is one of several development partners that targets WASH outcomes within the region. In order to further understand how UNICEF ‘fits’ within this landscape a review has been undertaken of the strategy documentation of a select number of other sector actors. This review is not exhaustive and focuses on those organisations with a high level of presence and/or investment in the region. Five organisations have been chosen: The World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) WaterAid, Plan International, and the Australian Government’s Department for Global Affairs (DFAT). None of them have a specific regional strategy and some do not have clearly defined budgets. though ADB and DFAT’s global strategies/engagement approaches focus primarily on the EAP countries. All focus on country specific strategies but within broad global frameworks.

2.2.2. World Bank

The World Bank is the largest multilateral source of financing for water in developing countries. They have a ‘Water Global Practice’ group (WGP) which aims to blend lending ‘operations’ with grants from a multi-partner trust fund which focuses on influencing and strengthening operational lending in key areas and leveraging resources from other sources. The WGP structure is the result of a restructuring process begun in 2016 which brought together lending and technical assistance. Previously these were separate and the Water and Sanitation Programme (WSP) was a multi-stakeholder trust fund which provided

24 UN General Assembly; Second committee (2013); New Approach Needed to Address Vulnerabilities of Middle-Income Countries, Delegates Say in Debate on Globalization, Interdependence
26 2017 UN GLAAS Report.
27 A lack of regional strategy also means that it is often difficult to estimate budgeted expenditure for each agency within the region.
technical assistance and knowledge management services focused on influencing governments and global practice.

At present the World Bank has neither a specific global WASH strategy nor country specific WASH Strategies. Their model is based on discrete projects at a country level which fit into a broader multi-sector country partnership framework (CPF). The WGP has a global results framework which sets out key themes to address at a country level - sustainability, inclusion, institutions, financing and resilience – and the five business lines which differentiate its operational focus: Water Resource Management and Water Security; Water Supply and Sanitation, Water in Agriculture, Water Poverty and the Economy and Hydropower and Dams.

In the countries that correspond to UNICEF EAP Region, WBG has over $6.1 billion active investments in WASH approved between 2014-2018. These are primarily in urban and rural water supply and sanitation and include finance support for infrastructure development and technical assistance to government and other institutions to improve management of WASH services.

WGP interventions are focused on achieving the SDG standards for safely managed services. In water supply and sanitation, the key aims are reaching the ‘last mile’ of sanitation and hygiene coverage; improved water quality; strengthening national and local institutional capacity; urban development and infrastructure (FSM specifically); effective financing from commercial and non-state actors; and resilience to climate effects and natural hazards using appropriate technologies and integrated water resource management.

WGP has recognised that in the past it has been weak on inclusion and institutional strengthening and recent knowledge work has increasingly focused on these areas. WGP sees UNICEF as a key partner within the sector.

2.2.3. Asian Development Bank (ADB)

The recently published ADB strategy takes a country focused approach targeted at the SDGs and looks to engage in all countries in the region. It recognises that strategies will need to be differentiated and outlines the different approaches it will look to take in:

- fragile and conflict-affected states;
- small island and developing states;
- low income and lower middle-income countries; and,
- upper middle-income countries.

In essence these differentiate the degree to which ADB will broadly focus on building or supporting government institutional capacity (1 and 2); strengthening infrastructure and service delivery (2 and 3); equality and inclusion (1,2,3 and 4) and developing the private sector (4 and 3).

The strategy outlines seven priority areas: addressing remaining poverty and reducing inequalities; accelerating progress in gender equality; climate resilience and environmental sustainability; making cities more liveable; rural development and food security; governance and institutional capacity; regional cooperation. Water and Sanitation is seen as a key component across all the priority areas and the 2018 workplan was costed at $17 billion but it is not possible to estimate expenditure on WASH activities as the workplan does not cost these separately. Central to work in the sector though is the aim to increase the role of the private sector; leverage additional finance; support the use of advanced technological solutions where appropriate, to work across the food, water, energy nexus and to build on their competitive advantage in supporting city-wide approaches.

2.2.4. WaterAid

WaterAid operates in four countries within the region: Cambodia, Papua New Guinea (PNG), Timor Leste and Myanmar. The first three of these have specific country strategies, though Myanmar is a new country so at present has no country strategy, and no budgets were included for any of the countries in the documents we reviewed. WaterAid’s Global Strategy outlines the key areas they look to focus on. These
include further developing their work on sector strengthening; improved hygiene behaviour; supporting a healthy start; targeting marginalised groups and developing the next generation of WASH leaders. They are also targeting new areas, highlighted by the SDGs, to move into, these include urban and city-wide approaches, FSM in urban and rural settings, cross-sectoral working, nutrition and public health and education.

Their model is to work with local partners (mainly NGOs) to create workable models that can then be taken to scale. Sustainability focuses on an effective balance between supply and demand, rather than one or the other, and an increased emphasis on the use of appropriate technologies and increased access to finance. They use seed money with partners to build their capacity to raise funds from governments and other sources. Water Aid aims to use its role as an ‘independent convener with creative energy’ to help influence and catalyse system strengthening and so work both ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom up’.

Country strategies are highly targeted and are based on country specific issues and challenges. In PNG, where levels of access to water and sanitation amongst the worst in the world, the focus is on sector-coordination and capacity building and creating a unified operational sector at national/district and local level. Here the focus is on a ‘district wide’, rights-based approach with an initial focus on behaviour change. In Timor Leste, there is also a focus on local government capacity building, but interventions are specifically targeted on sanitation and hygiene. There is an emphasis on sector financing, climate change and on leadership development. In Cambodia, where the sector is stronger there is a greater focus on partnerships, the development of sustainable technologies, women and girls and public health coordination.

2.2.5. Plan International

Plan International have a presence in most of the countries in East Asia and the Pacific Region31. Their global strategy32 emphasizes transforming the lives of girls. At a country level in the region their WASH engagement focuses primarily on bottom up community-based approaches, mainly in rural areas using Community Led Sanitation (CLTS) but also some activities in schools and water supply. Going forward they are looking to work more ‘upstream’, strengthen sub-national governments and influence national and global debates emphasizing the need to focus on girls. They often work with UNICEF on more system wide approaches. WASH is not a headline sector for them in their current strategy though they continue to work broadly across the region in this area. They are looking to focus more on integrated programming and increase their work in menstrual health and hygiene. No budget document was seen for Plan International.

2.2.6. DFAT

Water has always been a key sectoral priority for the Australian Government’s international development programme. At present it sits in DFAT’s Health for Development Strategy (2015-20). Geographically DFAT support in the sector concentrates on the East Asia and the Pacific Region and the focus is on water resource management, water supply, sanitation and hygiene, and infrastructure development. DFAT looks to work with and through partners and sees UNICEF’s strengths in the WASH sector in the region as provincial and district program delivery; WASH in schools; helping develop national WASH systems - in particular through its role hosting Sanitation and Water for All (SWA); and WASH monitoring (through the WHO and UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme).

DFAT’s strategic focus in the sector is on sustainability. Key elements of this are increasing budget and access to finance; scale up of effective pilots/interventions and looking to increase private sector provision, finance and the role of social enterprise. The strategy looks to develop country level systems but also work on regional preparedness. Other identified challenges are inclusion and national and subnational capacity.

There are examples of regional-level cooperation on WASH. Examples include the South Asian Conference on Sanitation, organised by South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the East Asia Sanitation Ministerial Conference. In 2015 the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) leaders - in the Kuala Lumpur declaration on ASEAN 2025 - have also resolved to support the development and exchange of knowledge and practices on new technologies as well as local knowledge in confronting and adapting to the water resource problems across the region. It is uncertain though whether the latter is going ahead.

31 all UNICEF countries except China, Thailand and Pacific island
32 100 Million Reasons: Plan International’s Global Strategy 2017-2022
Most recently the UNICEF EAPRO WASH Team hosted a weeklong workshop aimed at mobilising the political will to create an enabling environment, ensuring mutual accountability and monitoring. The overall purpose of the workshop was to support the adoption of the Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) Framework and localising of the SDG’s to specific country contexts. Senior government officials and UNICEF WASH focal points from 12 countries which fall under EAPRO participated during the meeting. The countries represented were Cambodia, China, DPR Korea (North Korea), Fiji, Indonesia, Laos, Mongolia, Myanmar, Philippines, Papua New Guinea (PNG), Timor Leste and Vietnam.33

2.3. UNICEF Global Strategy and ‘Market Positioning’

UNICEF’s approach in the sector is laid out in the Global WASH Strategy 2016-203034, which presents how UNICEF intends to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The 2016-2030 strategy follows the 2006-2015 strategy which offered 3 distinct packages of support for WASH: basic, comprehensive and emergency, and was based on a balanced WASH programme having three interdependent pillars of interventions to increase safe water and sanitation coverage, the promotion of behavioural change and support to an enabling policy and institutional environment, as shown in Figure 1.

The 2016-2030 WASH strategic framework, Figure 2, indicates that UNICEF will focus on five results areas: water, sanitation, hygiene, WASH in institutions and WASH in emergencies. The actual scale, scope and nature of interventions in each of the five intervention areas will be based on specific contexts, needs and capacities of key stakeholders. Underpinning the focus on each of these five areas is UNICEF’s core accountability to act where children do not have at least a basic level of service within each of the results areas which is reflected in a series of seven stated ‘programming principles’ and six programming approaches. Inherent to UNICEF’s mandate and programming is a focus on children, particularly the most vulnerable children as a means to improve equity and equality, with an explicit emphasis now on human rights to water and sanitation and ‘safely managed’ in line with SDG 6.

Figure 1: Three pillars for effective and sustainable WASH programmes as per 2006-2015 Strategy
Figure 2: UNICEF 2016-2030 WASH Strategic Framework

It should be noted that although UNICEF is guided by its global Strategy to a certain extent, it is defined/adapted at the country level through a multi-year agreement with the national government and from this a Country Programme Document (CPD) formulated as UNICEF fundamentally has a decentralized structure. The Regional Office has a support role to country offices and is also their link to HQ. Regarding WASH, it should be noted that EAPR only accounts for 6% of non-emergency, global WASH expenditure\textsuperscript{35}.

The Global WASH Strategy 2016-2030 also articulates a significant expected shift in UNICEF’s approach, evolving from a model focusing primarily on ‘downstream’ activities - providing finance and technical assistance for WASH service delivery - to one where more ‘upstream’ support - focusing on building and strengthening institutional systems, finance and markets - is provided. Figure 3 (taken from the strategy document) illustrates how this shift is expected to be different in different contexts, so in emergency and fragile state contexts UNICEF still expects the delivery of services and supplies to be central to UNICEF’s WASH work. The new strategy also signals increased engagement in ‘newer’ areas compared to the 2006-15 strategy such as adapting to climate change, urban service provision and private sector engagement beyond sole provision of goods and services.

\textsuperscript{35} WASH Results Report 2017
Figure 3: Indicative Intensity of Application of WASH Programming Approaches
3. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Approach

The approach taken for this evaluation is formative and focused on utilization to help UNICEF reflect on and enhance the approaches it takes to developing and implementing WASH strategies at regional and country level. It uses a non-experimental methodology and draws from a ‘theory-based’ philosophy. The evaluation aims to understand “how” and “why” UNICEF contributes to WASH outcomes in different settings.

3.1.1. Evaluation criteria

The terms of reference for the evaluation include a focus on three of the DAC criteria i) relevance, ii) effectiveness, iii) sustainability (including equity and scalability). The criteria of efficiency and impact were excluded as they would require a complex methodology that lies beyond the scope, budget and timeline outlined for this evaluation. Assessing and identifying causal impact from strategies which are broad, often aspirational and implemented alongside the work of other stakeholders would be highly challenging, if at all possible.

3.1.2. Utilisation focused

Utilization focused evaluations\(^{36}\) are based on the principle that they should be useful to intended stakeholders. This principle is also outlined in UNEG Norms 2 and 14\(^ {37}\). The terms of reference identify a clear set of utilisation-focused objectives with a focus on formative learning to inform future strategic development and behaviour\(^ {38}\). These are:

- To provide evidence as to whether regional and country WASH strategies are relevant, effective and sustainable in different contexts,
- Based on this evidence, to collaboratively work with UNICEF to develop ways forward which can help UNICEF to adapt and tailor their WASH strategies and implementation approaches to meet the specific needs of their diverse country contexts and help define the priority areas UNICEF needs to develop and focus on,
- To support country, regional, and global collaborative working both within WASH but also cross-sectorally.

Formative and utilisation focused evaluation is reliant on effective processes of engagement with the system or object being evaluated. This allows the evaluation team to understand the different perspectives within the system and ensure recommendations or suggested ways forward are relevant and actionable. The evaluation team do feel retrospectively that the evaluation scope limited the level of participation that was possible and have reflected on this in the lessons learnt section. During the evaluation the team tried to encourage participation where possible and kept semi-structured interviews as open as possible to ensure interviewees were able to give their views and opinions. Three country visits were also introduced to allow further and deeper engagement beyond the review of documentation. A validation workshop was conducted with country representatives where they were given the opportunity to review findings, conclusions, the theory of actions and recommendations in a participatory manner to ensure both ownership as well as usefulness, validity and prioritisation. All reports have had multiple rounds of feedback and consultation to ensure a broad group across the region and globally have been able to give their views.

\(^{37}\) UNEG (2016) Norms and Standards for Evaluation
3.1.3. Theory Based Approach

A theory-based evaluation is usually based on an explicit theory of change or logic model that explains the theory of a development intervention\textsuperscript{39}, however there is no agreed classification of theory-based approaches\textsuperscript{40} and indeed, in recent years, different models have proliferated, including multiple variations. For this evaluation the evaluation team initially set out to develop an overall theory of change which might identify the outcomes UNICEF was aiming to contribute to across the region, and then identify a common set of intermediate outcomes and then activities that would help map how different countries (and clusters of countries) contributed to these outcomes. During the inception phase the team felt that variation within the region, the breadth of the Global 2016-2030 strategy and the need for the analysis to be context specific, suggested a change in approach. Instead of a theory of change the team focused on developing and testing a ‘theory of action’\textsuperscript{41} which aimed to create a framework which outlined ‘how’ UNICEF country offices and EAPRO should operate and the suggested capabilities and interactions needed to achieve a range of what were context specific outcomes.

3.1.4. Evaluation Standards and Ethics

IOD PARC is a private, independent consulting company specialising in performance assessment, organisation development and quality assurance. The evaluation has been undertaken within the frameworks of the UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation\textsuperscript{42}, UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis.\textsuperscript{43} and IOD PARC’s Ethical Code of Conduct (2018) which adheres to UNEG Ethical guidelines for Evaluation (2008), UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System (2007), DFID Ethical Principles for Research and Evaluation (2011) and the ESRC Framework for Research Ethics and Principles (2012). IOD PARC takes a Rights Based/Human Rights Based approach\textsuperscript{44} to evaluation. The methodology adopted for this evaluation applied the principle of triangulation through mixed methods, a team approach and collection of data from multiple sources.

The UNICEF EAP Regional WASH and Evaluation Sections quality assured all deliverables and the latter additionally provided overall oversight and guidance throughout the evaluation. IOD PARC quality assured the evaluation and provided backstop support to the process, while the Team Leader held responsibility for in-country work and delivery of the final report.

In order to ensure the independence of the evaluation, the independent consultants exercised final judgment on addressing comments from the reference group, with guidance and contribution from Regional Office evaluation managers. This was done in a transparent manner, with an explanation behind their rationale shared openly with members of the reference group.

The evaluation has not engaged directly with programme beneficiaries or children, so this limits the scope of ethical discussions. All interviews have been undertaken based on IOD PARC’s ethical code which follow UNICEF’s own guidelines concerning the respect for human rights and gender. All interviews were of UNICEF staff or senior managers from other organisations.

Given the breadth of countries covered, the number of interviews and survey responses, and the number of questions asked, keeping the identify of interviewees and survey respondents anonymous has been challenging. Interviewees were asked if confidentiality was an issue and given this is a formative evaluation most were comfortable with answers being attributable especially when this was felt to be helpful. However, where possible we have tried to respect confidentiality as far as possible and not explicitly identify respondents.

Issues around human rights and equity were kept centre stage within the evaluation in particular trying to: ensure in country visits that a broad stakeholder group were interviewed including government and civil society; and looking at potential issues of equitable sustainability in UNICEF’s community based programmes given concern over slippage and treatment of the vulnerable in CLTS/CATS programming.

\textsuperscript{40} Miles, M., Huberman, A., Saldana, J. (2014). Qualitative Data Analysis a Methods Sourcebook. Key Features of Qualitative Sampling p31
\textsuperscript{42} https://www.coffey.com/en/ingenuity-coffey/what-is-a-theory-of-action/
\textsuperscript{43} UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation UNEG, March 2008
\textsuperscript{44} UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis, 2015
\textsuperscript{44} According to UNICEF this is ‘A human rights-based approach is a conceptual framework for the process of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights. It seeks to analyse inequalities which lie at the heart of development problems and redress discriminatory practices and unjust distributions of power that impede development progress.’
3.2. Changes from Terms of Reference

There have been three key changes to the Terms of Reference: the inclusion of country visits (as outlined in section 3.1.2), the use of a theory of Action rather than a theory of Change (as outlined in section 3.1.3) and a slight broadening of the evaluation scope. The evaluation was delayed, due to unforeseen reasons, yet to ensure it was useful and would be seen as relevant to country team’s documentation some documentation from 2018 and 2019 was reviewed even though this went beyond the original agreed evidence base.

3.3. Methodology

The evaluation took a mixed-methods approach and figure 4 provides a timeline which illustrates the various methods used and when they were applied. The primary methods of triangulation were methodological – so using different methodological approaches to answer similar questions to increase validity. Given variations in the depth of documentation across countries and the fact that the team visited three countries environmental triangulation is limited, though given the evaluation team had four members all working on at least two methods, investigator triangulation has also been used.

Figure 4: Evaluation timeline and methodology, including data collection tools, key deliverables and phases of evaluation

3.3.1. Document Review

The document review has been undertaken in two distinct phases with over 80 documents included. These are listed in Annex C. During Inception, UNICEF global, regional and programme documentation was reviewed including the Global WASH Strategy, the 12 Country Programme Documents (CPD); Regional Operational Management Plans (ROMP), a meta evaluation of UNICEF WASH evaluations from 2007-2015, 14 other evaluations and a range of UNICEF thematic strategies, and programme reports from within the region related to WASH. A review of strategy documentation of other comparator organisations was also undertaken.

The purpose of this review was to:
- Frame the evaluation by providing a deeper understanding of the evolving regional context;
- Assess UNICEF’s current strategic approach in the region and map its coherence across the countries with the UNICEF Global WASH strategy. This was undertaken by reviewing Country Programme documents for coherence against two overarching topics: results areas and

---


programming modalities and against a three-point scale (highly coherent, somewhat coherent and not coherent).47

- Identify any groups or clusters in the region that share similar characteristics and challenges which may allow for comparability within the evaluation;
- Provide an initial view on UNICEF’s comparative advantage within the WASH sector;
- Inform the development of a Theory of Action to help assess UNICEF’s performance and future capability; and identify key issues which can be focused on within those areas.
- Assess the role of the Regional Office as it is documented, to clarify how the role is conceptualised, where it is envisaged to add value and the different support activities that are expected.
- The second phase of document review focused primarily at a country level and predominantly looked at documents from the three country case studies but also included additional documents such as the staff perception survey undertaken on the role of regional office as well as other published evaluations and CO strategy notes.

3.3.2. Semi-structured interviews

As with the document review there have been two phases of stakeholder consultations, in total 36 interviews were conducted48, and these included representatives from the WASH teams from all of the COs as well as UNICEF staff at regional and global level and external stakeholders. A list of those interviewed and at which stage is included in Annex D.

There were 9 interviews in the inception process, and these aimed to inform the development of the methodology. They primarily focused on identifying key issues to be addressed through understanding: the breadth of strategic direction in WASH within the region and how it relates to UNICEF’s broader strategy; UNICEF’s niche/added value; and the role of the Regional office. It also helped inform an assessment of the likely strength of evidence the team would be able to generate to answer the evaluation questions. Interviews were undertaken with a sample of UNICEF staff from the Region and at Country Level and included WASH experts and representatives from other technical areas.

The second phase of stakeholder consultation took place during the main inquiry stage of the assignment. The evaluation team used a semi-structured interview framework (Annex E) based on the key evaluation questions, focusing on validating the evidence drawn from the document review and filling in gaps where there is limited documentary evidence.49. 27 interviews were undertaken in this phase. The interview guide was written to provide sufficient structure to enable points of comparison, but with enough flexibility to respond to the unique perspectives of each stakeholder and allow for exploration of relevant themes and discussions which may not have been anticipated in advance. As well as UNICEF staff from country, regional and global offices, external stakeholder representatives including partners and funders were interviewed.

3.3.3. Theory of Action development

The Theory of Action (ToA) was developed after the initial document review and inception stage interviews. A ToA50 is similar to a Theory of Change (ToC) in that it maps out the logical flows of activities and their interconnections. It focuses though primarily on how outcomes will be achieved, so looking at how organisational processes, activities and structures connect towards the achievement of outcomes, whereas a ToC focuses on identifying the external outcomes and then then looking for clear contribution to pathways for achieving them. The switch was made given the breadth of WASH outcomes and the variation in country context. Some country offices do have WASH theories of change, but they are quite varied both in content and process.

During initial inquiry processes several themes were identified, relating to how the Regional Office and Country Offices contribute to results in different ways. These themes were developed into a ToA to outline

---

47 “Highly coherent” is a categorisation where content in the reviewed document uses the same language, concepts and emphasis as in the Global WASH strategy. Somewhere coherent represents a range of situations: where concepts are the same, but the language differs, or the language is the same but concepts differ. Not coherent is where different language and concepts appear in the documentation to the Global WASH strategy.

48 13 women and 21 men were interviewed (2 interviewees were interviewed twice). 30 of the interviews were undertaken remotely by Skype and 6 were undertaken face to face.

49 A draft list of stakeholders can be found in Annex 8

The logical flow of the types of support the regional office can and should (and in some instances already does) provide in support of these country level development outcomes. It also shows core capabilities UNICEF needs at country and regional level, and how they fit together/can be sequenced to contribute to sustainable WASH outcomes. The ToA is represented graphically in Box 2.

The Theory of Action framework was initially developed by the evaluation team during inception following key informant interviews, and refined through document review, further interviews and the country visits. The framework was used as an analytical framework to help capture and assess key themes against the evaluation criteria and to look at the implications of these for making operational recommendations at country, regional and HQ levels. The theory was initially ‘validated’ with the EAPRO WASH advisor and Evaluation Advisor in a virtual workshop during the inception period, and the refined version presented face-to-face during the validation workshop held during the final reporting phase. Reflections on how useful a theory it is to underpin an operational framework for UNICEF at both regional and country level are included in the conclusions section.

Box 2: Proposed Regional level UNICEF Theory of Action
3.3.4. Country visits

The team undertook three country visits – Cambodia, China and Indonesia. These were not in the original methodology and were agreed during the inception phase. These focused on providing a deeper analysis of how strategy has evolved and is implemented at a country level, what works and what challenges UNICEF faces in contributing to country level WASH outcomes and the role of the regional office. The visits were short, ranging from 3 to 5 days and the main selection criteria was the ability of the country to host, in effect utilising an opportunistic sampling approach.\(^{51}\)

For these visits, in recognition of the short time frame and the need to fit in with availability of busy country teams the approach was primarily opportunistic with a prime focus on the use of semi structured interviews with key informants. The first visit to Cambodia involved 3 days added on to an existing visit being undertaken by one of the consultant team for another assignment and it should be noted that this visit was conducted prior to the inception visit and prior to the writing and sign off of the inception report. Prior to the visit, the team reviewed relevant documentation, and once in country, undertook key informant interviews. In some situations, workshops and focus group discussions were also used to make use of the opportunity to review issues in small groups with UNICEF staff, other development actors and, where appropriate or possible, government stakeholders. The depth of inquiry during the country visits varied primarily based on the availability of UNICEF staff and other stakeholders. In total, 19 interviews were conducted in China, 14 in Indonesia and 5 in Cambodia.\(^{52}\)

As is appropriate when working from a utilisation focused approach, where possible, at the end of each visit a presentation was made\(^ {53}\) outlining initial findings. These were followed up with short country specific reports (approximately 10-12 pages). These are included in Annexes F, G and H.

3.3.5. On-line Surveys

Two online surveys (an internal and an external survey) were distributed to UNICEF staff and relevant external stakeholders respectively by the UNICEF Regional WASH Lead. The primary purpose of the surveys was to deepen and broaden the evidence base against key evaluation questions. The surveys were conducted towards the end of the inquiry phase and designed in collaboration with the UNICEF evaluation team following the semi-structured interviews and country visits. The timing of the surveys (after the main inquiry) enabled the team to design questions to triangulate the emerging findings from the earlier data collection methods and fill any data gaps. The surveys were developed and conducted with respect to UNEG Norms and Standards, specifically Norm 10 – Professionalism.

The internal survey consisted of 32 questions and focused primarily on issues of strategic alignment, identifying key sustainability factors and UNICEF’s capability at a country and regional level to adapt to meet these. It looked to generate more data on scale up processes, effective partnerships, equity and the role of the regional office. No questions in the survey were mandatory and they were a mix of ranking questions, Likert scale rating responses and open response qualitative questions. The survey was distributed to a wide range of UNICEF staff, coordinated by the RO WASH team, including WASH specialists and Nutrition and Health colleagues. The internal survey received 29 responses across 9 countries.

The external survey consisted of 9 questions and focused on the role these external stakeholders saw UNICEF playing in their context. It was sent initially to COs who were then asked to distribute it to relevant external stakeholders. Respondents were not tracked, nor were they required to sign in to complete the survey, although they were asked to supply the organisation they worked for. The external survey received 10 responses across 4 countries.

It is not possible to calculate the response rate for either the internal or external survey as a comprehensive distribution list was not supplied to the evaluators and the distribution mechanism used did not allow for tracking. A copy of the survey is included in Annex I.


\(^{52}\) In Cambodia the number of interviews was limited by UNICEF staff availability

\(^{53}\) This wasn’t possible in Cambodia
3.3.6 Focus Groups
In the country visits to Indonesia and China, the evaluation team convened focus groups with the WASH teams in country. Focus group discussions are a type of participatory interviewing technique where people with similar backgrounds or experiences come together to discuss specific topics or areas of interest. These facilitated group interactions allow individual ideas and views to be shared, challenged and developed. These discussions informed the understanding of WASH context and activities and contributed to the richness of the qualitative data, enhancing semi-structured interview data by providing collective, subjective views.

3.3.7 Validation Workshop
A validation workshop was held in Bangkok on 22nd March 2019. This was attended by people with responsibility for WASH in 9 EAPRO country offices (Cambodia, China, DPRK, Fiji, Indonesia, Laos, Mongolia, Philippines, Vietnam) 4 regional office advisors (from WASH and Evaluation) and a senior advisor from UNICEF HQ. An attendance list and agenda can be found in Annex L. The evaluation team lead presented initial findings, conclusions and recommendations which workshop participants discussed, challenged and where appropriate amended. Their feedback has been incorporated into the presentation of Conclusions and Recommendations in this second draft document.

3.3.8 Sampling strategy
The evaluation has covered the ‘whole population’ in that all countries who have a WASH programme in the EAPRO region have been included in the evaluation. Documents from all countries have been reviewed and at least one semi-structured interview has been held with a representative from each country office.

Originally, it was intended to visit four countries. The selection of these combined a purposeful approach based on identifying a group of countries the evaluation team and managers agreed would be sufficiently representative and helpful; and a convenience approach based on which countries were able to host during the inquiry time frame. Formal randomisation in a formative non-experimental evaluation of this nature with a total population of 12 countries is inappropriate.

In informing the purposeful selection, it was intended to include:

- Countries whose CPDs ended between 2014-2017 and are developing or have developed new ones for the period 2018-2022;
- Variations amongst case countries in the shape of their programmes against the Global WASH strategy focus areas. In particular in the “Do better” and “Move in new directions” categorisations;
- The greatest learning potential for the Region.

It was also agreed not to include country offices that had recently conducted a WASH evaluation such as DPRK, Laos, the Philippines and Mongolia.

Cambodia, China and Indonesia were chosen primarily based on convenience and country willingness to host. The inability to find a fourth country highlights the challenges the evaluation faced.

For selection of interviewees (both remote semi-structured and on country visits) and survey respondents, the evaluation took a purposeful approach to sampling based on discussions with the UNICEF evaluation management team and other UNICEF staff. This was followed by a ‘snowball approach’ where the initial individuals selected were asked to recommend others who they felt could add value to the study. The suggested list of ‘starting’ interviewees at a country level is included in the country visit outline document included as Annex J.

3.4 Evaluation Framework
The evaluation framework is shown in Table 1. Following the inception period, it was decided not to reduce or alter the questions as laid out in the Terms of Reference. Given the lack of clear indicators on which to base evaluative judgements the evaluation team have used the strategic review framework used by the UK government’s Independent Commission for Aid Impact as the basis for the framework.

---

54 https://www.odi.org/publications/5695-research-tools-focus-group-discussion
### Table 1: Evaluation Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Questions</th>
<th>Criteria for assessment</th>
<th>Sources of evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Relevance:</strong> The appropriateness of plans and strategies as well as design of Regional Office Management Plan and Country programmes (WASH component) in regard to the changing context and needs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 To what extent are the objectives, strategic approaches and implementation modalities of UNICEF WASH Strategies in this region well adapted to the current and future (applying a more forward-looking perspective with this evaluation) regional and country contexts?</td>
<td>Evidence that CO WASH strategies fit with assessment of country current and future needs and that UNICEF has capability to design and implement appropriate interventions</td>
<td>UNICEF internal documentation: CPDs, CO WASH strategies where they exist, evaluations. Key documents from other development actors’ such as country, regional and global strategies. Key Informant Interviews with UNICEF CO, RO and external actors. Stakeholder workshops at country level (in country visits). Online survey.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 To what extent are they aligned with the 2030 SDG agenda (with emphasis on increasing focus on scaling up successful interventions/models, making programmes more equity-focused and improving the level, quality and sustainability of services)?</td>
<td>Evidence that Global and GO WASH strategies emphasise scale up, equity and sustainability and fit with the targets and indicators of 6.1 and 6.2</td>
<td>UNICEF internal documentation: CPDs, CO WASH strategies where they exist, evaluations. Key informant interviews with UNICEF CO, RO and external actors. Stakeholder workshops at country level (in country visits). Online survey.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 To what extent are they aligned with the new UNICEF Global WASH Strategy?</td>
<td>Evidence of CO alignment with Global WASH strategy</td>
<td>UNICEF internal documentation: CPDs, CO WASH strategies where they exist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 To what extent do they appropriately respond to the current and, with a prospective view, to future challenges and needs of the country WASH sector?</td>
<td>Evidence of context/needs assessment processes Evidence of awareness and responsiveness to changes in local and regional context Evidence of appropriate levels of innovation or capacity to innovate</td>
<td>Semi structured interviews with key UNICEF Country Office WASH staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 To what extent have these strategies and implementation approaches contributed to position UNICEF as a key player in the respective national and regional development agendas?</td>
<td>Evidence of UNICEF’s influence at national and regional development agenda</td>
<td>Key informant interviews External actors – INGO Multilateral, Bi-lateral Position papers, reports, country and regional level analyses. Stakeholder workshops at country/regional level. Online survey.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Evaluation Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Criteria for assessment</th>
<th>Sources of evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.6 How can the new Country Program’s objectives, approaches and modalities be more relevant and adapted to the fast-changing overall environment (economic, social, aid-related) and WASH specific context in the region?</td>
<td>Evidence of understanding and UNICEF capability to change intervention modality where appropriate</td>
<td>Key informant interviews UNICEF CO, RO and external actors&lt;br&gt;Online survey&lt;br&gt;Stakeholder workshops at country level&lt;br&gt;UNICEF Country strategy documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 Where should UNICEF position itself to strengthen its added value and make better use of its comparative advantage, e.g. positioning/niche/added value vis-à-vis: the government; the private sector; national NGOs and private initiatives, whose capacities and engagement are growing? Vis-à-vis other donors?</td>
<td>Evidence of understanding of market niche and of intent and organisational processes which allow it to develop an appropriate range of intervention modalities</td>
<td>Key informant interviews with external actors&lt;br&gt;Stakeholder workshops at country level&lt;br&gt;Online survey&lt;br&gt;UNICEF country strategy/reporting documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Effectiveness: Extent to which the country programmes are on track and contributing to scaling up innovations introduced by UNICEF?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 How has RO support to the Country Offices been taken up, in terms of knowledge generation and sharing/utilization, technical assistance and capacity building, policy advocacy etc?</td>
<td>Evidence from CO and RO for support type, form and effectiveness</td>
<td>UNICEF CO, RO&lt;br&gt;Country Programme Reports and plans&lt;br&gt;Key informant interviews with UNICEF RO and CO&lt;br&gt;UNICEF Staff perception survey 2017&lt;br&gt;Online survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 What are the operational implications of the strategic shifts (challenges and adaptations) needed from UNICEF (e.g. in terms of HR, skillsets, funding sources and mobilization strategies, and new areas of work) due to the evolving programming context and strategic shift in WASH programming?</td>
<td>Evidence of contextual and strategic analysis&lt;br&gt;Evidence of UNICEF capability to change intervention modality where appropriate</td>
<td>Key informant interviews with UNICEF CO, RO&lt;br&gt;Online survey&lt;br&gt;The evaluators have used the Theory of Action to look at the organisational implications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 To what extent has there been a progressive evolution of CO WASH programmes from downstream to more upstream (modelling, innovation, system strengthening etc.)? Has this evolution materialized whenever it was appropriate and feasible?</td>
<td>Evidence of shifts from downstream to upstream modalities and organisational processes that underpin shifts</td>
<td>UNICEF internal documentation: CPDs, CO WASH strategies where they exist, evaluations&lt;br&gt;Key informant interviews (remote interviews.&lt;br&gt;UNICEF CO, RO staff&lt;br&gt;External actors&lt;br&gt;Country visits&lt;br&gt;Case Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 What are the most and less effective strategic approaches at regional and country level for achievement the program strategies and results? (upstream vs. downstream, single sectors vs. multi-sectors)</td>
<td>Triangulated evidence of results being achieved&lt;br&gt;Evidence of assessment of what strategies are effective and which are not and effective reporting of these</td>
<td>Independent evaluations&lt;br&gt;UNICEF internal documentation&lt;br&gt;Key informant interviews with UNICEF CO, RO and external actors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Evaluation Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Questions</th>
<th>Criteria for assessment</th>
<th>Sources of evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3. **Sustainability, equity and scalability:** To what extent is the UNICEF WASH programme results within the broader policy environment in the countries and region? | Evidence of analysis undertaken in formal review/evaluation processes triangulated with informed subjective assessments | Stakeholder workshops at country level  
Online survey                                                                               |
| 3.1 What are the major factors which influence the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability and what are the options/solutions and in which context do they work particularly well? | Evidence of planned pilot to scale thinking and strategies, and reflective processes to develop transferable approaches | Stakeholder workshops at country level  
Online survey                                                                               |
| 3.2 What can UNICEF learn from its existing partnerships in the countries? How can UNICEF establish stronger partnership in achieving the SDGs, i.e. with the private sector, central governments, subnational authorities, civil society organizations, academic organization? | Evidence of analysis undertaken in formal review/evaluation processes triangulated with informed subjective assessments | Stakeholder workshops at country level  
Online survey                                                                               |
| 3.3 How is UNICEF intending to go from piloting models in the field to scaling up? Is there a well-thought strategy in place from the onset to allow for this process to happen? What are the upscaling pathways: policy mainstreaming, organized replication by UNICEF and its partners, spontaneous diffusion in the field? Are the scalability factors put in place by UNICEF and its partners to allow for either of these pathways to materialize? | Evidence of planned pilot to scale thinking and strategies, and reflective processes to develop transferable approaches | Stakeholder workshops at country level  
Online survey                                                                               |
3.5. Limitations and constraints

3.6.1 Team availability
Reconfigurations to the evaluation team were necessary due to the resignation of the original team leader and illness of one key team member. Therefore, the team of consultants initially proposed by IOD PARC for this evaluation were changed prior to completion of the inception phase and the evaluation delayed. IOD PARC ensured that suitable replacements were provided and brought in to complete the assignment.

3.6.2 UNICEF staff availability and turnover
Engaging with UNICEF staff was often challenging, given workloads and turnover. Interviews were often difficult to organise and the number of responses from the online survey were lower than expected. A shorter survey might have increased the response rate. The depth of data and insight gained from the country visits illustrated the value of on-site engagement and face-to-face discussion in an evaluation where the ‘object’ both evolves and is complex. The team worked to address these challenges through making extra time to hold interviews and being as flexible as possible on country visits. The difficulty in getting a fourth country visit highlights within the evaluation timeline illustrates a tension in UNICEF’s organisation structure, where the Regional Office has an advisory role and country visits need to be agreed by COs. Staff turnover was a limitation in terms of availability of key informants who had seen the country programming evolve from pre-2015 to when the new Global WASH Strategy was developed and rolled out.

3.6.3 Scope
Given the resources available the evaluation scope was very broad, given the number countries to be covered within the resource envelope provided. At inception a possible reduction in questions was discussed but the evaluation team were advised that all questions would need to be addressed. The evaluation team do feel that all questions can be addressed given the evidence collected, although the strength of evidence available does vary. Table 1 shows the evaluation team’s assessment of strength of evidence against each question. Green (strong evidence) represents triangulated evidence from 5 or more sources to include document, interview and/or survey data and independent evaluation; yellow (medium) shows where there are 3-5 sources of evidence including the triangulation of interview/survey data with documented evidence and where there is a reasonable level of confidence; red (weak) illustrated where evidence is single or dual and/or primarily subjective opinion i.e. purely interview or survey data.
Table 1: Strength of Evidence to answer evaluation questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Questions</th>
<th>Likely Strength of Evidence</th>
<th>Key data issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 To what extent are the objectives, strategic approaches and implementation modalities of UNICEF WASH Strategies in this region well adapted to the current and future regional and country contexts?</td>
<td>strong</td>
<td>UNICEF programs are reasonably well articulated although the ‘nesting’ of WASH activities within broader objectives complicates the process of pulling out WASH objectives and implementation modalities. The availability of good country context analyses from other WASH actors provides useful data to triangulate with UNICEF assessments and these were also able to be triangulated with interview and online survey data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 To what extent are they aligned with the 2030 SDG agenda?</td>
<td>medium</td>
<td>UNICEF has focused on MDG level indicators such as ODF rather than those which measure safely managed services. Country M&amp;E systems are also not aligned and there is often limited targets and data collection processes which align to safely managed services or ‘reaching the last mile’. The alignment of strategic intent is easier to assess from documents and this has been triangulated with interview data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 To what extent are they aligned with the new UNICEF Global WASH Strategy?</td>
<td>strong</td>
<td>The team have used NVIVO (a software analysis tool) to review Country strategy/programme documentation which has allowed a clear traceable mapping process against the Global Strategy with evidence triangulated through interviews and the survey.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 To what extent do they appropriately respond to the current and future challenges and needs of the country WASH sector?</td>
<td>medium</td>
<td>Answering this question has relied on the opinions of interviewees and survey respondents. It is difficult to verify this beyond alignment to these views.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 To what extent have these strategies and implementation approaches contributed to position UNICEF as a key player in the national and regional development agendas?</td>
<td>strong</td>
<td>Interview and documentary evidence clearly shows UNICEF as a major player in the sector. The major question is UNICEF’s ability to adapt to the SDG agenda given the previous focus on MDG appropriate intervention strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 How can the new Country Program’s objectives, approaches and modalities be more relevant and adapted to the fast-changing overall environment and WASH context in the region?</td>
<td>weak</td>
<td>Answering this question has relied on the opinions of interviewees/survey respondents and to some degree the interpretation of the evaluators. The limited number of survey respondents impacts the strength of the evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 Where should UNICEF position itself to strengthen its added value and make better use of its comparative advantage?</td>
<td>medium</td>
<td>This question is not evaluative and asks for informed subjective opinion. Given this is likely to be different across countries within the region it would be expected to provide a range of answers though some key themes have emerged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 How has Regional Office support to the COs been taken up?</td>
<td>strong</td>
<td>The evaluation has the results of a staff perception survey as well as responses from the online survey and interviews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 What are the operational implications of the strategic shifts needed from UNICEF (due to the evolving programming context and strategic shift in WASH programming)?</td>
<td>weak</td>
<td>This is reliant on the subjective analysis of interviewees and the evaluators.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 To what extent has there been a progressive evolution of Country WASH programmes from downstream to more upstream?</td>
<td>strong</td>
<td>Evidence to answer this question is mixed given the different level of analysis possible at a country level. Evidence from the three countries visited is stronger compared to those where there has been a reliance on high level documentary evidence and remote interviews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Questions</td>
<td>Likely Strength of Evidence</td>
<td>Key data issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 What are the most and less effective strategic approaches at regional and country level for achievement of program strategies and results? (upstream vs. downstream, single sectors vs. multi-sectors)</td>
<td>medium</td>
<td>The documentary evidence – primarily evaluations - we have is not strong on assessing the effectiveness of strategic approaches as it tends to focus on project and programme outputs. It is also uneven across the region and over time. Evaluative evidence is limited in particular on 'upstream' interventions. Given that WASH programming is also often nested within broader programme approaches the evaluation is more reliant on subjective opinions than verified results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 What are the major factors which influence the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability and what are the options/solutions and in which context do they work particularly well?</td>
<td>medium</td>
<td>The identification of sustainability factors comes through survey and interview data and though there is a reasonable amount of evidence this is primarily a collective subjective opinion. Evaluation reports do provide some triangulated views, but these are also often collected from subjective opinions which are forecasting future performance. Documentary evidence which shows UNICEF programming is sustainable is limited and the best example (CATS\textsuperscript{55}/CLTS) is perhaps now less persuasive given the switch to SDG level service provision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 What can UNICEF learn from its existing partnerships in the countries?</td>
<td>strong</td>
<td>Where interviews with partners has taken place (on some country visits) it is possible to cross reference and UNICEF staff views. In countries not visited evidence is weaker and though there is some evidence from the online survey the low against documentation number of responses limits this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 How is UNICEF intending to go from piloting models in the field to scaling up?</td>
<td>medium</td>
<td>There is some evidence with good data from countries visited (in particular China) where documentary evidence can be triangulated with interview data.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence Ratings</th>
<th>Descriptor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Strong evidence is characterised by having 5 or more sources that corroborate it (these can be narrative as well as from key informants) and include independent evaluation. Clear on perspectives and positions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium evidence will have fewer (3-5) corroborative sources of evidence including the triangulation of interview/survey data with documented evidence. It is typified by having more range and difference in the perspectives and positions given.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>Weak evidence has 1-2 sources of evidence which is subjective i.e. purely interview/survey data. There is little substantive clarity on perspectives and positions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{55} Community Approaches to Total Sanitation (CATS) is an umbrella term used by UNICEF sanitation practitioners to encompass a wide range of community-based sanitation programming. CATS share the goal of eliminating open defecation; they are rooted in community demand and leadership, focused on behaviour and social change, and committed to local innovation. The CATS Essential Elements are a framework for action, providing a common foundation for work in the sector while allowing for broad variation in the way programmes are applied and translated locally. Taken from: United Nations Children’s Fund (2009) Field Notes: UNICEF Policy and Programming in Practice. Community Approaches to Total Sanitation.
3.6.4 Data consistency

This evaluation has involved collecting a broad range of data covering a large number of countries. The data is 'wide' rather than 'deep' and is inconsistent across the countries in the EAP region. Strategies cover different periods and only a few programmes have been subject to evaluation. Three countries have been visited and the level of engagement from staff from different countries for interviews and in proving documentation has varied. Some countries - such as Democratic People’s Republic of Korea - have standalone WASH programmes which report on WASH outputs, others - such as China, Vietnam and Indonesia - are nested within broader programme frameworks. This has meant it has been difficult to fairly aggregate or look at each programme equally and has limited the ability to select cases of good practice or learning from across the region. The team have tried to mitigate as far as possible, but it is likely that good examples exist beyond those reported.

Annex C provides a list of all the documents reviewed as part of this evaluation. A common type of documentation reviewed for all 14 of the countries was the Country Programme Document (CPDs), and in some cases two CPDs for a country were reviewed whereby a country had entered a new strategic period during the course of this formative evaluation. Country Strategy Notes, sometimes specific to WASH were also reviewed for nine countries (they were missing for Timor Leste, China and Indonesia). CPAPs were available and reviewed for only three countries (Cambodia, Indonesia and Mongolia). Additional documentation including evaluations were reviewed which covered Indonesia, Philippines, Mongolia, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Timor Leste and Viet Nam, as well as a meta-analysis of UNICEF WASH evaluations from 2007-2015. All documentation was provided by UNICEF EAPRO.

3.6.5 Assessing the effectiveness WASH strategies

Several questions ask the evaluation team to evaluate the ‘success’ of UNICEF strategies. There are several conceptual difficulties in doing this when focusing on effectiveness. Most of the country strategies are either just coming to the end of their strategic cycle or are at the middle of it. The DAC criteria of effectiveness focuses on whether an intervention has achieved its objectives. Many strategies are made up of more than one intervention and often have broad objectives, with indicators which are at project rather than strategic level and some of them are still ongoing. There is little documentation which provides a direct link between WASH activities (which are often nested in broader programmes) and WASH strategic outcomes, so assessing whether they have been effective is difficult unless the programme has been evaluated. Even where they have most evidence which looks at UNICEF’s contribution to upstream work is based purely on subjective views of whether UNICEF activities have influenced changes that may have happened anyway. They also do not consider the contributions others may have made to those changes.

The indicators in the 2016-2030 global strategic plan are also limited and cannot easily be used as benchmarks or standard indicators. This is particularly the case in sanitation which covers most of the WASH activities in the region. ‘Countries implementing a national strategy to eliminate open defecation’ is quite limiting as a measure of effectiveness as the link between UNICEF’s role and the achievement of the indicator depends on further evaluator analysis. It also has limited relevance within the SDG agenda as it doesn’t engage with sanitation levels above basic or the safely managed services of indicator 6.2. Similarly, indicators for Water: ‘countries with drinking water targets’; ‘countries implementing water safety plans’ or ‘with a sustainability plan’ don’t help assess effectiveness without more evaluative work linking UNICEF to their achievement. The team can also not draw from the 2017 Global WASH results report as virtually none of the reported results include evidence or examples from the EAP region.

To mitigate this the team have tried to draw as much from the various data sources we have, but given that some strategies do not have data yet as to whether they have achieved their objectives, even triangulated evidence is often based on making an 'inductive leap' from achievement of project outputs to achieving strategic objectives. This is particularly the case of question 2.4.

3.6.6 Evidence of Sustainability

Assessing sustainability is also difficult as it does require a degree of forward prediction. Although a model of sustainability has been developed by UNICEF which attempts to identify the key factors which lead to sustainability, it has yet to be validated, nor has it been used yet in the region. Question 3.1 asks the evaluators to identify the major factors which influence the achievement of sustainability, though within the region the evidence of sustainability for UNICEF programmes is quite weak, so therefore identifying factors
which lead to success is problematic. Where it is seen as strongest (CLTS/CATS programmes in sanitation) there are still major questions in evaluations as to whether continued (if reduced) levels of Open Defecation Free (ODF) communities shows sustainability or whether there needs to be some signs of communities moving ‘up the ladder’. The team have had to make some assumptions and are basing their assessment of ‘factors for success’ primarily on the collective subjective view of interviewees and survey respondents, triangulated where possible with judgments made in evaluations.
4. FINDINGS

4.1 Relevance

Overall UNICEF strategies are seen to be well aligned to the existing local context and national government strategies and to UNICEF’s Global Strategy. They are only partially aligned to the SDG agenda and to future challenges. There are more programmes focused on sanitation and sanitation in schools and this reflects UNICEF’s local capability and perceived comparative advantage as well as local need.

Qu. 1.1 To what extent are the objectives, strategic approaches and implementation modalities of UNICEF WASH Strategies in this region well adapted to the current and future regional and country contexts?

Interviews and evaluation documentation confirm that UNICEF country programmes are viewed by external stakeholders as being well aligned to both the current government priorities and the needs of children. It is less clear that strategies are well adapted to future challenges such as urbanisation and indicators 6.1 and 6.2 in the SDG’s.

Within the region the greatest strategic focus is on sanitation, hygiene and WASH in schools. In sanitation, levels of Open Defecation Free (ODF) communities is a common performance indicator and Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS)/Community Approaches to Sanitation (CATS)\(^{56}\) is the most common WASH modality in the region\(^{56}\) followed by WASH in Schools (WINs\(^{58}\)).

CLTS drives a demand led approach in principally rural areas, which though important is not sufficient to reach the ‘safely managed’ level of service required for SDG 6.2 (as discussed further in 1.2). UNICEF sanitation strategies focused on urban sanitation, improving supply chains, Fecal Sludge Management (FSM) and access to finance are much less prominent.

The limited focus on water reflects the perceived greater needs for sanitation and hygiene in the region but also reflects UNICEF’s history, organisational capability and comparative advantage in developing and delivering CATS/CLTS and WINs (WASH in Schools). There are exceptions, in DPR Korea, Cambodia and Mongolia there are programmes which focus on improving water quality and these are more aligned to reaching safely managed service levels (SDG 6.1) In the case of DPR Korea over 90% of the expenditure for the WASH programme is on delivering safely managed drinking water services with a focus on longer term gravity fed systems.

There are clear signs that countries are beginning to work more systemically and inter-sectorally. Examples include Vietnam which has a strong multi-sectoral strategic framework and Mongolia, where, emerging challenges around climate change, air pollution and extreme cold and have put significant effort in including these in their WASH programming.

\(^{56}\)Within the documentation the relationship between CATS and CLTS varies. In some documents CLTS is seen one of many tools within CATS which is UNICEF’s own methodological overview. In others it is used interchangeably. In the recent Indonesia STBM study they are viewed as distinctly different with CATS being more systemic; focused on respect, dignity and pride rather than shame, shock and disgust; and less dogmatic about the use of subsidy.

\(^{57}\)Only China and DPR Korea do don’t have CATS programmes

\(^{58}\)9 of the 12 countries have WINs programmes
Qu. 1.2: To what extent are they aligned with the 2030 SDG agenda?

UNICEF documentation shows country’s plans and strategies being only partially aligned to the SDG agenda though most of the strategies under review commenced after the launch of the SDGs in September 2015.59

Figure 5: EAP Country Strategy cycle

The SDG 6 targets focus on achieving universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all with an aim to end open defecation. The SDG 6 indicators 6.1. and 6.2 though are focused on measuring the achievement of ‘safely managed’ service levels in water and sanitation.

The indicators in the UNICEF 2016-20130 WASH strategic plan are aligned to the SDG 6 targets but not to the indicators and this is replicated across WASH programmes in the region. In sanitation most programme goals are focused on ODF targets, even though these are not sufficient to meet the SDG 6.2 levels of service. There is an argument that ODF is a stepping-stone toward moving up the ladder to ‘improved’ and then ‘safely managed’ services, though at present there is limited evidence that this is happening or that programmes have a methodology which will facilitate that progression. Only Myanmar is currently explicitly targeting ‘safely managed services.’

A few countries do use SDG 6 terminology in their results and resources framework such as ‘equitable’ (Pacific Islands, Timor Leste, PNG) and programmes are in general focusing on ‘leaving no one behind’ with sanitation programmes in particular focusing on how to address issues of ODF slippage and ensuring the ‘hardest to reach’ reach at basic level services. If UNICEF though wants to be fully aligned to the SDGs in WASH it will need a significant shift both in strategic approaches and performance indicators modalities to shift programmes to working towards safely managed service levels.

59 The Philippines (2012-2018) and Timor Leste (2015-2019) have strategies that commenced prior to this. Two country programmes began in 2016 (China, Indonesia), five were initiated in 2017 (DPRK, Mongolia, Lao PDR and Vietnam) and two in 2018 (Myanmar and the Pacific). The Philippines and Cambodia both had strategy periods that ended in 2018 and new strategies starting in 2019.
Qu. 1.3: To what extent are they aligned with the new UNICEF Global WASH Strategy?

UNICEF’s global Strategy for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene 2016-2030 is intended to help “guide the organization-wide contribution to global efforts to meet SDG 6 – and the broader SDG agenda - targeting priority interventions for children”. It outlines how UNICEF will support governments and partners to achieve universal and sustainable WASH with a focus on reducing inequalities for the most vulnerable children in both stable and crisis situations.

The UNICEF 2016-2030 global strategic framework has five results areas:

- **Water**: safe, sustainable, accessible, strengthening institutions, building systems
- **Sanitation**: Eliminating OD, moving from a basic level of access for all to safely managed, partnerships, addressing social norms, sustainability, financing, demand, supply.
- **Hygiene**: handwashing, MHM, safe water handling, safe disposal of excreta, promoting key messages at critical times, policy/implementation and monitoring, channels of engagement
- **WASH in institutions**: schools. Health care facilities, childhood care centres, evidence-based advocacy, health and education, programming capacity.
- **WASH in Emergencies**: direct response, leading coordination efforts, children and women, culturally appropriate access, user friendly, secure, mitigate social tensions.

Table 2 shows how elements of the five results areas are covered across the EAPRO countries, based on the Country Programme documents (CPD) reviewed. The tick (check marks) indicate when an element of a results area features in a country programme.

Specific areas where there is alignment between country strategies and the Global WASH Strategy is varied. Country programmes within the region are most aligned in Sanitation and WASH in Institutions, with alignment weakest in water supply. In the countries where there are WASH in emergencies interventions, coherence in general is extremely high.

It is clear that CPD content focuses on certain ‘elements’ of the results areas as the clustering of ticked boxes show, for example ‘access’ in Water, ‘basic access’ for Sanitation, ‘supporting others’ for hygiene, ‘schools’ for WASH in Institutions and ‘leading coordination efforts’ for WASH in emergencies. There are some ‘elements’ that are not referred to in any of the CPDs such as moving towards safely managed, sanitation financing and delivering key hygiene messages at critical moments, and some where only one or two of the CPDs explicitly refer to them, for example ‘safe disposal of excreta’ is only mentioned in Cambodia’s 2016-18 CPD and ‘demand creation’ only in Indonesia’s 2016-2020 and Timor Leste’s 2015-19. Some results areas such as ‘Hygiene’ and ‘WASH in Emergencies’ show less ticks than the other results areas.

A few countries show clustering in certain results areas for example Viet Nam (2017-2021) in water but not the other results areas, and Philippines (2012-18) in water and sanitation. As mentioned in 3.2 CPDs are broad rather than deep so may not outline all of the WASH activities that are being undertaken in a context.

---

60 The CPDs reviewed to inform Table 2 were the CPDs available to the consultant team and ‘active’ during the inception phase and first half of this evaluation process, specifically June-July 2018. Some CPs, for example Cambodia and Philippines have entered new strategic period’s during the data collection part of this evaluation (starting in January 2019). Given this overlap in strategic periods and consequent CPDs, the evaluation team have tried to balance use of both their new CPD and their former ones during the data collection process.
Table 2: Mapping of results areas from the 2016-2030 global strategic framework by country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Water</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Safe</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Access</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Water safety planning</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strengthen institutions and build systems</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sanitation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eliminate OD</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basic level of access for all</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Move towards safely managed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work with partners</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demand creation</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improved supply</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social norms</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Access</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Hygiene</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Handwashing</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MHM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Safe water handling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Safe disposal of secrets</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Delivering key messages at critical moments</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Policy, implementation and monitoring</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Variety of channels for engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supporting others</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>WASH in institutions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health Care Facilities</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other institutions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evidence based advocacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Institutionalising WASH issues in health and education</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>WASH in emergencies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Direct response</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leading coordination efforts</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focus on women and children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mitigate social and gender-based tensions</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Facilities are gender and culturally appropriate, secure and user friendly</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Country Office’s CPDs were reviewed and assessed for their level of coherence with results areas and programming modalities. This was done for all 12 countries that have a WASH programme. The results of this analysis were used to create maps which have been updated to take into account data from the country visits/remote interviews and survey. These are shown in figure 6 for results and figure 7 for programming modalities. The CPDs in use and ‘live’ during the second half of 2018 (specifically in June 2018 when the mapping was done) have been used to make these assessments, rather than any new CPDs starting in January 2019. They therefore offer a view based on a ‘snapshot in time’ and should be viewed with the understanding that CP focus may have shifted in for results areas/programming modalities and or broader country strategy. All country offices (apart from China and Timor Leste) also produced WASH Country Strategy notes, these should align with the CPDs but where appropriate some adjustments have been made. Figure 6 shows how coherent each EAPRO country with a WASH programme is for water, sanitation, hygiene, WASH in institutions and WASH in emergencies as results areas.

Figure 6: Country Program coherence against Global WASH strategy Results areas

UNICEF’s Global strategy for WASH 2016-2030 sets out six programming approaches that are intended to help address the WASH SDG agenda. These are as follows:

- **Strengthen enabling environments**: sector policy and strategy, institutional arrangements, budget and financing, planning, monitoring and review, capacity development.
- **Utilize evidence to promote child rights**: evidence generation, advocate for children including most vulnerable.
- **Leverage sustainable financial resources**: mobilize new funding sources, develop new financing mechanisms to deliver results at scale.
- **Build sustainable markets**: demand creation, government/civil society outreach, media campaigns, community wide programmatic approaches, partnerships with private sector.

---

61 Country programmes were rated as ‘highly coherent’ when the elements of their programme aligned to what is stated in the global WASH strategy, ‘somewhat coherent’ when parts of it aligned and ‘not coherent’ when it was different to the direction provided in the global WASH strategy. ‘No data’ has been used to indicate that the CPD does not mention a certain results area or programming modality.

62 So all EAPRO countries except Thailand and Malaysia.
- **Empower communities**: help communities participate in WASH design and delivery, access information, obtain support and resources, establishment of healthy practices, change social norms.
- **Deliver services and supplies**: support direct delivery for modelling evidence based, innovative approaches and technologies at a large scale, during humanitarian response and reaching the poorest and most marginalized.

Figure 7 shows how coherent this evaluation has assessed each country in the EAPRO region with a WASH programme is against the programming modalities.

**Figure 7: Country Program coherence against Global WASH strategy programming modalities**

When looking at programming modalities the highest level of alignment and coherence was in strengthening enabling environments\(^{63}\) and delivering services and supplies\(^{64}\).

This was verified in the survey data; when asked which programming approaches were primarily used in their context, 66% (19/29) indicated ‘strengthening enabling environment’ and 45% (13/29) indicated ‘deliver services and supplies’. 8 countries, (represented by 41% (12/29) respondents) indicated ‘empowering communities’ and 7 countries (represented by 12/29 or 41% or survey respondents)\(^{65}\) indicated a focus on utilising evidence to promote child rights. 34% (10/29) representing 7 countries indicated ‘leveraging financial resources. Only 14% (4/29 respondents selected ‘building sustainable markets’ representing 4 different countries.

For a few countries, it is difficult to assess alignment to the global WASH strategy due to WASH’s positioning within the Child Survival and Development section, for example in Indonesia. The Global WASH strategy does express the notion of ‘working cross-sectorally’ though, with WASH contributing to areas such as education, health and nutrition. Most countries are attempting to forge links to this extent such as the Pacific Islands, PNG, DPR Korea which shows alignment to the strategy. WASH is also incorporated under CSD in Mongolia, Indonesia and Viet Nam.

---

\(^{63}\) 10 countries in the region being rated as highly coherent or somewhat coherent (Cambodia, DPR Korea, Indonesia, Myanmar, Timor Leste, Viet Nam, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Pacific Islands)

\(^{64}\) 8 countries in the region rated as highly coherent or somewhat coherent (DPR Korea, Laos, Viet Nam, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Pacific Islands, Myanmar)

\(^{65}\) Cambodia, Indonesia, Timor Leste. DPR Korea, Laos, Philippines, Papua New Guinea)
Given that the Global WASH Strategy is so broad, all CPs are aligned to some extent, but it is clearer where this alignment is in some CPs compared to others. The China country programme (2016-2020) clearly illustrates being aligned to the UNICEF global WASH strategy i.e. ‘where it fits’, especially given their focus to increase access at scale. It clearly targets WASH in Institutions and Sanitation, as well as complementary activities on Hygiene and WASH in emergencies support when required. The ‘pilots to policy to results’ CO strategy is well aligned to an approach of utilising evidence to go to scale and for strengthening enabling environments. There is intent to address other areas such as sanitation marketing, urban WASH and engaging with the private sector and leveraging financial resources though the strategy documentation and approach to doing this is rather limited.

The Cambodia country office began a new strategic period (2019-2023) during the course of this evaluation. The consultant team have reviewed their new CPD and accompanying WASH strategy note, which provides a good example of how strategies evolve and highlights how Country Programmes can switch their alignment to the global WASH strategy.

Cambodia’s 2019-2023 CPD shows greater focus on strengthening community, market and finance-based approaches for addressing ODF than their previous strategy. It intends to improve Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) in schools, and communications for sustainable WASH behaviour change as part of its hygiene work. It is also concentrating on WASH in emergencies and WASH in institutions, the latter of which to include elements of modelling and scale up. The CPSN also explores how it will use various (8 in total) implementation strategies as part of their contribution to change. These implementations strategies correspond well to the programming approaches as outlined in the Global WASH strategy, particularly for strengthening the enabling environment. Further analysis of the Cambodia CO in the context of both CPDs can be found in Annex G.

Not all COs in the region have separate WASH strategies, and this was reaffirmed in the survey; 40% (4/10) answered that they didn’t have one, 60% (6/10) that they did and a further 31% (9/29 of total respondents) skipped the questions suggesting some possible confusion or uncertainty. The evaluation thus had to delve deeper into a broader range of sources i.e. documentation and interviews to draw the conclusions regarding coherence.

In terms of the level of influence the Global Strategy had on country strategies, the responses were mixed. Survey data found that 9 respondents (31%) felt their WASH country programme was ‘highly influenced’ by the global WASH strategy and 2 that it was ‘partially influenced’. 8 respondents (28%) skipped the question and didn’t answer it at all.

Qu. 1.4 To what extent do they appropriately respond to the current and future challenges and needs of the country WASH sector?

In the interviews, documents and survey responses the challenges identified were split between those which focused on technical areas and those that looked at process or institutional issues.

The survey focused primarily on institutional or ‘upstream’ challenges with very little focus on technical WASH issues. 37% (11/29) of survey respondents identified leadership, commitment and prioritisation of WASH by governments as the most important current challenge, with 20% (6/29) sighting the need for enabling policy/legal/regulatory environments. These were also the most commonly identified significant future challenges for the WASH sector (37% and 15% of respondents respectively).

CPD’s and Country Strategy notes highlighted increased urbanisation, climate change/emergencies, sector financing and the need for multi-sectoral working as well as levels of government and stakeholder capability. During the country visits and interviews the focus was more on what UNICEF should look to address and again the primary focus was on addressing system issues such as how to get results at scale working through partners and sustainable solutions. There was a sense from external partners that UNICEF has clear strengths based around its convening power, its relationship to government, its ability to take both a catalytic role and technical lead within the sector, and the potential to support multi-sectoral working. There were mixed views about UNICEF’s how appropriate UNICEF’s modalities are to address future challenges. There was strong support for UNICEF supporting capacity building and

66 These implementation strategies are stated as being: developing and leveraging WASH resources and partnerships, fostering WASH innovation for children, harnessing quality WASH evidence for children, programming excellence for at scale results for children, working with WASH businesses and markets, targeting technical assistance to barriers and bottlenecks, working across ministries and sectors at national and subnational level and adopting a complete commune or district wide approach.
advocating/helping develop effective policy and legislative frameworks. There was less confidence over UNICEF’s ability to go into new areas in particular urban water or sanitation, or to adapt its CATS methodology to include sanitation marketing and partnerships with the private sector.

UNICEF staff were also unsure as to how well equipped the organisation is to meet future challenges. In the survey 24% (7/29) of respondents indicated their strategy/programme to be only ‘somewhat well aligned’ to address these challenges and only 9% (3/29) survey respondents thought they were well aligned. 6% (2/29) felt they were ‘less well aligned’ and 3% (1/29) thought they were not well aligned at all. In interviews, limited staffing was seen as both a constraint to developing new strategic approaches but also helpful in shifting UNICEF ‘upstream’ as limited resources means that wide scale service delivery is not possible.

Generally, country WASH strategies do try to respond to identified challenges to some degree, given resource constraints, and all of them give due consideration and appraisal to the overarching features of their own WASH context and nuances. For example, in Myanmar, the recent development of a National WASH strategy is considered a major achievement and the process of its creation was used to get the different ministries to work together in terms of government engagement and supporting for full house connections to metered water supplies.

Qu. 1.5: To what extent have these strategies and implementation approaches contributed to position UNICEF as a key player in the national and regional development agendas?

In all of the countries in the region UNICEF is an important player in the WASH sector. Its institutional credibility comes less from specific strategies and implementation approaches and more from its history of engagement and willingness to develop approaches in partnership with Governments. Clearly UNICEF is seen as the major implementer of CATS/CLTS and WINs but interviewees were clear that it’s ‘key player’ position derives from its institutional credibility, convening power and global spread.

In some countries UNICEF leadership roles are seen as central, such as in technical working groups with government (such as Cambodia with the Ministry of Rural Development and DPR Korea leading the WASH sector working group with the participation of the Ministry of Urban Management), or clusters (Lao PDR is the cluster lead for WASH in emergencies, Indonesia leads the coordination of the nutrition and WASH clusters, and Philippines co-leads the WASH cluster as well as nutrition, education and child protection sub clusters) for example.

UNICEF’s push to move ‘upstream’ and focus on strengthening enabling environments and a move from service delivery to facilitating interventions going to scale and knowledge generation, may shift stakeholder views of UNICEF’s ‘key player’ position. Some interviewees felt this might fill a gap left by the World Bank’s Water and Sanitation Programme (WSP) though others also felt it would be important to check for duplication and overlap with other organisations who work in this sphere such as WaterAid and Practical Action.

Qu. 1.6: How can the new Country Program’s objectives, approaches and modalities be more relevant and adapted to the fast-changing overall environment and WASH context in the region?

The CPDs and WASH strategy notes show that COs are changing and adapting their objectives, approaches and modalities. In particular there is a consistent move towards trying to improve the policy and legislative frameworks and develop the capacity of the WASH system (government and other actors) to deliver better more equitable services.

Interviewees suggested that improving programme relevance and adaptability could focus on a) increased levels of flexibility, so changing course more quickly b) enhancing existing modalities so they are aligned with new goals and c) developing new approaches or partnerships in areas which UNICEF hasn’t worked on before. Contracting arrangements, performance frameworks and M&E systems and processes will also need to align with these.

Increased flexibility could be driven by more frequent reviews of progress through using tools such as the BAT bottleneck analysis. Reacting quickly may require a change in partnership relationships/agreements to enable UNICEF to mobilise activities more quickly. CATS/CLTS is an established approach but there is still significant work to develop the capability at a country level to integrate sanitation marketing, increase
levels of finance for sanitation and to start tracking safely manage services. As UNICEF works more upstream it will need new and different types of partnerships with those actors who will take initiatives forward. There are models emerging for taking modalities to scale, but these are still developing\textsuperscript{67}; and current strategies are limited in how much attention is paid to certain institutional partners, specifically the private sector. If UNICEF is going to move into new areas such as urban WASH it will need to build its own technical capability, understanding and intervention modalities as well as develop relationships with new partners.

It is noted that climate change is a growing concern for EAP region countries and this is often linked to WASH in Emergencies (WiE) work. The EAPR region is a natural hazard ‘hot spot’ with countries such as Indonesia, Pacific Islands, Philippines and Viet Nam being greatly affected by them. Focused resources, planning and capacity to respond to such under a broader WiE lens would contribute to helping adapt in what can be a fast changing and critical environment.

**Qu. 1.7: Where should UNICEF position itself to strengthen its added value and make better use of its comparative advantage?**

Interview data suggests that UNICEF are a well-known and well-respected actor in the WASH sector of most EAPR countries. External stakeholders feel they are particularly well positioned to develop inter-sectoral working and join up the different sectoral relationships it has at ministry levels to encourage a more coordinated approach towards addressing the SDGs.

The strategies being developed through the CPD and strategy note process are seen to fit the needs of country contexts and do in general play to UNICEF’s strengths particularly in community-based interventions (CLTS/CATS) and using its comparative advantage with government to build an enabling environment through capacity building, advocacy, convening broader groups and developing policy frameworks.

UNICEF will need to make decisions about where it positions itself based also on its own staffing and resource levels, especially if it wishes to go into new areas such as engaging with the private sector or urban programming. Consideration should be paid to the strengths of other development players in these sectors such as the World bank and ADB at country levels. More work could be done on creating demand and increasing responsiveness from governments, for example in Indonesia, and focusing on advocacy at both provincial and national levels.

UNICEF can play a lead role in drawing together its work in key sectors focusing strategically on bringing together results areas where it has technical expertise and comparative advantage such as nutrition, WASH, health, education and child protection. China and Indonesia are examples where this is being done at a strategy level and one challenge will be balancing the ‘power dynamics’ and resource allocations between the sectors in cross sectoral configurations. There is a danger that WASH programming, targets and objectives get subsumed within a broader agenda.

UNICEF will need to continue to foster partnerships with CSOs, private sector and international financial institutions whilst also considering further expansion of the WASH partnership network and engaging with new partners including the private sector.

UNICEF should reflect and learn from current and recent programmes across the region which focus on developing models of scale up\textsuperscript{68}. These models if successful could further strengthen UNICEF’s comparative advantage in an approach which is well aligned to both country contexts and its global strategic direction.

\textsuperscript{67} Please see Box 7 for example from Philippines

\textsuperscript{68} For example in the Philippines (see box 7), China and Indonesia
4.2. Effectiveness

It is challenging to assess the effectiveness of UNICEF’s Country WASH strategies as they are often still in progress and others don’t provide a clear link between project or programme outputs and overall strategic goals. From evaluations undertaken community-based interventions, particularly CATS/CLTS, are effective, and there is some evidence that upstream advocacy is contributing to positive change though the evidence is less strong. The Regional office supports country programmes, in particular through the provision of technical advice and there is evidence of programmes evolving to having a more ‘upstream’ focus. Approaches which don’t include exit strategies or post project follow up are seen as least effective and limited staff numbers affects what UNICEF is able to achieve.

Qu. 2.1 How has Regional Office support to the COs been taken up?

The EAPRO regional WASH support to COs is expected to cover a range of areas including strengthening capacity, budgets, coordination, SDG monitoring systems of national Governments, and scaling up tested WASH approaches and models.

EAPRO run periodic surveys to understand how regional office support is taken up. The team have reviewed the 2017 survey. The results suggest that Regional WASH technical support is well valued by respondents and the WASH technical sector received the highest number of complete responses from all sector and area cohorts (95%). The majority of respondents (75%) rated Regional Office support as very good, or good for relevance and alignment to CO priorities and needs. 75% also rated appropriate modalities of support as very good or good. 72% felt support to be timely and 78% considered it high quality.

The evaluation survey also explored elements of EAPRO support. The results of this survey broadly confirmed these elements of “customer satisfaction”. The online survey asked where CO WASH teams mainly received support, with responses indicating a range of sources, according to need and context. For many WASH teams, in-house or nationally sourced consultancies provided a valued channel alongside regional support.

The evaluation asked COs what the most valued contributions they received from EAPRO. The responses can be grouped into four clusters:

- Technical assistance and guidance (China, Myanmar, Pacific Islands, Lao PDR. DPRK, Indonesia, Philippines)
- Quality assurance (Cambodia)
- Provision of strategic direction (Myanmar)
- Access and dissemination of to learning opportunities and materials (China, Pacific Islands Islands)

From interviews, more detail emerged on the access to relevant technical advice (knowledgeable consultants) and access to learning opportunities. Specific examples include the Philippines receiving valued support on Private Sector engagement; Indonesia on Sanitation Marketing; Myanmar receiving support for capacity development; and Pacific Islands on WASH financing.

However, there is also an awareness of the cost in engaging with the Regional Team. Three COs mentioned the organisation and facilitation of Regional Team visits as being time-consuming and resource intensive. Fitting these with existing work schedules led to some resistance in further engagement with the EAPRO as the ‘opportunity cost’ was seen as high.

A more specific challenge for Regional Team input is some countries do not see the support as specifically relevant to their needs. Three countries mentioned this in interviews and four in the survey. For example, too much focus from sectoral advisers on their own sectors without wider understanding, or knowledge, to contribute to critical inter-sectoral and broader picture issues.

Specific requests from COs include opportunities for inter-sectoral working, cross-regional networking and training as described in further detail below:
Working inter-sectorally

All country programmes report engagement in building and strengthening inter-sectoral work in WASH. This is a key priority at Country and Regional Office level given the UNICEF strategic plan and the overlap in results areas (e.g. SDG 4 and SDG 6) and there has been a significant push on this from the EAP Regional Office. Successful examples include joint Theory of Change workshops conducted by Regional Technical Advisors for Nutrition and WASH in China, DPRK and the Philippines. This was highly valued. Despite the strong recognition of the importance of cross-sectoral working and a drive to greater integration, challenges remain in building effective practice. Key questions raised by interviewees:

- How to work inter-sectorally in WASH whilst also supporting the improvement of nutrition and health outcomes?
- How does an inter-sectoral approach translate from a national level (with more capacity) to Regional and local levels (with less capacity)?
- How could internal UNICEF incentive and work-planning structures support cross-sectoral working and support this?
- How can Regional Advisers align their workplans to ensure they can minimise transaction costs for COs and model effective inter-sectoral working?
- Engaging with the Private Sector and fund raising. This takes a lot of effort and support and tends to be focused on more traditional ‘service delivery projects. There is a real need to encourage and provide support for new types of ‘Private Sector’ involvement that support the development of agile programming and bring in appropriate solutions/ideas.

Box 3: An example of inter-sectoral working in the Pacific Islands.

The key challenge and hurdle to overcome is for COs to have the tools, knowledge and support that will enable them to work effectively inter-sectorally and make a significant contribution without ending up with an increase in projects and over-complex programming.

Inter-sectoral working: a good practice example from the Pacific Islands

Some health ministries have a national mandate for rural WASH services which makes it easier to address open defecation linked to nutrition (Solomon Islands) or introduce drinking water safety planning (Fiji). Specific cross-sectoral interventions such as attention to handwashing at health care facilities during vaccination campaigns (Kiribati) originated from the field and were championed by field office chiefs and specialists.

Most prominent are the WinS programmes with the ministries of education where WASH interventions can be blended with ongoing support for ECD. New concepts on WASH and Nutrition are being developed, but there is only limited understanding/grasp of inter-sectoral approaches within governments and donors.

Knowledge Management processes to help learn, network and convene

Whilst COs have their own networks and linkages with colleagues in other country programmes there is a real desire for more peer-to-peer learning, exchanges of tacit information, experiences, approaches and ideas across country programmes and across regions. As well as formal events and exchanges there is also a need for light touch knowledge management processes which don’t just add additional layers of information but include interfaces which act like ‘village notice boards’ or ‘town criers.’ The RO can aim to highlight key messages or sources of information on specific issues through creative mechanisms such as WhatsApp groups, as currently used by the India WASH Teams, message boards or highlights on the Regional Team webpage. This can support their work in effectively disseminating best practice through more traditional channels – guidelines, manuals, other knowledge products, as well as through new approaches such as interactive infographics.

Training, information exchange

Training support is also recognised as an important area of contribution. The recent survey by UNICEF on training recognised that this was especially critical for local staff. Also support in the form of information
exchange or specific initiatives on ‘hot topics’ like climate change or WASH in Emergencies (examples from Cambodia and Myanmar). A key message for EAP from CO Teams is to enable and support them to be ‘more agile’. This is to support them to be effective in achieving and contributing more (at outcome and impact levels) not through trying to do more but through doing less, and on focusing on the right areas – particularly SDG required skills of finance, sanitation marketing and private sector engagement.

Qu. 2.2 What are the operational implications of the strategic shifts needed from UNICEF due to the evolving programming context and strategic shift in WASH programming?

A key operational shift informed by the SDG 6 indicators would be a greater emphasis on the key technical components of ‘safely managed’ service level delivery. This would mean an additional focus and increase technical knowledge for example on improving water quality and FSM. There is also more capability required to support ‘upstream work’, so evidence generation, communication, advocacy and facilitation/convening. More intersectoral working is also seen to be required given the linkages and interdependencies of different SDGs plus maybe greater input from C4D.

Interview and survey data suggest that EAP Countries recognise these shifts would also mean more engagement with the private sector, both in technical areas and to support increased access to finance; and potentially less time on government relationships. Few COs though are clear on how they will manage this.

The operational implications for country programmes mainly focus around the capabilities required to go into new areas and the time, effort and skills needed to build these. UNICEF structures and processes may also have to adapt if UNICEF wants to work inter-sectorally.

COs will need to have the skills and competencies to support and build the capacity of local actors including local government\(^70\). This requires a mix of well supported local staff, access to technical support in key gap areas and potentially consultants strategically embedded in national/local government. One of the constraints faced is levels of staffing. Table 3 shows the limited and variable levels of staff in WASH units across the region. This will clearly limit what is possible and also suggest an important role for the RO in helping support the required shifts.

Table 3: WASH staffing in the region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNICEF Office</th>
<th>P2</th>
<th>P3</th>
<th>P4</th>
<th>G5</th>
<th>G6</th>
<th>G7</th>
<th>NO A</th>
<th>NO B</th>
<th>NO C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPRK</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laos PDR</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongolia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNG</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timor Leste</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A further operational challenge is supporting movement to scale. For example, in Mongolia with the Cold Weather School Sanitation it become clear the key competencies were not just technical or problem solving related but more about analysing stakeholders, developing and communicating evidence and system wide planning and enabling.

\(^70\) Capacity in this section relates to skills, abilities, resources, mandates to be able to effectively carry out a role.
Scaling up will also require the development of more private sector expertise to help develop and implement wider interventions. This is especially the case in if UNICEF goes more into urban programming. For UNICEF this may need to involve bringing in new sources of knowledge and expertise, potentially from other regions and areas. For example, Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor (WSUP). Whilst focused on Africa and South Asia, WSUP has expertise in Urban Sanitation and has an Advisory Section they were recently awarded the Inclusion Award by AMCOW for their work on urban sanitation in the slums of Maputo, Mozambique.\(^7\)

There are operational implications at the Regional level with regards to the huge variation found in government, state and institutional contexts across country offices. The RO is going to need to be able to adapt its support to different contexts, recognising their different environments, capacity levels and programme priorities. Support may also need to be more intersectoral dependent on the CO structures and ways of working.

Qu. 2.3 To what extent has there been a progressive evolution of Country WASH programmes from downstream to more upstream?

CO teams have been working at both ‘downstream’ and ‘upstream’ levels for some time. There has though, been an increase of upstream work, in particular: a greater focus on facilitating an enabling environment; developing policy and legal frameworks; capacity building at national and local level, support to M&E and producing evidence of models that can go to scale. This can be seen in all of the strategies in the region.

The pace and extend of this evolution in practice depends on factors beyond strategic intent including staffing and funding levels, capability, country context, and existing legacy programmes which need to be completed.

Downstream engagement is seen in many countries of operation as part of UNICEF’s competitive advantage and the source of its ‘trusted partner’ status. This trusted long term relationship often provides the foundation for ‘upstream’ engagement but may also accentuate any change to partners who may still see UNICEF as primarily a service delivery provider.

The Philippines provides a good example of how a programme has evolved as illustrated in the shifts made from Country Programme Seven (CP7) 2012-2018 to CP8 2019-2023. The CO engagement on sanitation is now moving more to developing frameworks for scale up and to a bigger role in facilitating monitoring, verification and advocacy based on evidence. There is also a greater focus on addressing more enabling environment challenges such as the lack of a central coordinating body in government rather than on overseeing or delivering projects or programmes.

The WASH programme in PNG provides a good example of an extremely challenging context characterised by minimal service infrastructure and weak capacity at government level. It currently ranks bottom of all Pacific Islands countries for all WASH related health statistics, with over 6,000 diarrhoeal deaths per year and in 2009 cholera re-emerged after 50 years. Unless considerable improvements are made by the government and development partners, PNG will miss the national targets identified in government’s development strategic plan 2030 and the recently approved National Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Policy (UNICEF PNG). In this setting it is reasonable for UNICEF to continue to undertake both downstream work - focused on working with and through local partner organisations – and upstream work, which is focused on training, capacity building and mentoring to WaterPNG.

In comparison, the Indonesia Country Programme, despite having similarly daunting challenges with vulnerability to natural hazards, a large and rapidly urbanising population and significant pockets of poverty, has a more highly developed linkage between its downstream and upstream work. For example, work on providing safe water is influenced by input to studies on Water Quality monitoring that are then used to advocate for changes in behaviour by communities as well as to lobby for improved monitoring and better service support.

\(^7\) WSUP wins AMCOW AfricaSan Inclusion Award: WSUP won the award for a programme which enabled the Maputo Municipal Council (CMM) to provide high-quality shared sanitation in the densely populated areas or ‘bairros’ of Maputo, where there is neither space nor money for a toilet for each household. Our innovative model has been recognised as an effective solution which shows that well-designed shared latrines can improve quality of life for the poorest urban residents. https://www.wsup.com/blog/wsup-wins-amcow-africasan-award-for-our-work-in-mozambique/
For countries like Indonesia the evolution between downstream and upstream needs to focus on building on its strengths and looking for innovative ways of leveraging and influencing change. An example of this is in the rapidly growing urban areas where there are still very poor and inadequate sanitation systems. The problem is not lack of funds or funding but demand. UNICEF is in a unique position of being seen as a trusted partner by the government. It needs to be able to build on its skills and expertise in evidence generation and advocacy, capitalise on its linkages with government and other sector actors in order to lead on advocacy with government, service providers and communities to address the challenge.

For the Regional Team input and support to these diverse contexts needs to focus on enabling each country programme to have the most appropriate and effective skills mix to deliver both downstream and upstream programming. For countries like Myanmar where the country team have limited skills in Urban WASH, risk informed programming and climate resilience the need is for provision and support to build or support capacity. For the Philippines the challenge is continuing to build on their ‘downstream’ service delivery and further develop their facilitation and support skills, expertise and modalities which support the scale up of the PhilPASS programme.

Qu. 2.4 What are the more and less effective strategic approaches at regional and country level for achievement of program strategies and results? (upstream vs. downstream, single sectors vs. multi-sectors)

As outlined in the limitations of this study, assessing the effectiveness of strategies which are part of broader strategic documents, or are still ongoing is challenging. This is particularly the case when they involve new modalities or results frameworks where outputs don’t link directly to higher level objectives or outcomes. This section looks at the effectiveness of strategy development as well as delivery and has drawn primarily from evaluations which often cover programmes which started prior to the period being reviewed.

**Strategy Development**

The evaluation team have looked at WASH country strategy notes from all countries except China and Timor Leste. These include Theories of Change (ToCs) to assist strategy development by identifying what outcomes country teams want to see and then developing the pathways and UNICEF’s role to help get there.

In Mongolia the Country Programme team took a systemic approach to developing an integrated strategy. Through ‘starting at the top’ and looking at the big issues and challenges they have been able to identify and develop specific programme and cross-sector areas of focus. They intentionally started with a ‘blank sheet of paper’ and then through using various tools such as problem analysis they were able to develop programmes which had effective cross-sectoral linkages embedded from the outset that were outcome focused. This approach also involved and encouraged them to seek support from new actors/donors (in their case KOICA).

Other countries have utilised similar analytical and stakeholder consultation processes. Lao, Pacific Islands, Cambodia, PNG and DPR Korea have sector specific notes; whereas the Philippines and Mongolia ToCs are nested within the broader outcome area of ‘Infants, Children, Adolescents and Women Survive and Thrive’. The recent evaluation (2018) of Vietnam’s 2012-2016 Rural Sanitation and Hygiene Programme highlighted the use of bottleneck analysis in supporting the effectiveness of the programme. The evaluation of the community sanitation programme in East Indonesia also commended the strategy development and adaptive management approach in leading to effective operations.

In development ToCs have become popular due to the increased recognition that change is complex and traditional planning processes don’t provide the adaptability and focus on learning that is required to support more systemic level and outcome focused improvements.\(^{72}\) It was envisaged that ToCs should map out that complexity and address the concern that other planning frameworks, such as logframes, have a ‘missing middle’ where the link between outputs and outcomes is often unclear or not mapped out.

The strategy development process being used seems to be participatory and analytical and leading to effective programme design, however the evaluation team have a concern that UNICEF WASH ToCs, although supporting an improved planning process, still have a gap between output and outcome which could be addressed with a layer of intermediate outcomes. The ToCs illustrate and help facilitate the importance of UNICEF moving from ‘downstream’ to ‘upstream’ programming and show why this is where

the most significant change needs to happen. They don’t in general, though, focus on the key changes or levers that can bridge the gap. These are mainly articulated as assumptions. Issues such as ‘government commitment or prioritisation’, ‘resource allocation’, ‘steady donor funding’ or ‘sectoral communication’ are often ‘outside the boxes’, rather than the key targets of change that UNICEF activities/or programming are trying to ‘measure’ or show where they influence. The evaluation team recognise the challenge in defining and measuring process indicators but if UNICEF is going to understand its role and contribution and learn about what makes certain upstream strategies work and influence sustainable change, then developing these might help them further.

**Strategy Delivery**

Recent evaluations on sanitation programmes in the region provide useful data on UNICEF WASH programmes including both upstream and downstream activities. They are largely consistent in their assessment of UNICEF’s effectiveness. They are all broadly positive and in particular highlight the effectiveness of efforts to influence policy change and supporting national and local governments in a way which may lead to scale. It is not clear though how UNICEF’s contribution to these changes are being assessed. They also suggest that CLTS/CATS is delivered effectively with target numbers of ODF communities in general being met, though the evaluation of the Solomon Islands programme was less positive. Sanitation marketing interventions are not seen as being as effective and the major weaknesses in CATS/CLTS identified are in post ODF support and monitoring.

There have been four recent evaluations of WASH in Schools programmes. All the programmes (except Solomon Islands) are seen to have effectively implemented both construction and behaviour change activities and have provided models which may form the foundation of going to scale. Weaknesses are also similar with concerns over lack of an exit strategy or effective follow up to ensure sufficient local capacity going forward.

The recent evaluation (2017) of Philippines 7th Country programme give a positive view on UNICEF’s upstream work in WASH in influencing policy change and also suggest that the WASH 3-Star model in schools has been effectively supported by UNICEF and has the basis to go to scale. Lack of follow up on ODF communities was also identified as a barrier to effectiveness.

In interviews stakeholders when able to give a view have also supported the view that UNICEF supports effective CLTS triggering, can deliver water supply projects and WASH in schools programme effectively and given its position with government can influence policy, provide capacity building and convene broad stakeholder groups. They also concur with the evaluations that post intervention support and engaging in areas such as sanitation marketing is less strong. They also emphasize the importance of strong partnerships for effective delivery.

It is difficult to assess the effectiveness of approaches which support going to scale as few have been evaluated and internal reporting of effectiveness is limited. The model for the China team of moving from pilot, to evidence, to policy to scale, mirrors the government’s own approach to supporting social change. UNICEF staff noted that they feel taking this approach and the design and delivery of pilots provides them with an entry point to engage with government and sets the scale up process in motion, but their future role in supporting going to scale is more emergent. China is obviously different to other countries in the region as it the government has huge resources; however, it will be important for UNICEF to start thinking about what factors/contribution it brings to effectively delivering scale. These may include engaging key influencers; bringing in new actors such as donors, the private sector, advocacy and communications and developing and supporting a systemic approach to going to scale.

The evaluation team have limited evidence on the effectiveness of multi-sector interventions as these have not been evaluated.

### 4.3. Sustainability, equity and scalability

The evidence that UNICEF’s WASH work in the region is sustainable is limited. All of the evaluations that the team have reviewed highlight this as an issue. Community focused sanitation interventions (CATS/CLTS) are seen as most sustainable but there are question marks over ODF slippage and lack of
progress up the sanitation ladder towards safely managed services. The key factors identified which are believed to support sustainability are mainly institutional rather than technical; those which lead to non-achievement focus on limited post-implementation follow up and lack of an exit strategy. There is limited focus on equity and the assumption that CATS is equitable because of its methodology needs to be challenges given that ODF slippage tends to occur amongst the poorest and most vulnerable. There are promising examples of scale up approaches, but these are not sufficiently advanced to be validated.

Qu. 3.1 What are the major factors which influence the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability and what are the options/solutions and in which context do they work particularly well?

Fifteen evaluations covering UNICEF WASH programmes in the region were part of the document review. All were to a certain degree critical of the sustainability of UNICEF programming.

The meta-analysis of WASH programming from 2007-2015 suggested sustainability was, at best, moderate. Levels of sustainability of drinking water provision measured by functionality rate was 60 to 90 percent and the level of sustainability of latrine use one to five years after OD certification was comparable with a progressive decrease over time. The 2014 CATS evaluation also identified sustainability as the main long-term concern and identified no examples where communities targeted by CATS programmes are showing signs of moving up the ladder and adopting more sophisticated sanitation facilities after the certification process.

These evaluations were broad and included programmes outside the EAP region, covering interventions before or during the early part of the period covered by this evaluation. Recent WASH evaluations conducted in Timor Leste and the Solomon Islands though, provide a similar picture. Reversion to OD in Timor Leste in its CATS based programme was between 42 and 53 percent. In the Solomon Islands only four of 42 communities triggered were verified or in the process of being verified ODF by the end of the project. The supply chain for both water and sanitation in the provinces was limited, with evidence indicating that without this and the construction of improved latrines they would revert back to open defecation. Given that slippage tends to be amongst the poorest and most vulnerable this was also an equity issue.

The evaluations of sanitation programmes in Vietnam and Indonesia were more positive, particularly as ODF achievement has been high, they reported policy changes had been influenced and there was commitment from local and national government. They also report concern about ODF slippage, particularly amongst the poorest in communities and weaknesses in post ODF support and monitoring.

The evaluations of WASH in schools programme in Indonesia, Mongolia and Laos all report sustainability was possible as behavioural change components seemed to have achieved results and policy and enabling frameworks and government actors had been influenced. The risks focused on post implementation follow-up, monitoring and operations, maintenance and access to facilities.

The WASH meta evaluation suggests that for sanitation too much attention is paid to the technical and financial determinants as an explanation for reversion to open defecation than to institutional determinants and the enabling environment. These are equally critical.

UNICEF’s Strategy for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene 2016-2030 articulates a significant shift in the Global UNICEF’s approach, evolving from a model focusing primarily on activities that provide finance and technical assistance for WASH service delivery (downstream) to ones focusing on building and strengthening institutional systems and the enabling environment (upstream). To a certain extent, this can be seen as a tacit model for sustainability and addresses the need to support systems and an enabling environment to ensure sustainable WASH services and supply

However, there is little evidence that country programmes, or regional and global WASH strategies, are fully articulating the way that SDG 6 shifts the definition of sustainability, and therefore the key role that UNICEF can play within that.

Key elements the evaluation team would expect to see in any sustainability model informed by SDG 6 would be a greater emphasis on key technical components of ‘safely managed’ services. This would mean additional focus on water quality, FSM and urban coverage, as well as more engagement with private

---

75 See Annex C for list
sector actors. EAP Countries are already recognising the key role the private sector and access to finance will play, although few are clear on how they intend to engage effectively.

UNICEF has developed a sustainability framework and tools, such as third-party sustainability checks and sustainability compacts, but none of the countries in EAPRO report having participated in these. In the 2016-2030 review presented at WASH Net 2018, none were identified as having done so.

Limited evidence has emerged from this inquiry to suggest UNICEF has a coherent sustainability strategy across the region, designed to respond to the particular conditions of SDG 6, within the context of the 2030 Agenda. It is also not clear that COs individually are working from robust definitions and approaches to sustainability that centre SDG 6. The major factors guiding programming activity and approach are primarily concerned with an institutional focus, including effective and equitable decision making and building government leadership and capacity. While this does speak to institutional sustainability, it may not be sufficient.

The majority of CPDs for the EAP COs do not explicitly mention sustainability. Others use the term in more general use to refer to “ongoing/sustained” activity. 5 CPAPs/CPDs mention sustainability in the context of environmental sustainability and resilience.

This is reflected in the top factors cited by Country Office WASH teams in their survey responses. Country Office WASH teams were asked to supply the top 3 factors they saw as being key to influencing the sustainability of WASH services in their context.

Their responses can be grouped into 5 clusters:

- **Government commitment and ownership** (DPRK, Lao PDR, Cambodia, Myanmar, Pacific Islands, PNG, Timor Leste); and **championship** (Indonesia) of WASH
- **Policy, standards and regulations** (Indonesia, Myanmar, Mongolia, Timor Leste)
- **Capacity at the national** (DPRK, Timor Leste, Cambodia, Myanmar), **sub-national** (Cambodia) **and local government levels** (DPRK, Lao PDR, Cambodia, Myanmar)
- **Funding/financing** (DPRK, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Pacific Islands, PNG, Timor Leste) including **cost recovery and market mechanisms** (Myanmar) and **O&M funding** (DPRK, Myanmar, Philippines)
- **Community commitment and ownership** (DPRK, Timor Leste) and **behaviours/practices** (Philippines).

Philippines also noted the impact of natural hazards and conflict as a key sustainability affecting factor in their context.

UNICEF’s key contribution to these key factors, as mapped across a collation of individual country responses by factor, are shown in Table 4.

### Table 4: UNICEF’s contribution to sustainability factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key sustainability factor identified by WASH teams</th>
<th>Key UNICEF contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commitment and ownership</td>
<td>Advocacy and support for Governments to demonstrate commitment to WASH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Championing WASH, knowledge management and access to information</td>
<td>Prioritising WASH data collection, sharing stories and best practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy, standards and regulations</td>
<td>Supporting the creation of WASH policies, strategies and plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity at the national sub-national and local government levels</td>
<td>Supporting government through targeted capacity development (managerial skills especially), partnership through delivery, technical support and co-ordination at the national and sub-national levels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Countries within EAPRO with strategies or CPDs starting in 2019, such as Cambodia, are explicitly mapping their strategic activities against the key elements of the Global WASH strategy 2016-2030. In Cambodia’s CPD additional elements of Financing (including private) and Resilience to the 2019 – 2023 strategy demonstrates a shift towards greater SDG 6 relevance.

In China there has been a focus on developing models which can be taken sustainably to scale. Box 4 provides an overview of the approach.

**Box 4: An illustrative example of bringing about sustainable change: WinS, China**

### Sustaining Change in China through WASH in Schools

UNICEF China has been working on WASH in schools since 2006 and is seen by central government as a technical agency with a global perspective, not as a service provider. At local level, the organisation’s history and long-standing engagement on the ground has built trust. Their WASH in schools programme is an example of a programme that “fits” with the above criteria and factors for EAPRO CO determinations of sustainability as shared during this inquiry.

In China, WASH challenges are not primarily at the household level but also focus on the need for attitudinal and behavioural change within the broader community. Improving institutional facilities and community awareness of WASH is a key process to achieve this. UNICEF’s WASH in schools programming has used a range of entry points which to maximise cross ministerial/sector working such as: ‘healthy country‘, keep schools clean’. A push on equity also helps ‘sell’ the need for WASH in schools.

The programme has shown positive results that illustrate going to scale. A UNICEF supported model in 3 counties in Chongqing from 2011 has been replicated to all 40 counties. A UNICEF investment of RMB 5 million has leveraged RMB 700 million of government investments. A Train-the-Trainer programme delivered nationally to 180 education officials has cascaded down so 7,000 local education officials and teachers have been reached in more than 140 counties.

**Key success factors:**

- Capacity building as an engagement approach
- Bringing in the latest ideas and tools and showing how interventions have worked elsewhere (even in very different societies such as in India or Kenya) is seen as a good driver for change.
- The importance of ‘visible’ change and impact on lives of children. Examples of behaviour change are really important. Ensuring policy makers, key stakeholders visit and experience what is different is a powerful form of advocacy.

**Key challenges:**

- Limited assessment of how and what the key features/conditions are for successful scale up, as well as M&E frameworks to measure against these.
- UNICEF internal co-ordination and collaboration practice, and skills mix at a country level

However, as outlined above, the above programme may illustrate sustained change, but may not be sustaining the kind of change needed to address key SDG 6 criteria.
Qu. 3.2 What can UNICEF learn from its existing partnerships in the countries?

Partnerships are central to UNICEF’s operating model. Evidence from documentation and other inquiry methods suggests that across the EAPRO region, UNICEF develops good partnerships with local and national governments. Partnerships with NGOs and CSOs are mixed, with some examples of effective partnership working, but others where they are just seen as transactional contractual relationships. The recent evaluation[^78] of partnerships in Indonesia highlight this. Box 5 provides more information about this.

Box 5: UNICEF’s Partnerships in Indonesia.

---

**UNICEF Partnerships in Indonesia**

UNICEF’s partnership approaches are commended as they are well aligned with Indonesia’s policies and focused on the SDGs. Partnerships with local governments are seen as effective especially when there is strong involvement from central line management.

There are several criticisms in the Indonesia evaluation. UNICEF is shifting its partnerships to working with more non-government agencies such as CSOs and Universities, but these mostly concern the implementation of programming for scale partnerships and do not systematically include ‘upstream’ activities. Very few downstream partnerships are seen to lead to replication in other districts and provinces. ‘At scale’ partnerships represented the largest share of budget but had limited upstream results and did not leverage the additional government resources expected. Partnerships with private sector organisations were seen to be short lived which negatively impacted on their effectiveness.

A concern from government was that UNICEF’s partnership portfolio is too diverse, includes too many different partners and needs priority setting. UNICEF should focus more on upstream partnerships though there was a sense that UNICEF is not well set up for these. Most partnerships in Indonesia are not seen as having an exit strategy or plan for long term sustainability.

The recent 2017 evaluation of the UNICEF-BMGF Indonesia Sanitation Programme, whilst being quite positive about certain elements of UNICEF’s partnership approach, emphasized issues partners have on how long agreements were in place for and the reliance on a procurement-based contractor – contractee partnership model:

> "NGO partners showed their concern over the short duration of the partnerships since it causes an extra hassle to follow the complete cycle of proper documentation for the previous and new agreement. Furthermore, the uncertainty about the probability of award/renewal of new contract potentially unfavourably affects the quality of relationship with the UNICEF and government on one hand, and the motivation/prioritization to work for short-term projects."

UNICEF Indonesia was seen as needing a framework for partnerships which includes those based on non-financial agreements and clarify whether some partners are actually suppliers not partners. In the evaluation some CSO partners noted the high transaction costs of partnering with UNICEF through the Civil Society Partnership (CSP) mechanism. CSOs do not see themselves as partners but as sub-contracted implementation agencies.

Within the region there are limited documented examples of good operational relationships with the private sector or financial organisations. Indonesia does have an interesting briefing note on its engagement with an Islamic finance agency, though the nature of the partnership – so what each partner gets, how the partners work together etc – is not clearly explained.

As with the concepts of sustainability (section 3.1) and scale up (section 3.3), there is no coherent model that articulates the range or expectation of behaviour, approach or outcomes associated with partnership practice across EAP COs. “Partnership” is used interchangeably to refer to a whole range of different relationships. There are no clear indications from the document review, survey, or interviews across the country office cohort that different types of partnerships are recognised to have different needs, means of management, or measures of success.

To take Cambodia as an example, the 2016-2018 Cambodia CPD uses the word partnerships to encompass relationships with multi-lateral organisations (UNFPA, WHO, FAO, CSF and WFP) multi-lateral financial bodies (World Bank, GSF and the Asian Development Bank) sector actors (WaterAid, World Vision, Plan International, East Meets West and CARE), institutional relationships with varying levels of government agencies, Ministries and national and sub-national bodies and operational relationships with INGOs, NGOs, CBOs and other community organisations to deliver against CATS/CLTS requirements. Cambodia’s WASH programme CSN for their new strategic period (2019-2023) builds on this but also mentions working closely with the private sector including small/medium WASH enterprises, contractors and consultants. Importantly, one of their prime implementation strategies as per this CSN is ‘developing and leveraging WASH resources and partnerships’.

The survey enquired into effective partnerships that countries have had or currently hold. Specifically, the survey asked what government, private sector, implementation, NGO and financial organisation partnerships had been most effective and least effective for each country given their country context and strategic goals. 13 respondents mentioned having had effective partnerships with a government for example Ministry of Rural Development (Myanmar) and Departments of Education (PNG and Philippines). Governments are often considered as both strategic and operational partners.

Survey respondents were asked to identify partnerships they felt were most needed to adapt to future context. Where data was reported, countries in the EAP region see that private sector partnerships are a key mechanism by which future strategic progress will be made. DPRK and Timor Leste reported not having partnerships with the private sector.

However, there is also a shared recognition that that UNICEF does not currently manage or support partnerships with private sector actors well, with no countries across the region identifying that they currently have sufficient skills, capability, capacity or resources required.

Qu. 3.3 How is UNICEF intending to go from piloting models in the field to scaling up?

There is no clear, shared model of different forms of scale-up that guides use consistently across the EAP region. When documents, interviewees or survey respondents refer to scale up, it’s not clear what form of scale-up is meant.

The document review found limited evidence of successful sustainable scale up and at present the upscaling pathways and approaches to working at scale are unclear. There are examples of scale up approaches being developed, Box 4 above and Box 6 below show examples from China and Philippines.

In Indonesia in a Bill and Melinda Gates funded programme a scale approach has been developed with five critical enabling environment factors have been identified: sector policy and strategy, institutional arrangements, sector financing, planning and monitoring and capacity development. A clear scale up process is not described though important elements are identified within a systemic approach. These include effective stakeholder mapping based on identifying the level of influence they may have on required changes; leadership and commitment and good knowledge management including tracking overall progress. UNICEF’s role was seen as a supportive one where they could facilitate, and nurture partnerships given its trusted position with government and non-government players. Also, in Indonesia, a focus on communications activity provided a different conceptualisation of scale – that of reach in behaviour change messaging using social media. The Tinju Tinja ‘Punch the Poo’ online platform raises

---

79 Scaling-up and Strengthening Community Approaches
80 http://www.tinjutinja.com/aksi-nasional-tinju-tinja
Box 6: Going to scale in the Philippines

Going to scale in the Philippines

In the Philippines an indicative route map to scale is being created to help local government planners meet national targets on sanitation. It is building on an approach that has been piloted in eight provinces since 2014 and aims to convert policy goals into doable steps. It involves the identification of four levels of sanitation ranging from 0 – 3 where Grade 0 is open defecation and Grade 3 is sustainable sanitation. A set of ‘Guidelines on the Implementation of the Philippine Progressive Approach to Sustainable Sanitation’ (PhilPASS) have been written which how to progress up the levels or ‘climb the ladder’. Three pillars have been identified: an enabling environment, demand creation, and supply and services, and each pillar then has a set of sub-components. All three pillars are expected to be in place for the approach to work. A verification and certification process has been designed to assess the status of each ‘barangay’ (local area unit) and clear roles for different government and non-government agencies have been clarified. Action plans are expected to be generated after verification to help barangay’s move to the next level.

This scale up approach is at an early stage, so the evaluation team cannot assess as yet how effective a model it is, though based on material received it does seem to be coherent and have government buy-in and commitment at a policy level. It aims to take a holistic approach recognising that a number of different activities need to take place simultaneously. In reviewing the approach, it will be important for UNICEF to reflect on where it works well and why and how the different components fit together in which circumstances. It will also be important to assess what factors enhance success when sanitation is one of several competing priorities.

In China, policy change is recognised as a central driver of sustained institutionalised change– much more so than in other regional contexts. Persuading policy makers and budget holders through effectively communicating evidence through in-person demonstrations of the benefits of improved WASH services does lead to changes in policy and then resource allocation. The intervention logic or theory of change for this approach is simple: ‘from pilots to policy to results at scale’ and follows how government operates. This strongly guides programming choices and is recognised throughout the UNICEF CO team. At present there is limited documentation which critically analyses how the different phases link together to achieve sustainable results or key factors both within and between each stage.

In Mongolia the WASH Team recognised that scaling up of innovations was often a challenge. They gave the example of the cold weather portable latrine which had been piloted (together with Plan International) and had good results. Despite the good results and benefits, take up was very limited with implementation in just a few locations. To address this challenge, they were considering using a brainstorming approach to look at different ways of scaling up – diffusion, replication etc.

Survey responses by Country WASH teams with regards to their strategy and operational experience at taking innovations or pilots to scale gathered very little data. Where CO responses were registered, WASH teams rated themselves as somewhat effective (PNG, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Fiji, Indonesia) at taking pilots to scale, but all recognised that more could be done.

81 In lower case, a theory of change can be an informal guide to how an intervention is assumed to bring about change - not a formal ToC which is more structured and includes assumptions etc. That is how this is being used here.
5. CONCLUSIONS

This evaluation aimed to assess how well adapted to current and future needs UNICEF WASH strategies and programmes are in the EAP region. It also intends to inform possible changes or shifts in what UNICEF focuses on in the WASH sector at a country level and identify how it needs to operate to effectively contribute to the SDG agenda. It has also considered how the Regional Office can most successfully support COs to deliver and work effectively within the overarching global strategic framework.

This section is in two parts: firstly, it looks to draw together conclusions from the findings under each evaluation criteria; secondly it uses the ‘theory of action’ developed in the inception phase as a framework to assess UNICEF’s current readiness to deliver effectively and shape suggested changes to inform the evaluation recommendations.

5.1. Relevance

UNICEF programmes in EAP are considered to be relevant, in particular they are seen as aligned with national government programmes. UNICEF is a valued partner who listens to what national governments want, and designs programmes that fit with a locally driven agenda.

The 2016-2030 Global WASH Strategy is extremely broad, so it would be difficult for any WASH programme/set of activities to not fit within this framework. There are some clear patterns that have emerged, and EAP countries are collectively more aligned to certain elements of the framework than others. In terms of areas of focus, UNICEF is doing more work in ‘Sanitation’ and ‘WASH in Institutions’ and less in ‘Water Supply’ and ‘Hygiene’ across the region. UNICEF responds well in WASH in countries where there are emergencies, which has been explored deeper in another assignment IOD PARC is conducting for UNICEF. In terms of programming modalities, the highest degree of coherence is in delivering services and supplies and in strengthening enabling environments. There are some country programmes which have an explicit focus on promoting child rights but only limited evidence of programming in leveraging financial resources, building sustainable markets and empowering communities. UNICEF outlines areas in which it wishes to do better (areas where it already works but wishes to improve in) and new areas in which it wants to work. Although there is evidence of movement from service delivery towards upstream work influencing the enabling environment and intersectoral working, at present there is only limited evidence of programming in Urban WASH, working with the Private Sector and Climate resilient WASH.

Alignment with the SDG agenda is limited. SDG 6 has changed the sectoral ‘goalposts’ through a focus on ‘safely managed’ water and sanitation for all. In sanitation this requires a shift away from focusing on the achievement of ODF as a key outcome measure and a move towards a more integrated demand and supply based model with a greater focus on appropriate technologies, fecal sludge management, the role of the private sector, and access to finance for the construction of improved latrines. In water it means more focus on water quality and the effective provision and finance for operations and maintenance and developing the private sector. The 2018-2021 Regional Office Management Plan (ROMP) continues this trend in particular it continues to focus on basic sanitation as an aim with very little indication that UNICEF is attempting to develop programming which aims to achieve safely managed levels of service delivery.

5.2. Effectiveness

The Regional Office role is very much valued in particular when it provides access to timely, high quality technical advice and training. Countries want more help on cross-sectoral working and learning and networking across the region and globally. The main issues for increasing regional office effectiveness revolve around the processes and costs of engagement and alignment between regional advisers.

It is difficult for the evaluation to assess which country or regional level strategies are more or less effective. Based on evidence from recent evaluations UNICEF is effectively influencing the enabling environment including policy and legislative frameworks. In EAP the most common WASH interventions are WASH in Schools and CATS/CLTS. These lead, in the main, to effective delivery of outputs - that is,
improved services and an increase in ODF communities. UNICEF is weak in post intervention support and monitoring.

Underpinning UNICEF’s strategy are two key elements: the need to support change at scale and to be able to support the achievement of the SDGs. At present there are no validated operational models/modalities which show how scale up is achieved (though there are promising examples) or programmatic models where UNICEF achieves sustainable, SDG-level change.

The move to more ‘upstream’ working and alignment with SDG 6 requires a significant operational shift for COs in both the programmes they design and implement, and how they measure performance and success. This is likely to require mindset change as well as a broader set of skills and technical knowledge. For example, CATS (with its strong CLTS base) is community based and requires partnerships with NGOs and tends to receive limited government subsidy; safely managed services require an increased focus on scaled up cost effective supply and engaging with private sector providers. UNICEF’s M&E system also needs to be aligned to reinforce shifts. This requires moving from activity and output monitoring at project level to, for example, a top down assessment of what system changes are required to achieve an enabling environment. Routine data and KPIs also need to be collected and tracked which shows progress towards ‘safely managed’ levels. This could be done by the government in middle income countries, and is what UNICEF is doing with DFID’s ‘Accelerating Sanitation and Water for All’ (ASWA) in Cambodia and Myanmar.

Similar shifts in organisational processes are also required to reinforce cross-sectoral working. This will prove essential in countries where UNICEF has reduced budgets or because systemic change means host countries require more cross-sectoral support. At present it is difficult for UNICEF staff to ‘formally’ collaborate with staff from another technical area as it is difficult to put objectives and activities in their workplans for work in another sector. During the validation workshop there were questions raised at the CO level as to whether cross-sectoral working will help deliver against SDG 6.1. and 6.2 results.

There are UNICEF wide organisational challenges which impact on UNICEF’s ability to operate this theory of action. Creating/facilitating effective cross-sectoral planning sessions, ensuring cross-sectoral workplans with shared objectives and an M&E system which tracks systems level change would enhance alignment between UNICEF’s espoused strategy and how it can be implemented.

UNICEF will need to recognise that although it is trying to make a strategic shift the foundation of its market position is based on what it has done in the past. UNICEF’s programme is evolving in most countries, but its ‘on the ground’ role is still highly valued as is its partnership and willingness to work with government partners. As UNICEF evolves it will need to think through the pace of that evolution and ensure it builds from where it has a strong base. It will need to prioritise new areas that it must go into – e.g. fecal sludge management, sanitation marketing, water quality – and balance this with areas where there may be more of a strategic choice – e.g. urban engagement, public and private finance.

This analysis will obviously need to be done at a country level and may also impact on the number and type of partnerships UNICEF has. Working in urban areas, fecal sludge management or improved water quality for example involves a significant amount of capital investment which maybe beyond UNICEF in many countries, however it also requires effective broad stakeholder engagement. UNICEF may need to work more closely with organisations like the World Bank, and ADB to optimise joint interventions in these areas and utilise their combined skill sets. UNICEF will need to increase its engagement with the private sector, and this might require an adaptation in operational processes for effective partnerships as the concerns, particularly of small businesses, are often different to comparatively sized NGOs or community-based organisations.

There are clear limitations in UNICEF’s technical knowledge, skills and experience – and staff resources - at a country level which constrain the focus of programmes, and the way in which they are effectively designed and implemented. In particular there are many countries where UNICEF staff have limited experience and knowledge in Sanitation Marketing, engaging with the private sector, and access to finance. Some strategies also suggest a greater degree of expertise in communications, advocacy to influencing support enabling environment level change. It is not essential for all UNICEF staff or Offices to know everything, but it is important that offices either have the internal capability or access to external advice or partners who can fill this gap in a timely manner. It is clear that the Regional Office can play a key part in this.
5.3. Sustainability, Equity and Scalability

UNICEF has been developing a new framework for sustainability in WASH\(^3\) though this has not been rolled out within EAPRO yet. In evaluations the main concern over sustainability revolved around embedding systems-wide change and ensuring intervention benefits achieved such as ODF or WASH in schools weren’t lost because of lack of follow up or post intervention monitoring.

From the documents, interviews and the online survey the factors identified as necessary for sustainability are primarily institutional, including government leadership, commitment at national and local levels, funding and policy. These are quite high level and it doesn’t yet seem these have been linked up with more operational processes for the achievement of measurable SDG change.

UNICEF may need to review its thinking and also its approach to understanding the SDG agenda in terms of sustainability, in particular in sanitation and hygiene. During the validation workshop there was a discussion about what should UNICEF be focusing on, the SDG 6 targets – which include ending open defecation – or the indicators, which measure safely managed services. A corporate view was given resource limitations and UNICEF’s comparative advantage and equity agenda, the focus should continue to be on areas where basic services weren’t in place and therefore on initially reducing open defecation.

There are three issues for UNICEF to consider in taking this approach: a) it is not clear that the main implementation modality – CLTS – achieves sustainable and equitable results for UNICEF. All evaluations of UNICEF work (globally and in the region) report slippage which is highest amongst the most poor and most vulnerable; b) ODF particularly when it is not 100% does not seem as yet to be sufficient to achieve some of the outcomes attributed to it in particular reduction in stunting\(^3\); and c) there seems limited evidence of good and replicable examples where communities (countries) are able to climb the ladder from basic – through CLTS - to safely managed levels.

Given that in the region country governments have committed to safely managed services, an approach which provides a pathway towards this level may need to be taken. Of course, UNICEF will still need to recognise that in some contexts this may not be possible. The approach being taken in Philippines where there is an institutional and systemic ‘climbing of the ladder may prove to a replicable and sustainable model; the alternative approach to consider, recognising contextual differences, is India’s approach which involves a nationally driven district led programmatic approach, including subsidy which aims to ‘jump’ directly to safely managed services in one go.

There is as yet only limited modelling of how pilots will be scaled up. The exceptions to this are China and Philippines (and to a lesser extent Indonesia) where approaches have or are in the process of being delivered. At present, though, there is limited detail as to how this actually works and whether change is based on replication or involves more systemic processes.

In *Equity, scalability and sustainability in UNICEF WASH programming: Evidence from UNICEF evaluations 2007-2015*\(^5\) it is noted there is:

> “a confusion between scalability and sustainability, because evaluations do not define the notion of scalability as a basis and starting point for the analysis. Information is overall scarce. Reports generally only document cases where the programme has been replicated by other development partners or mainstreamed in national policies. Evidence of spontaneous diffusion are seldom investigated. Evaluations reviewed do not highlight as a negative finding cases in which WASH programmes have had a very limited scale and did not try to expand.”

There are good examples of equitable programming, but these are primarily within the context of CATS/CLTS which has an inclusive, participatory methodology. The caveat to this is that though programming is inclusive and equitable there are questions as to whether results are equitable, given levels of slippage are highest amongst the poorest and most marginal. This philosophy is informing other programming approaches, though there are concerns that UNICEF is only applying limited geographical targeting, so whether the needs of the poorest or ‘last mile’ communities are actually being met. In all the evaluation documentation the team have seen there is a question mark over ODF slippage and full

---

\(^3\) Programming for Sustainability in Water Services – A Framework (2018)


coverage in UNICEF programmes. At present it is the poorest and hardest to reach who are seen most likely to slip.

Partnerships are central to UNICEF’s operating model and the evidence suggests that UNICEF’s strongest partnerships are with local and national governments. Partnerships with NGOs and CSOs are mixed, with some examples of effective partnership working, but others where they are just seen as transactional contractual relationships. At present examples of good operational relationships with the private sector or financial organisations are more limited.

UNICEF uses “partnership” as a blanket term to describe a range of relationships with very different dynamics. This difference is not explicitly captured in a shared model of different types of partners, nor an approach to partnership working that outlines what successful partnership looks like suited to different contexts and relationships. UNICEF’s current strategy and the context in which it is operating requires more and different partnerships. Partnership with NGOs, academic institutions, UN agencies or private sector organisations will have different power dynamics. Developing a model of partnership, and an associated framework with clear levels of mutual accountability for different types of partnerships, alongside an effective monitoring framework, would help facilitate and track effective partnership working.

5.4 Theory of Action

The theory of action shown in box 2 (section 3.3.3.) was seen at the validation workshop to be a valid and useful representation of how UNICEF needs to operate if it is to be effective and captures the key dynamics and range of issues to be addressed. During the workshop a couple of amendments – the importance of M&E and networking were added (and are included in box 2). In discussions there was a clear recognition that the role of EAPRO is important to CO performance in particular in helping COs learn from each other, supporting intersectoral working and helping to access expertise in new areas if UNICEF are to expand their focus. The key barriers COs identified were lack of staffing to do all that is needed to work successfully and the need for a continued cultural shift in WASH away from problem solving technically based programmes towards facilitating and supporting institutional change and working at scale.
6. LESSONS LEARNED

The evaluation has generated some important lessons both for the WASH section in EAPRO region and for UNICEF globally. Some of these lessons are highlighted below.

UNICEF is good at designing WASH programmes that are relevant to its context but there is a lag between contextual changes and strategy development. SDG 6 is providing new challenges, particularly on achieving 'safely managed services' and 'leaving no one behind'. It may be worth considering shorter strategic cycles and processes to assist a more adaptive management approach.

Addressing the challenges of SDG 6 is going to require complex, multidisciplinary approaches, effective intersectoral working structures and processes. M&E systems are also going to need to evolve assess safely managed levels of service and track 'upstream' activities so UNICEF’s contribution to changes in the enabling environment and scale up processes can be assessed.

Effective knowledge management enhances organisational learning particularly at a regional level. Given the changes being pushed by SDG 6 being able to capture and share information quickly and easily will help UNICEF learn collaboratively as the WASH strategic agenda shifts.

The primary driver and variable for effective strategy development for UNICEF in WASH is local context. To understand the relevance and the effectiveness of strategy development it is important to engage at a country level. Evaluations of strategy, particularly covering a region, should include visits to all countries which are part of the ‘object’ of the evaluation. This will support a utilization approach as it encourages engagement across the region.

Formative and utilisation focused evaluation requires a methodology and scope that allows for suitable levels and forms of participation. Country visits and workshops provide a mechanism for collaborative inquiry and increased buy-in to findings as they provide an opportunity to both test and expand on discussions. In an evaluation of this nature wherever possible all COS within a region should be visited.
7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Initial recommendations were developed based on the evaluation findings and shared at a workshop in Bangkok in March 2019 attended by representatives from EAP Regional Office and Country Offices. In order to maximise utilisation these recommendations were discussed in small focus groups in terms of their validity, prioritisation and also how they may be operationalised.

The final recommendations below have considered this feedback and were amended; however, it is important to emphasize this is an independent evaluation so the team may have made suggestions which not all parties may agree with. Recommendation 5 has been altered after the initial recommendations were drafted and include reference to documents (EAP Regional Knowledge Management Strategy and WASH Knowledge Management Plan and Progress Update 2018) provided by UNICEF after the Bangkok workshop. Although the evaluation team recognise these documents are formally outside of the evaluation scope, they are relevant to the suggested way forward and therefore to the utilisation of the evaluation.

All recommendations are strategic but aim to provide some guidance as to how they may be operationalised. Recommendations 1 to 4 should be complete within 1 year, recommendations 5 – 9 should be complete within 2 years.

The evaluation team recommends:

1) **UNICEF EAPRO and Country Offices** to review their WASH strategies and areas of focus - in terms of ‘continue learning and adapting’, ‘do better’ and ‘move in new directions’ - as per country needs and context and in line with the Global WASH Strategy and SDG 6.1 and 6.2.

The WASH EAPRO Strategic Framework 2019-2020, in particular, does not currently sufficiently outline or provide guidance as to how countries should address the challenge of meeting SDG indicator 6.2.1.

The evaluation team recommend all countries in the region have explicit WASH strategies which include clear Theories of Change\(^86\). The team recognise that some countries already have these. This is a regional evaluation and the team do not feel (outside of the three country offices visited) that it is appropriate to make specific programmatic recommendations for each country or generalisations for specific groupings or clusters.

The evaluation team support the use of a rigorous country-led strategic planning process to ensure strategic decisions are nuanced and have country level commitment and engagement. Reviews should be undertaken by country teams and align appropriately to existing strategic planning processes. If possible, reviews should happen within the next 6 months and prior to the development of the next CPD.

Engaging in some ‘new directions’ where UNICEF does not currently have technical expertise or experience, such as FSM and engagement with the private sector for example, may be critical for UNICEF to remain relevant in the future. Other areas, such as urban sanitation may not be the best way for UNICEF to leverage their comparative advantage given likely resource levels and comparative advantage in some countries.

The evaluation team suggest that UNICEF set up working groups from across the region looking at methodologies for addressing FSM and urban programming which aim to provide recommendations as to how UNICEF can improve its capabilities in these areas. These groups should report within a 6-month period and should include representatives from relevant organisational units such as the private partnership team. The Regional Office should then provide support to assist country Offices in integrating new/emerging programme areas into new Country Programme Documents.

2) **UNICEF Headquarters and the Regional Office** review the existing M&E framework to ensure it so it can a) effectively track system level change and b) is aligned with SDG 6.1. and 6.2. indicators so can assess progress towards safely managed services.

---

\(^{86}\) The evaluation team recognise that a few countries have developed WASH strategies and recommend that they would benefit from reviewing their strategies against their Theory of Change.
Currently UNICEF’s M&E framework as applied to WASH is focused on service delivery and capacity building and often tracks activities without any overarching system level change framework. While UNICEF has a number of higher-level frameworks which assess the enabling environment, these should be reviewed, and a set of indicators developed, which track the necessary conditions for sustainable change (such as government commitment or access to finance).

These indicators should not just be designed around what it is possible to count, for example, counting number of policy changes does not identify the contribution UNICEF makes or whether those policy changes were crucial for improving WASH services. This will also require UNICEF to start seeing ODF, for example, as an intermediate outcome towards a higher level of service delivery rather than as an outcome. Country Offices should review their WASH M&E frameworks – even if they are nested within a broader intersectoral programme - to ensure they are aligned. This process should be led by the EAP WASH and M&E advisers working with the HQ M&E team.

3) The Regional Office WASH section, with the support of the HR section, should develop a framework of core skills and competencies needed to deliver WASH programmes within the region. This should be led by the EAPRO WASH adviser.

Skills and competencies should cover not just technical WASH skills but also programmatic approaches and working at both downstream and upstream level. Country Offices should undertake assessments, given their country specific context and country WASH programme, of the skills and competencies they have and where there are gaps which may impact on them achieving effective programme results. This mapping should inform CO and RO capacity development strategies, future WASH staffing structures within CPMP, future recruitment and partnership development. It should also consider skills and competencies required in the field offices and at provincial/district levels. The Regional office should also identify any potential opportunities for “multi-country” support models for increased efficiency. The framework development should include working with HQ and other regions to see where there is overlap and to determine the helpfulness of a global framework.

4) The Regional office and Headquarters should initiate the development of a partnership framework which outlines the range of partnerships UNICEF has, their characteristics, what makes them successful and what role UNICEF and its partners are expected to play.

It is particularly important that this framework distinguishes between ‘transactional’ partnerships where UNICEF works with smaller sub-contractors and the range of partnerships which involve more complex power relationships. This evaluation does not have sufficient data to propose a framework. The evaluation team feel it is important for UNICEF to do this analysis themselves (not to outsource the development of this framework to external consultants). It is important to include structured inquiry processes where UNICEF staff engage with existing and future possible partners. The Regional Office should support Country Offices to review their own partnerships and ensure they have a mechanism to monitor their effectiveness and give and receive feedback on how well they are working. It is suggested that this process be led from HQ who should create a global task force, including advisers from a range of countries and sectors to work on this.

5) The Regional Office should review and revise both the content and the process by which it develops its regional Knowledge Management (KM) Strategy and its regional WASH Knowledge Management. It should ensure the Regional WASH KM plan is part of an integrated cross sectoral Strategy

The current 2018 EAPRO KM strategy is weak - it makes no attempt to focus on capturing tacit knowledge and focuses primarily on external reviews, products, evaluations and training rather than balancing this with internal monitoring, sharing, organisation development and reflection. It has no Theory of Change to identify the process or the challenges that the KM strategy aims to address and does not provide an integrated overview of how KM supports cross-sectoral working. The WASH KM plan does include some useful and pertinent activities and sections but there are significant gaps both in terms of the content areas suggested but also in suggested processes. At present it is not clear how activities have been prioritised and it seems more focused on approaches UNICEF already takes (e.g. CLTS) and much more limited in areas which UNICEF needs to develop (e.g. Fecal Sludge Management, Sanitation Marketing, urban work, how to go to scale). Measuring SDG 6.1 and 6.2 are identified as priorities yet there is no clear sign as to a) how measuring fits with developing and supporting interventions which reach the safely managed level of service required by the indicators for 6.1 and 6.2; and b) limited activities in the pipeline which seem to be focused on these areas. The
section on capacity building focuses only on training and does not look at broader capacity issues such as required staffing and who needs to know what given their context. Neither the Regional KM Strategy nor the WASH KM plan includes a clear section on resources or budgets required.

6) UNICEF Headquarters and the Regional Office should purposefully support the further development and critical review of scale up models which show potential for achieving SDG indicator level service delivery.

These models should include an appreciation of whether going to scale involves replication (horizontal scale up) of small-scale improved service delivery models, or changes in operational approach as UNICEF aims to influence the expansion of demonstrated WASH approaches at different institutional levels (vertical scale up). This should build on experiences to date and move beyond designing and implementing demonstrations or pilots and then presenting them to the government to take to scale. The Regional Office should then work with Country Offices to help them enhance, adapt and operationalise these models as part of country programmes.

7) Given increasing demand for inter-sector programming approaches, the Regional Office should review experiences of inter-sectoral programming to date and document/assess which have been most effective and of benefit to the delivery of SDG 6.1. and 6.2 - for example reviewing the impact on programmes and performance of the theories of change joint planning undertaken between nutrition and WASH. This review should be led by the EAPRO sector adviser team and include a focus on the alignment of internal systems, processes and workplans across sectoral groupings and also the identification of intersectoral working entry points.

8) Country offices should place an increased level of emphasis on reporting and generating evidence on equity and inclusion, and ensuring they are targeting the ‘hard to reach’ population and areas. This work should include advocacy to national and local governments to ensure that evidence can where possible be drawn from government managed M&E systems. The evaluation team suggest that WASH leads and heads of COs be brought together at the next regional meeting to create an action plan on how to take this forward.

9) The Regional Office should initiate a regional meeting or workshop amongst key development partner WASH actors in the region. This meeting should look to compare strategic approaches and look to see where there is synergy or potential overlap in approach. The Regional WASH adviser should talk to country and HQ colleagues as to who to invite but the evaluation team recommend that at a minimum, the World Bank, Asia Development Bank, WaterAid, DFAT and Plan international should attend.
ANNEXES

The Annexes as follows are presented in the Annex document supplementary to this report.

- Annex A: ToRs
- Annex B: EAPRO Country 2015 statistics
- Annex C: List of documents reviewed
- Annex D: List of people interviewed
- Annex E: Semi Structured Interview framework
- Annex F: Country Case Study Report - China
- Annex G: Country Case Study Report - Cambodia
- Annex H: Country Case Study Report - Indonesia
- Annex I: Survey
- Annex J: Country Visit outline document
- Annex K: Evaluation Framework
- Annex L: Country Summaries – remaining countries (4 pages each)
- Annex M: March 2019 workshop agenda and participant list