Evaluation of UNICEF Strategies and Programmes to Reduce Stunting in Children under 5 years of age
Executive Board, 11 – 14 June 2018
Background and Purpose

• Over 150 million of the world’s children under 5 are stunted

• Increased focus on stunting and its effects.

• UNICEF investment in nutrition in the past decade has doubled.

• First formal, global assessment of its global strategies and country programme performance to reduce stunting among children.
Objective

**2010**
Reducing number of underweight children

**2015**
Reducing number of stunted children

**Evaluation Coverage Period**

**Evaluation Objectives**

- Relevance, appropriateness and coherence of UNICEF strategies and plans to address stunting
- Effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of UNICEF country programmes to address stunting,
- UNICEF leadership and technical support and the adequacy of its capacities to contributing to sustainable and equitable reduction of stunting
Key Findings - relevance, appropriateness and coherence

- Stunting rarely included as an outcome or output in COs overarching strategy or frameworks to address stunting

- UNICEF’s programmes aligned with national priorities which were geared towards the MDGs which did not include reducing stunting prevalence.

- Clear evidence of relevant leadership activities undertaken by UNICEF on strengthening partnerships and strategic alliances at the global, regional and country levels.

- UNICEF often misses opportunities related to stunting because of a siloed approach to planning, incentives, accountability and sectoral priorities.
Key Findings—Effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability

• UNICEF **successful** in advocating for improved policy frameworks, increased government commitment and other upstream achievements related to addressing stunting.

• Although most COs specified vulnerable populations, **few included** nutrition indicators disaggregated for those groups.

• Technical and institutional considerations relevant to sustainability were **integrated** in all UNICEF programmes, including upstream work, capacity-building and system strengthening.
Key Findings: Effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability

**Knowledge Generation**
- Significant contributions to support data generation
- Use of innovative approaches e.g. mobile and cloud-based technology

**Sustainability Risks**
- Resource constraints
- Funding unpredictability
- Lack of government commitment
- Limited infrastructure and capacity
Recommendations

• Formulate a UNICEF strategy for maternal and child nutrition aligned closely with the 2030 Agenda

• Develop and promote a theory of change and guidance to inform strategies in regions and countries

Global Strategy and Guidance
**Recommendations – Regional and Country Programmes**

- Include nutrition-specific interventions, nutrition-sensitive approaches, indicators and strategic multi-sectoral approaches in nutritional plans

- Assess capacity gaps & needs, mobilize partners & leverage UNICEF’s upstream role to expand capacity-building

- Leverage resources & expertise to track country financial resources for nutrition for more reliable country budget data
Recommendations – inter-sectoral coordination

Define and articulate approaches in the Strategic Plan (2018-2021) for cross-sectoral coordination to reduce stunting.

Promote and support processes to clarify the roles & responsibilities of strategic partners.

Incorporate accountability across sections and use it to assess the achievement of country programme targets.
Recommendations – knowledge generation and use

• Invest in knowledge generation on determinants and interventions in differing contexts
• Use evidence for advocacy, resource mobilization and planning

• Improve documentation and sharing of evidence, tools, and lessons within and across regions.