Disability-Inclusive Evaluations in UNICEF
Guideline for Achieving UNDIS Standards
# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDIS Indicator 10: Disability-inclusive evaluations – Elements to address, UNICEF considerations and good practices</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparatory Phase</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection: Stakeholders and Methods</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis and Reporting Phase</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion, Recommendation and Dissemination Phase</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concluding Remarks: UNICEF evaluation function current status on disability inclusion approaches and proposed next steps</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

UNICEF’s mandate is to uphold the rights of all children, focusing on those left furthest behind. This means working to ensure that the most marginalized and vulnerable children, including children with disabilities, are able to enjoy their rights and have a fair chance to realize their full potential.

UNICEF’s portfolio on children with disabilities has four main goals:

1. Empower and recognize children with disabilities as their own best advocates;
2. Ensure children with disabilities receive the required support throughout the life cycle to live independently and be included in their communities;
3. Ensure children with disabilities grow up in enabling environments with access to resources and opportunities to realize their full potential;
4. Ensure children and persons with disabilities benefit from a full range of UNICEF programmes and organizational investments that embrace inclusivity and diversity.

Children with disabilities are a diverse group, having different types of disabilities, including physical, sensory, intellectual, and psychosocial, with some not obviously visible. This diversity requires a corresponding understanding of the diverse barriers they face (physical, social, cultural, legislative). It also calls for a deeper and sensible analysis of the support they require and any compounding forms of discrimination (based on their gender identity, cultural, or geographic residence) that will affect the design and implementation of tailored interventions to support them.

The UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022-2025 positions disability as one of the organization’s cross-cutting priorities. This marks a change from the previous strategic plan, where disability had a less prominent role. Under this cross-cutting priority, UNICEF is committed to: (i) prevention of stigma, discrimination, neglect and violence against children with disabilities and promotion of diversity and inclusion; (ii) improvement of disability-inclusive infrastructure, services, programmes and coordination platforms; (iii) access to comprehensive ‘community-4-care’ and support services; (iv) access to assistive technology and relevant services; (v) disability-inclusive action in humanitarian, emergency and fragile contexts, including in programming and in UNICEF’s role as a cluster lead agency; and (vi) full and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities. The organization is also rolling out the implementation of the new Disability Inclusion Policy and Strategy (DIPAS), designed to accelerate the progress towards greater disability inclusion.

This strategy follows a twin-track approach, using both disability-targeted and disability-inclusive actions, to ensure that UNICEF expands and fulfills its vision to work holistically and with a cross-sectoral approach. This twin-track (i.e., mainstreaming and targeted) approach requires (i) targeted actions and investments to advance the rights and well-being of children with disabilities, as well as the inclusion of staff with disabilities; and (ii) the integration of disability inclusion into sectoral and cross-sectoral programming and organizational systems and structures. These greater efforts are closely aligned to UNICEF’s commitment to the 2019 United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS), to provide “the foundation for sustainable and transformative progress on disability inclusion through all pillars of the work of the United Nations”.

Integrating disability-inclusive approaches to evaluations is key to fulfilling UNICEF’s mandate and to achieving UNDIS standards, particularly Indicator 10 (Evaluation). This guidance note was developed for UNICEF staff as a tool to raise awareness and to facilitate the utilization of disability-inclusive approaches to evaluation – for all evaluations, across all phases of the evaluation process. The guidance references existing UNDIS technical notes and United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) guidance on “elements to address”, complementing them with UNICEF-specific considerations.

Good practices with regard to disability inclusion continue to evolve across the organization. This guidance presents examples of good practices based on existing UNICEF evaluations. In addition, the organization is launching a global disability research agenda and platform, led by UNICEF Innocenti, that will complement and provide further evidence for research and evaluation to understand and strengthen new areas of inclusive programming.
UNDIS Indicator 10: Disability-inclusive evaluations – Elements to address, UNICEF considerations and good practices

**Preparatory Phase**

- **Element 1**: The terms of reference of evaluations should pay adequate attention to disability inclusion
- **Element 2**: Evaluation teams have knowledge and/or experience of disability inclusion, where relevant
- **Element 3**: Evaluation questions cover different aspects of disability inclusion

**Data Collection: Stakeholders and Methods**

- **Element 4**: Evaluation stakeholder mapping and data-collection methods involve persons with disabilities and their representative organizations

**Analysis and Reporting Phase**

- **Element 5**: Evaluation findings and analysis provide data and evidence on disability inclusion

**Conclusion, Recommendation and Dissemination Phase**

- **Element 6**: The conclusions and/or recommendations of evaluations should reflect their findings on disability inclusion
Preparatory Phase

The terms of reference of evaluations should pay adequate attention to disability inclusion

UNICEF Considerations

- All evaluations should find ways to appropriately include consideration of disability. A decision tree to determine how central disability should be in the ToR could be guided by the following two questions: (i) Does the programming topic of evaluative interest inherently include a relevant disability element? (ii) Has the design of the programming topic recognized and included disability as a relevant element of interest? The priority and relevance of a more focused vs. a more general disability-inclusive approach could be guided by the responses to these questions.

- Disability-inclusiveness should be considered analogous to gender inclusiveness in evaluations. Gender-inclusive approaches to evaluation are commonly based on the gender continuum model, which ranges from gender-discriminatory and gender-blind to gender-responsive and ultimately gender-transformative.

- Using a disability-inclusive approach during the scoping phase of the ToR development is critical, to ensure greater control over all phases of the evaluation process.

- UNICEF evaluation guidance materials and existing data-collection tools about disability inclusion should be referenced in the TOR.

- The disability focus of the evaluating topic will guide methodological and ethical review considerations regarding the involvement of children/persons with disabilities (and/or their main caretakers), or their representative organizations, directly including them as key stakeholders in the ToR.

- A disability-inclusive ToR should consider reasonable accommodations and realistic budget considerations to make the data-collection processes more accessible (accounting for tools and extended timelines), for example using child-appropriate sign language translators, visual tools for non-verbal communication, accessible spaces, recording devices, etc..

- Provide the consultant team with UNICEF disability-inclusion guidance tools, such as Take Us Seriously: Engaging children with disabilities in decisions affecting their lives, which provides guidance on appropriate data-collection methods.

Examples of Good Practice

- The UNICEF-Adapted UNEG Quality Checklist for Evaluation Terms of Reference is a useful resource for evaluation commissioners, but needs updating to reflect disability-inclusion priorities.

- The UNDIS Technical Note (Indicator 10) indicates that disability inclusion should be considered in all terms of reference of evaluations, including for those not explicitly focusing on disability inclusion. Scoping exercises to assess how to best cover disability inclusion are key.

- The 2022 UNEG Guidance on Integrating Disability Inclusion in Evaluations and Reporting suggests addressing the following key considerations when producing disability-inclusive ToRs:
  - Background describing how policies, strategies, projects/programmes/cross-cutting priorities include disability in design or implementation;
  - Disability inclusion in purpose and objectives;
  - Disability inclusion referenced under the evaluation scope, reflected in methodology and deliverables;
  - Disability inclusion reflected under relevant evaluation OECD-DAC criteria;
  - Disability inclusion included in evaluation questions;
  - Proposed evaluation methodology references disability inclusion.

- The Developmental Evaluation of UNICEF Work on Innovation in Malaysia, and the developmental evaluations of the early childhood development response during the COVID-19 response in Croatia and Moldova. Disability inclusion was featured in the ToR, but its centrality to an effective ECD response during COVID only became clear as the evaluation progressed. UNICEF Guidance Including Children with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action offers practical advice on appropriate disability-inclusive programming in the areas of education, health and HIV/AIDS, nutrition, child protection and WASH.
Evaluation teams have knowledge and/or experience of disability inclusion, where relevant

UNICEF Considerations

▶ Make reference to required disability inclusion knowledge and/or experience, a standard practice for all evaluation TORs. Requiring this expertise will help establish a market for these important skills.

▶ Expertise requirements should be calibrated to the degree of focus on disability: greater expertise will be needed for disability-focused evaluations, while understanding of and familiarity with disability-inclusive approaches to programming and evaluative methodologies will be required for evaluations with more general attention to vulnerable populations.

▶ Arranging long-term agreements (LTAs) with organizations with expertise on disability inclusion is a good entry point for disability inclusion in evaluations for UNICEF. This should be considered at the stage of framing the selection criteria/rating process, where disability-inclusive evaluations is one of the services covered.

▶ Engagement with organizations of persons with disabilities (OPD) is particularly relevant for evaluations in humanitarian contexts. OPDs are organizations led, directed and governed by people with disabilities, guided by the principles and rights recognized in the CRPD.

Examples of Good Practice

▶ Being explicit about disability inclusion knowledge and/or experience has helped encourage potential evaluator partners with disability-inclusive technical and methodological skills to respond to requests for proposals. The *Malaysia Formative Evaluation of #ThisAbility Initiative* was very explicit about team member requirements, looking for:
  ▶ Experience with social inclusion interventions;
  ▶ Knowledge about the rights of children with disabilities;
  ▶ Strong mixed-methods evaluation background was more desired than specific experience evaluating disability programmes.

▶ For guidelines on how to engage with organizations of persons with disabilities in humanitarian contexts, see this [tip sheet](#), part of the [Operational Tools to Strengthen the Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action toolbox](#). Tips on how to prepare prior to the engagement with OPDs, and steps to take into consideration, are described, including:
  ▶ Identify OPDs (or informal groups of people with disabilities) locally;
  ▶ Ensure that OPD engagement reflects the diversity of disabilities;
  ▶ Agree on the type of engagement with OPDs, to ensure clarity in roles;
  ▶ Facilitate accessibility and inclusive communication devices during consultations and engagements with OPDs.
Element 3 Evaluation questions cover different aspects of disability inclusion

UNICEF Considerations

- The type of disability and the disability emphasis of the programme evaluated will guide the decision of the type of questions and whether standalone disability questions are necessary or explicitly referenced. Non-disability targeted evaluations must include more general questions, assessing the reach and needs-met of vulnerable populations, including children with all types of disabilities, their caregivers and organizations representing people with disabilities.

- Programme activities that were designed without a disability inclusive perspective are likely to have fewer results to show. However, aside from highlighting the importance of the issue, systematically asking questions about disability inclusion might encourage subsequent monitoring efforts and iterations of the activity to be shaped in a more inclusive manner.

- Disability inclusion can be assessed for all evaluations against the OECD/DAC criteria. Evaluation questions following a disability-inclusive approach should include questions within the relevance category (including UNICEF equity criteria), regardless of the thematic focus on disability. Efficiency and effectiveness criteria are most relevant to assess when evaluating disability-targeted or inclusive activities or programmes.

- Evaluation questions falling under impact and sustainability should ensure that assessment of both intended and unintended consequences are accounted for in the ToR. Unintended consequences are usually more likely to be observed and an important element of consideration for this population.

- Evaluations of humanitarian action should assess the extent to which, and how, children with different types of disabilities and their carers:
  - were identified and reflected in planning and monitoring;
  - received inclusive and safe access to supporting information and services;
  - were able to participate in the design of programmes, and how these programmes affected their lives (intended and unintended consequences).

Examples of Good Practice

- The Evaluation of the UNICEF Three-Star Approach for WASH in Schools in the Pacific offers practical advice on disability-inclusive evaluation questions and data-collection methods.

- The UNICEF Guidance on Including Children with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action provides a detailed list of possible evaluation questions across the different OECD/DAC criteria. Examples include:
  - Relevance: To what extent has the agency/programme ensured that the various needs of marginalized and excluded populations, including women and girls, adolescents and youth, persons with disabilities and indigenous communities, been taken into account in both the planning and implementation of the agency-supported interventions?
  - Coherence: How does the programme align with other plans, programmes and priorities in the area of disability inclusion, or complement national programmes or those of local OPDs?
  - Efficiency: To what extent does the allocation of resources reflect the needs of vulnerable and marginalized groups, including persons with disabilities?
  - Effectiveness: To what extent did the agency/initiative support the elimination of barriers to access (e.g., political, social, economic, legal, physical and attitudinal) to services, rights, information for vulnerable and marginalized populations (e.g., women, adolescents and youth, persons with disabilities, indigenous communities, sexual diversities and those furthest behind)?
  - Sustainability: Were partners made aware of the importance of the sustainable inclusion of persons with disabilities in the project? Have OPDs been included as partners to facilitate the identification of and reliable engagement with children with all types of disabilities?
  - Impact: Has the programme improved outcomes for persons with disabilities or led to any unintended impacts?
Data Collection: Stakeholders and Methods

**Element 4**  
**Evaluation stakeholder mapping and data-collection methods involve persons with disabilities and their representative organizations**

UNEG guidance: A mixed-methods approach to data collection is recommended, ensuring that both the methods chosen (e.g., focus groups, interviews, documentary review, etc.) and the ways in which they are applied are gender-sensitive, disability-inclusive and human rights-responsive. Persons with disabilities and organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) can enrich an evaluation by providing first-hand information on their situation and experience.

**UNICEF Considerations**

- Stakeholder mapping and participation methods should recognize that children with different types of disabilities, their caretakers, and members of organizations who represent their interests, may be less practiced at participation. Confidence-building, through individual respect and elimination of stigma, are critical. Evaluators should orient them to the questions, practices and processes beforehand.

- Ensure that evaluation team members receive adequate training, use coherent definitions, are aware of context-based environmental barriers, and have a common understanding of the different types of disabilities, when needed or relevant. Using persons with disabilities as trainers can help address some issues of stigma or unconscious biases.

- In evaluations of humanitarian action, where key informants need to be identified quickly, direct engagement with disability-specialized organizations such as the International Disability Alliance or other networks that can link evaluators with the local OPD community. UNICEF must play a proactive role facilitating these consultations and engagements.

- Ensure that resources have been properly budgeted and allocated during the planning phase to account for additional efforts needed to ensure that populations with disabilities are included in the consultation process. Effective engagement with OPDs may take more time, as organizations often have less administrative capacity than other traditional UNICEF partners.

- Household surveys that ask binary yes/no questions about disability are less useful and less accurate. Asking respondents only yes or no questions might oversimplify the actual household situation, inhibiting the collection of nuanced data on the type or the complexity of the disability and the prevailing social attitudes and cultural context.

- UNICEF has developed specific child-functioning modules that can be used in surveys where children are involved, following the Washington Group’s bio-psychological framework. UNICEF multiple indicator cluster surveys (MICS), in place since 2018, have incorporated disability-disaggregated survey modules.

- UNICEF Office of Research is committed to (and close to launching) the ‘Global Research Agenda and Platform for Children with Disabilities’, with an extensive data and documentation repository of research and evaluation evidence on children with disabilities.
Examples of Good Practice

- The **Uganda End-Term Evaluation On Provision Of Accessible Learning Materials For Children With Visual And Hearing Impairment In Primary Schools 2015 – 2018** purposely mapped and selected key informants. The data collection design ensured the provision of accessible learning materials and assistive devices to children with visual and hearing impairments, who were purposefully selected. Students with disabilities, as well as their classmates without disabilities, teachers and parents were significantly engaged in the evaluation. The data collection design purposely included sign-language translation for focus group discussions and interviews.

- The **Evaluation of the ‘Accelerating Sanitation and Water for All’ Programme in Sierra Leone** included in the data collection design focus group discussions and key informant interviews with persons living with disabilities and their national representative bodies. In addition, wider community input was sought on issues such as whether project management committees involved persons with disabilities. This resulted in the finding that more attention could have been paid to specific strategies to promote inclusion, along with a recommendation to undertake consultations with implementing partners to do this.

- Evaluators should be encouraged to consider innovative methods for scoping and data collection (that could also inform long term disability-inclusive monitoring and programme designs). Existing examples include the use of assistive devices to record diaries by children or family members; sensors attached to mobility equipment to track movement frequency and distance; provision of free phone minutes to allow for periodic calls or to share data/upload videos. Some of these technologically innovative solutions were particularly important during the COVID-19 pandemic. See **Children with Disabilities: Ensuring their inclusion in COVID-19 response strategies and evidence generation** for reference.

- The **evaluation of the WASH programme in Nigeria** undertook a quantitative survey that used a version of the Washington Group short-set questions on disability. Household surveys carried using the Washington Group questions can provide a powerful source of evidence about who is benefitting from different interventions.

- Increasingly, UNICEF data are available providing context on the situation of children with disabilities, such as the **MICS-EAGLE report on Education for All in West and Central Africa**.

- During the 2019 **Evaluación de resultados de las acciones de inclusión de familias con niñas, niños y adolescentes con discapacidad en Familias en Acción (2012-2018)** in Colombia, household visits were used to include children with disabilities into the interview process, making an important contribution to the evaluation.


- The **Washington Group short-set question** methodology allows for greater specificity to measure disability, using the World Health Organization’s International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF). This conceptual framework uses a bio-psychosocial model defining disability as the interaction between people’s functional capabilities, age-specific development milestones and environmental barriers (physical, social, cultural, legislative) that might prevent their engagement in society.
Analysis and Reporting Phase

**Element 5**

**Evaluation findings and analysis provide data and evidence on disability inclusion**

UNEG guidance for the preparation of evaluation reports already proposes the inclusion of a specific section on gender equality in an evaluation report, which can also be used for disability inclusion. The evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations should describe the analysis and interpretation of data on human rights and gender equality; specific findings on human rights- and gender equality-related criteria and questions; strengths and weaknesses of the intervention with respect to human rights and gender equality; and specific recommendations addressing human rights and gender equality issues.

**UNICEF Considerations**

- Evaluation analyses must take into consideration that persons with disabilities commonly experience programmatic interventions differently. Factors such as environmental and infrastructure conditions, institutional structures, and attitudinal or social norm barriers, in addition to the individual conditions (physical, sensory, intellectual, or psychosocial) defining their disability status, must be clearly defined and included in any disability-inclusive analysis.

- Both analytical evidence and descriptive results must be presented with the highest level of respect for the dignity of those being represented. Evidence and analysis must avoid any reference that could lead to perpetuating stigma or represent a lack of deference for children or any person with disabilities.

- Descriptions of vulnerable populations as an undifferentiated group must be avoided. Analyses must reflect the differentiated experiences of children with different types of disabilities as a separate group from children experiencing other types of vulnerabilities or identities. Presenting more nuanced evidence and findings is crucial to defining clearer messages and actionable disability-inclusive recommendations.

- It is critical that both intended and unintended consequences of programme or policy implementations significantly affecting children with disabilities are reflected in the analyses.

- Any gaps on disability-disaggregated data must be highlighted in concluding remarks, in order to inform advocacy or UNICEF technical support to partners.

**Examples of Good Practice**

- The evaluation of Nepal’s education equity strategy attempted to assess the different experiences of children from marginalized ethnic groups and castes, low-income families, and children with disabilities. It concluded that children with disabilities have not benefitted to the same extent from the equity strategy in terms of enrollment or the quality of pedagogical practices to support them. The evaluation included specific findings for children with disabilities in an integrated manner throughout the report.

- An example of how to describe and clearly emphasize the different findings for children with disabilities is presented in the Evaluation of Early Childhood Care and Development in Bhutan, in which the report presents findings and conclusions explicitly focusing on children with disabilities as a separate section.
Conclusion, Recommendation and Dissemination Phase

The conclusions and/or recommendations of evaluations should reflect their findings on disability inclusion

**UNICEF Considerations**

- Conclusions and recommendations should reflect and be cognizant of programming priorities described by UNICEF disability inclusion policy and strategy.
- Invite persons with disabilities, their caretakers, and members of organizations representing them into evaluation validation or dissemination processes.
- Any disseminated material must represent children with disabilities with the maximum respect and dignity, eliminating messages that could lead to greater stigma.
- Accessibility of digital reports and presentations to screen-readers must be tested, planned, and costed. Publication and dissemination plans must factor into their budgets the cost of making publications fully accessible.
- Venues used for in-person events need to be assessed for any barriers to access. Take advantage of UNICEF convening and advocacy powers to reach out and to invite organizations representing people with disabilities to dissemination and knowledge-sharing events to engage with decision-makers.

**Examples of Good Practice**

- The **Formative Evaluation of the UNICEF Response to the ZIKA Epidemic** made important and opportunistic recommendations about how UNICEF could extend its role regionally by supporting partners to address the consequences of ZIKA, which are disabling for children.
- The **Evaluation of the UNICEF Rights, Education and Protection (REAP II) Project** is a model for a targeted disability-inclusive thematic evaluation. The report was launched both regionally and globally, where it provided a framework and springboard for the disability inclusion policy and strategy development process. An important lesson learned by the REAP II evaluators (who had to rapidly adapt their methods because of the COVID-19 pandemic) is that online or remote methods are more accessible to both evaluators and participants with certain kinds of disabilities.
- The **UNICEF Procedure on Disability-Inclusive Communication and Advocacy** provides general guidance on how to ensure inclusive communication with children and youth with disabilities.
- Engagement with the Programme Group Disability Team or regional disability focal points is very important. UNICEF digital accessibility helpdesk, hosted by ICTD, is an excellent resource for advising on how to test and to make evaluation report publications accessible.
Concluding Remarks: UNICEF evaluation function current status on disability inclusion approaches and proposed next steps

UNICEF Evaluation Function / Organization Status

- UNICEF has made important improvements since 2016 on the number of disability inclusive evaluation, nevertheless there is still significant room for improvement. The number of disability inclusive evaluations increased to 19 in 2021, from only two in 2016, however these represent less than five (5) per cent of all evaluations produced during this period.

- The UNICEF 2018-2021 Strategic Plan, clearly introduced and defined disability as one the organization’s specific result areas, stating that “girls and boys with disabilities are reached by accessible and inclusive programmes and services to participate in society”.

- The strategic approach to disability has been revised in the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan, giving disability a cross-cutting priority status. This approach and operationalization rationale are described in the 2022 Disability Inclusion Policy and Strategy (DIPAS).

- Lack of clarity and awareness of stigma-free disability inclusive strategies, accountabilities, and limited technical capacity has limited the inclusion of this approach in all evaluation.

- Limited disaggregated data availability and a lack of a clear accountability path for disability results, are perceived as two main factors preventing disability inclusive evaluation questions to be properly answered.

- Budgetary issues might also be preventing evaluations from proposing disability inclusive data collection methods, for all evaluations.

- Lack of information on disability strategies, priorities, accountabilities, and guidance on how to include all types of disabilities into programme areas, limit evaluators’ abilities to propose disability-inclusive evaluation ToRs.

UNICEF Evaluation Function, Next Steps

- To complement the existing efforts to consolidate and to clearly define disability inclusive strategies, approaches, and accountabilities at the organization level, this guidance aims at providing a first step towards greater guidance to address disability inclusion in all evaluations.

- The UNICEF Evaluation Policy must be revised to reflect UNICEF commitment to UNDIS, the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan cross-cutting priority approach to disability, and the Disability Inclusion Policy and Strategy.

- Reflecting the organization’s cross-cutting priority approach to disability inclusion, revise existing guidance tools, including the Evaluation Report Standards, the Quality Checklist for Evaluation Terms of Reference, and the Global Evaluation Report Oversight System (GEROS).

- The evaluation function must ensure that any new and or under-development guidance, such as for decentralized evaluation in humanitarian contexts, support the efforts to exceed the UNDIS Indicator 10 standards.

- Consider sharing lessons learned from the existing UNICEF cross-sectoral approach to disability, to improve the design of across-agencies joint evaluations, aiming at developing a whole-of-people-with-disabilities coverage.

- Increase strategic and technical awareness, developing supporting guidance materials on how to include disability inclusive approaches into all evaluations, regardless of whether programmes had been or not designed in a disability inclusive manner.
Disability Inclusion is mainstreamed effectively throughout the evaluation process and reflected in the terms of reference, inception and evaluation report(s). (To meet requirements)

**UNICEF Evaluation Function / Organization Status**

- In order to meet this standard (indicator 10.ii), the evaluation function must make significant progress both in terms of increasing the number of disability-focused evaluations as well as in mainstreaming disability-inclusive approaches to all evaluations.
- Over the 2016–2021 period, only five per cent (56 out of 1,067) of UNICEF evaluations came close to UNDIS standards for evaluations of disability-targeted activities.
- There is inconsistent understanding of, and ways of approaching, disability inclusiveness in evaluations, with some approaching disability inclusiveness as ‘another cross-cutting issue’ among the many included in the strategic plan and others emphasizing its importance and comparing it to gender equality efforts, arguing for rights-based approaches to Leaving No One Behind.
- Among the sample of disability-inclusive evaluations, only 29 per cent (16 evaluations) targeted children with disabilities and/or their environment (directly or in an intersectional manner), with 25 per cent (14 evaluations) directly stating a disability-inclusive approach to the evaluation. Only seven per cent (four evaluations) directly targeted children with disabilities and/or their enabling environments (tagged as targeted disability on EISI). Fourteen per cent (eight evaluations) evaluated regular programme activities and included consideration of children with disabilities and/or their accessibility, but did not specifically target this population (tagged as mainstream disability on EISI).
- Among the terms of reference sampled, only 35 per cent included explicit disability-inclusive objectives or purpose, and only 23 per cent reflected it as part of the evaluation scope.
- Although 57 per cent of ToRs (30 of 53) made some reference to disability-inclusive approaches to data collection, only 46 per cent of final evaluation reports (26 of 56) included data-collection methodologies that involved children with disabilities and/or organizations of people with disabilities.

**UNICEF Evaluation Function, Next Steps**

- Make disability inclusion in evaluations stigma-free, clear and practical. Awareness-raising within the evaluation function would not only improve the quality of UNICEF evaluations, but would also improve the quality of UNICEF disability-inclusive programming.
- Use gender-inclusive approaches as a reference to design disability-inclusive evaluations. Integration must start from the ToRs and be applied consistently throughout all the phases of the evaluation, including the dissemination phase.
- Encourage evaluation stakeholders to integrate disability-inclusive approaches during all phases of the evaluation process. Among the existing disability-inclusive evaluation reports, 86 per cent (48 of 56) of the sample included disability-specific findings and 75 per cent (36 of 56) included disability-specific recommendations, despite only observing 57 per cent of those using disability inclusive data collection methods.
- Plan for technical capacity-building efforts on increasing disability-inclusive approaches into thematic evaluations, country programme evaluations and corporate evaluations, working in close collaboration with country and regional offices. Ensure that countries in regions with low prevalence of disability-inclusive evaluations receive greater technical support priority.
- Encourage and support country offices and national actors in their efforts to include disability-inclusive learning activities into their national evaluation capacity development (NECD) portfolios, both developing the capacity and building the demand for such evaluations. UNICEF should facilitate the engagement with OPD and organizations with capacity to collect disability-relevant data and to generate other evidence sources.
Meta-analysis of evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations relating to disability inclusion is performed at least every five years (To exceed requirements)

UNICEF Evaluation Function / Organization Status

- The limited number of disability-inclusive evaluations, as well as their lack of diversity (geographic and thematic), are a constraint to conducting a comprehensive meta-analysis of UNICEF evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations relating to disability inclusion. Disability-inclusive evaluations are prevalent only in a few programmatic areas.
- Production of disability-inclusive evaluations varies widely by region, with ECAR producing the largest number of disability-inclusive evaluations (25, representing 45 per cent of evaluations) and the rest producing between three and seven each. HQ-EO produced the lowest number of disability-inclusive evaluations (two).
- Programme areas with more disability-inclusive evaluations include child protection (13) and education (nine). Programme areas such as nutrition and health/HIV-AIDS only have one and two evaluations, respectively, with disability-inclusive approaches. Despite representing over 50 per cent of UNICEF resource allocation, only five humanitarian evaluations included a disability-inclusive approach.

UNICEF Evaluation Function, Next Steps

- Consistently increase the number of disability-inclusive and disability-focused evaluations, as well as plans for meta-analyses of evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations relating to disability inclusion in the global, regional and country plans for evaluations. Greater consideration should be given in HQ and regions where the number of such evaluations has been historically low.
- For example, at the HQ level, the 2022–2023 corporate evaluation of disability would provide an opportunity to further assess programmatic progress as well as operational and accountability elements, technical capacity gaps, the organization’s positioning on disability vis-à-vis other actors, key partnerships, and advances on internal organizational and human resources management factors.
- Generate more evaluative evidence, ensuring that all new evaluations reflect the organization’s strategic shift towards mainstreaming disability inclusion as a cross-cutting priority.
- Include leadership in awareness-raising efforts in order to achieve mainstreaming goals. Ensure that strategic clarity and coherent understanding of concepts on UNICEF disability-inclusive approaches is promoted.
- A key factor supporting the integration of disability-inclusive approaches into programme evaluations is the engagement of ‘champions’, either from evaluation managers, teams of consultants, or other staff in leadership roles.