

Evaluation of the UNICEF role as cluster lead/co-lead agency (CLARE II)

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Item 7: Evaluation of the UNICEF role
as cluster lead/co-lead agency

Reference document: [E/ICEF/2022/19](#)

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Evaluation purpose, scope and approach

- Objective and purpose: [provide an updated assessment](#) of how well UNICEF is fulfilling its cluster lead agency (CLA) responsibilities since the last evaluation 7 years ago, and [offer insights and recommendations for improvements](#) in the exercise of this role
- Scope: covers [global, regional and country-level](#) perspectives (from 9 “focus” countries); [WASH, Education, Nutrition, Child Protection](#) with equal attention; both coordination and leadership aspects of CLA role
- Approach: [mixed methods](#) – collecting, synthesizing and triangulating qualitative and quantitative evidence from internal and external sources



Overarching findings

- UNICEF has generally delivered on the **coordination responsibilities** of its CLA role
- UNICEF worked to ensure that clusters have dedicated **capacity and tools** in place; produced **policies/guidance**; and provided **technical/operational support**
- Since the CLARE I, there have been **achievements in the staffing of coordination positions** in countries
- However, **staffing gaps remain at the country level**; clusters have **taken on more tasks**, often at the expense of more strategic work



Overarching findings

- There are **positive examples** of **CLA leadership**
- However, UNICEF has not performed as consistently well in its **leadership responsibilities**
- The role of the CLA is **not** a “**shared responsibility**”
- **Cluster coordinator positions** are **not sufficiently incentivized within UNICEF** (limited career path)
- **Co-leadership** arrangements at country level have often been reduced to practical divisions of labour, resulting in **missed opportunities**
- CLA **accountability** has sometimes been **elusive**; the **provider of last resort** concept remains unclear
- There has been limited direction, **from UNICEF as CLA**, on how clusters should implement **key policy issues** (centrality of protection; accountability to affected populations; humanitarian-development nexus and localization of aid)





3 overarching recommendations

Recommendation 1: Renew the recognition that the CLA role is a core imperative of the UNICEF mandate.

Recommendation 2: Better align UNICEF internal systems with its CLA responsibilities.

Recommendation 3: More actively contribute to strategic discussions within the Inter-Agency Standing Committee in order to keep the cluster approach “fit for purpose”.

Overall, the recommendations:

- speak to the need to weave across UNICEF systems a greater level of commitment and accountability for the CLA role; and
- represent a second opportunity for UNICEF to tackle some of the outstanding obstacles that have hampered performance of the CLA role to the fullest.

Thank you.

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