Formative evaluation of UNICEF work to link humanitarian and development programming

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Evaluation Purpose, Scope and Approach

- **Assess progress** in linking humanitarian and development (LHD) programming; provide insights and recommendations for practical improvements

- **Mixed-methods** approach, which involves collecting, synthesizing and triangulating qualitative and quantitative evidence from internal and external sources

- Covers the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, up to **October 2020**

- Divided into **five themes** (1) definition and coherence; (2) partnerships; (3) planning and programming; (4) internal systems and structures; (5) COVID-19 response

1. Definition and Coherence

× Current framing of '**linking**' humanitarian and development programming neglects peacebuilding dimension, reinforces notion that these are two discrete ways to programme

R1.1 - Adopt the **approach and language** of the 'nexus'

× LHD **not** prominently integrated into the 2018-21 Strategic Plan

R1.2 - Ensure nexus approach and language are integrated fully and prominently into the new Strategic Plan, 2022–2025

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1. Definition and Coherence *(continued)*

× Inconsistencies in the way that tensions between humanitarian principles and development approaches are addressed in UNICEF **policies and guidance**

R1.3- Ensure a **clear statement** of UNICEF role and contribution to the peace dimension of nexus and centrality of humanitarian principles is integrated into the next Strategic Plan, and all programme policy, procedures and guidance, including the revised LHD Procedure

✓ Concept of LHD programming is recognized across UNICEF; **2019 Procedure** on linking humanitarian and development programming has had traction, particularly in development of country programme documents (CPDs)

R1.4 – All **programming tools** to reflect an explicit, coherent, collaborative approach across humanitarian and development programming, including contributions to peacebuilding

R1.5 - Create a **communication strategy** and process to roll out the revised LHD Procedure

2. Partnerships

✓ Clear and consistent policy commitments to: (i) LHD programming in coordination processes, (ii) better supporting local humanitarian action, (iii) strengthening national and local systems and capacities for humanitarian responses linked to development

✓ Effective use of leadership or co-leadership of multiple sectors to promote inter-agency LHD strategies; advancing the nexus through joint programming with other United Nations

✗ Efforts to build **local civil society capacities** or transform local partnerships in line with nexus commitments were mixed

R2.1 - Review and strengthen how UNICEF approaches its **civil society partnerships**, in line with its localization commitments

R2.2 – Provide training and support to ensure UNICEF staff in leadership, senior programme and coordination roles can confidently **manage across humanitarian, development and peacebuilding** programming

3. Planning and Programming

✓ Commitments to **risk-informed programming and emergency preparedness** are clear in policies and guidance, supported by regional offices and headquarters; strong evidence that the Guidance on risk-informed programming used in CPDs and annual reviews but more can be done to **contextualize it**

R3.1 - Strengthen the application of the Guidance on risk-informed programming at the **country level**

✕ **Accountability to affected populations (AAP)** is not systematically embedded in UNICEF's planning and programming in humanitarian action; AAP initiatives in humanitarian work with accountability and participation approaches in development work

R3.2 - **Embed AAP** more systematically in programming for humanitarian action, in line with guidance and Core Humanitarian Standard on Accountability and Quality commitments. Create linkages between humanitarian approaches to AAP and development approaches to social accountability and participation

✕ Gender policies and guidance strong, not yet translated into consistent practice in contexts affected by fragility; little evidence of linking humanitarian and development approaches to **gender and disability**

R3.3 - Drawing on gender and disability programmes in the development context, make humanitarian programmes **more responsive** to the rights of women and girls and those with disabilities

3. Planning and Programming *(continued)*

✓ Strong policy commitments and guidance to supporting **shock-responsive social protection;** in strong position to work effectively with governments and development partners on this

✗ No systematic and consistent approach to **peacebuilding and conflict sensitivity** across the organization. Country offices lack skills and capacities for conflict analysis, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding

R3.4 - Improve peacebuilding and conflict sensitivity in the new **Strategic Plan** and revised LHD Procedure; make further investments in staff capacities to strengthen approaches to peacebuilding and conflict sensitivity

R3.5 - Ensure that **conflict sensitivity** is consistently and continuously emphasised in planning and programme development and adjustment. Include conflict analysis in approaches to risk-informed programming.

4. Internal Systems and Structures

× Overall, 'siloed' reporting, financing and staffing systems not supporting nexus approaches; this is rooted in the bifurcated assistance architecture, that UNICEF has internalized in its structures.

× Lack of framework for effectively estimating the operationalization of nexus approaches

R4.1 - Harmonize and combine work planning processes using stronger **context and risk analysis**, including conflict analysis.

R4.2 - Review programme performance management to support a **combined reporting** system to bring headquarters reporting together.

R4.3 - Develop an improved set of specific **indicators** to track the prevalence of nexus approaches; develop a nexus marker

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4. Internal Systems and Structures *(continued)*

× Lack of **funding** for nexus approaches is a significant constraint

R4.4 – Take a leadership role in conducting advocacy to advance global humanitarian financing commitments and increase the levels of **quality funding** that can support nexus approaches

R4.5 - Re-examine the system for designating and distributing **funding streams** and/or the budget allocation processes in support of nexus approaches. Investigate whether priority can/should be given to nexus approaches in the targeting of other resources-regular and other resources-emergency; and whether this designation remains relevant

× Weaknesses in human resources to support nexus approaches. Staff need skills in peacebuilding, conflict sensitivity, AAP, gender and disabilities, and "mixed mindsets".

R4.6 - Build **capacity** (through recruitment and training) of staff with mixed humanitarian, development and peace skills

5. COVID-19 and the nexus

✓ UNICEF adapted its ways of working to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic which created real opportunities for better linking programming for public health emergencies and development programming in its planning and reporting systems

R5.1 – Maximize learning and opportunities for LHD programming provided by the COVID-19 response, including through more **integrated planning and reporting systems**

R5.2 - Build on the momentum of the COVID-19 response to further support shock-responsive social protection and strengthen **local/national capacities** for disaster risk management

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Thank you.

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