
UNICEF PROCEDURE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2018 UNICEF EVALUATION POLICY

Document Number: EVAL/PROCEDURE/2018/001

Effective Date: 18 October 2018

RATIONALE

1. The Executive Board, at its annual session in June 2018, endorsed the [revised Evaluation Policy of UNICEF\(E/ICEF/2018/14\)](#). The revision of the Evaluation Policy was based on extensive consultations across the organization and with partners.
2. The [2018 revised Evaluation Policy](#) of UNICEF aims to ensure that the organization and its partners use evaluation for learning, continuous improvement and strengthened accountability, all towards the timely achievement of the targets of the UNICEF Strategic Plan and the Sustainable Development Goals, and in fulfilment of the rights of all children.
3. The Evaluation Policy provides for the development of an organisation-wide evaluation function that encompasses work at global, regional and country levels. It upholds the norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and international good practices in evaluation, such that evaluations are independent, impartial, credible and useful, and that evaluation processes are transparent and fully engaged with stakeholders.
4. This procedure provides the management and staff of UNICEF with the requirements for the implementation of the 2018 revised Evaluation Policy. It seeks to provide a coherent approach to implementing the Evaluation Policy throughout the organization, under the leadership of the Evaluation Office. It focuses on measures to ensure that evaluations undertaken by UNICEF meet international standards including the United Nations Evaluation Group Norms and Standards. This procedure also outlines the key responsibilities for the Evaluation Office, Headquarters Divisions and Offices, Regional Offices and Country Offices. It supersedes previous directives on the subject.

APPLICABILITY AND SCOPE

5. This Procedure is applicable to all UNICEF offices.

PROCEDURE STATEMENTS

6. All Heads of Offices and staff involved in evaluations are to uphold the evaluation norms as described in [Table 1 of the revised Evaluation Policy](#). These include norms around internationally agreed principles, goals and targets, utility, credibility, independence, impartiality, ethics, transparency, human rights and gender equality, national evaluation capacities, and professionalism.

Coverage benchmarks

7. Adequate evaluation coverage is key to providing a representative, unbiased picture of UNICEF performance, and to ensuring that policies, strategies, programmes and advocacy are informed by relevant evidence at all levels of the organization. [Table 2 of the revised Evaluation Policy](#) outlines the benchmarks for evaluation coverage at the country, regional and corporate levels, along with responsibilities for evaluation management and quality

assurance. Heads of Offices are to meet the assigned coverage benchmarks in a timely manner.

8. Heads of Offices are to pay particular attention to meeting the coverage benchmarks on: (a) conducting at least one country *thematic evaluation* per year by each country office, except for small offices, which may conduct three such evaluations per programme cycle; (b) *country programme evaluations* by regional offices at least once every two country programme cycles or once per programme cycle if monitoring and audit information points to a significant shift in the programming context or a significant increase in the level of risk; (c) *evaluation of humanitarian response* by various levels of the organization as specified in the Evaluation Policy; (d) *multi-country regional and corporate evaluations* by regional offices and the Evaluation Office respectively.
9. Offices will work with Governments, UN entities and other partners to advance *country-led evaluations* to support achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, joint *and system-wide evaluations*, and *national evaluation capacity development*, recognizing the benefits of promoting learning, shared accountability and reduced transaction costs.

Timeliness of evaluations

10. To meet the coverage benchmarks for evaluations, Offices are to link these to their decision-making schedules in a timely manner:
 - 9.1 Regional Directors, Country Representatives and the Director of Evaluation should ensure that country programme evaluations are in sync with the country programme and UNDAF cycles and other programme review opportunities at the country level.
 - 9.2 The timing of multi-country evaluations, country thematic evaluations and country-led evaluations should relate to planning and budget cycles of government and key partners.
 - 9.3 Office work plans and budgets, and review processes should be informed by evaluation evidence.
 - 9.4 At the global level, the schedule for corporate evaluations should harmonize with UNICEF planning and budgeting cycles as well as the mechanisms established by Member States to review progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. The Director of Evaluation will provide guidance on improving the timeliness of evaluations, including for fast-changing humanitarian contexts.

Quality assurance

11. Enhancing quality is a key objective even as we increase the number and timeliness of evaluations. The Evaluation Office will provide technical guidance for purposes of enhancing the quality of evaluations and related quality assurance processes at all levels of the organization.
12. The Evaluation Office should actively support capacity development for staff at all levels of the organization – in technical skills as well as in professional conduct.
13. Heads of Offices and Evaluation Specialists should ensure that the provisions of the Evaluation Policy for quality assurance are enforced. In accordance with technical guidance issued by the Evaluation Office, Regional Offices should strengthen quality assurance for evaluations managed by the Country Offices, and the Evaluation Office should do the same for those managed by the Regional Offices.

14. The Evaluation Office should also continue to ensure that the system for providing feedback to Offices on the quality of evaluations (the Global Evaluation Reports Oversight System - GEROS) is periodically reviewed and remains credible.

Enhancing use of evaluations

15. Enhancing the use of evaluations is a central element of the Evaluation Policy. Heads of Offices are to plan for the use of evaluations even as these are being designed. The Director of Evaluation, working with Heads of Offices should invest in innovative technologies to advance the use evaluations, including platforms for connecting evaluators with users of evaluation evidence.
16. Offices must prepare a formal management response to evaluation recommendations and make arrangements to maximize the use of evaluation results. Managers should ensure that evaluation recommendations feed into key decisions taken in Offices.
17. Except under conditions specified by the Evaluation Policy, all evaluation reports and management responses will be made public by the Evaluation Office. The Evaluation Office will continue to maintain a system for recording and reporting on the status of implementation of management response actions.

Evaluation funding

18. All levels of the organization should ensure necessary funding for the evaluation function as informed by the provisions of the Evaluation Policy. Heads of Offices should institute measures through Office Management Plans, Country Programme Management Plans and annual budgets to ensure adequate funding for evaluations to support attaining the coverage benchmarks, quality assurance, and reaching the target of utilizing at least 1 percent of programme resources on evaluation in UNICEF.
19. UNICEF will prioritize the establishment of a pooled fund to support evaluation capacity enhancement, especially in support of Country Offices; professionalization of the function; innovation in evaluation; and strategic evaluations. The Evaluation Office and Division of Finance, Administration and Management will provide guidelines on the administration of the evaluation pooled fund.
20. The Field Results Group will strengthen the organization's programming procedures and planning systems to facilitate improved evaluation planning and budgeting, and related expenditure monitoring. This will include strengthening of guidance on the programme structure in VISION to explicitly require planning and budgeting for evaluation.

PROCEDURE ELEMENTS

Key accountabilities for implementing the Evaluation Policy

21. Divisional Directors, Regional Directors and Country Representatives should ensure that programmes and initiatives are designed in a way that permits evaluation at a later stage (founded on well-defined objectives, supported by a theory of change, have baseline information).
22. Regional Directors and Country Representatives should institute appropriate management arrangements to ensure the utility, credibility, and independence of evaluations at the regional and country levels according to the United Nations Evaluation Group norms and standards,

including ethical standards. They should also ensure that adequate human resources and funds are provided to conduct and manage evaluations.

23. Furthermore, Regional Directors, Country Representatives, the Director of Human Resources, and the Director of Evaluation should ensure that provisions of the evaluation policy for reporting lines are implemented. For Regional Evaluation Advisers, Regional Directors should provide management oversight and guidance, and the Director of Evaluation provides technical guidance, in accordance with the areas specified in the Evaluation Policy. Country Office Evaluation Specialists (or staff assigned to manage evaluations at the country level) should report to the Country Representative in matters related to evaluation. The Country Representative should also ensure that the assigned staff are provided the necessary environment and support, and needed independence from programme planning and implementation to fully manage evaluations in accordance with the norms, coverage benchmarks and quality assurance standards of the [evaluation policy](#).
24. Furthermore, Regional Directors should on the basis of Country Programme Management Plans, Office Management Plans, and the PBR approval processes institute measures to implement provisions of the evaluation policy on reporting lines of staff managing evaluations at both regional and country levels.
25. Regional Directors, Country Representatives and the Director of Evaluation should ensure that completed evaluations are submitted by relevant evaluation managers to the UNICEF online evaluation database on a timely basis and that evaluation findings are disseminated to relevant stakeholders.
26. Division Directors, Regional Directors and Country Representatives should submit the management response to evaluation recommendations through the UNICEF online evaluation database; and they should also ensure that appropriate management response actions are implemented.
27. Regional Offices should develop action plans in support of their accountabilities as defined in the Evaluation Policy. The action plans should specify measures to enforce provisions of the Evaluation Policy with respect to the norms and standards, coverage benchmarks, quality assurance standards, use of evaluations and efforts to achieve the 1% evaluation spending target.
28. Country Offices are requested to revise their Costed Evaluation Plans in response to the provisions of the revised evaluation policy, including coverage benchmarks, budgets, quality assurance requirements, use of evaluations and support for National Evaluation Capacity Development (NECD), and present these to their Regional Director and the Director of Evaluation. Country Offices should also update their entries in the organization's evaluation planning and information management systems to reflect the coverage benchmarks of the revised evaluation policy.
29. The Evaluation Office has a dual role: implementing a programme of independent corporate evaluations, and providing leadership and oversight to the entire evaluation function of UNICEF. It will lead in developing appropriate approaches and methodologies, monitor the performance of Offices in the implementation of the Evaluation Policy, and implement a professional development programme for all staff engaged in evaluation as well as their key partners. It will work closely with the Regional Offices to ensure adequate quality assurance services, especially to Country Offices. It will also work closely with the Division of Human

Resources on the implementation of the competency framework of the United Nations Evaluation Group.

30. The Global Evaluation Committee, comprised of all Deputy Executive Directors, relevant Divisional Directors, the Director of Internal Audit and Investigations, the Director of the Office of Research and all Regional Directors should continue to create opportunities for the use of evaluation evidence and follow up on the implementation of management responses. Through its regular meetings, the Committee should assist in following up on key evaluation performance information.

REVIEW AND REPORTING

31. The Evaluation Office will issue guidance on a revised list of performance indicators for the function by the first quarter of 2019. It will also update and issue new guidance on key components of the policy in 2019.
32. Regional Evaluation Advisers share work plans and annual reports with the Evaluation Office, to ensure overall coherence of the evaluation function. The Director of the Evaluation Office will incorporate highlights of evaluation work in the regions into the Annual Report on the Evaluation Function to the Executive Board.
33. Country and Regional Offices and Divisions will report on the performance of evaluation in their respective offices through their respective annual reports.
34. The Director of Evaluation will monitor and report annually to the Executive Board on the implementation and resourcing of the Evaluation Policy throughout the organization.
35. All offices should prepare to engage in an external review of the UNICEF evaluation function in 2022.

Special Considerations in Emergency Contexts

None

Transitional Measures

None

RISK MANAGEMENT

Document Title: UNICEF PROCEDURE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2018 UNICEF EVALUATION POLICY	
Corporate Risk Category: Results-based Management	
Typical Risks	Minimum Expected Mitigation Measures
Offices/Evaluation Staff do not uphold the internationally agreed evaluation norms and standards as described in the Evaluation Policy	<p>Offices/Evaluation Staff are to become familiar with the norms and standards as set out in the Evaluation Policy</p> <p>Offices are to conduct periodic/as needed training/briefings on the norms set out in the Evaluation Policy</p>
Evaluation staff inadequately cover the prescribed evaluation benchmarks	Evaluation staff are to review and adhere to the evaluation coverage benchmarks set out in the Evaluation Policy at the country, regional and corporate office levels
Heads of Offices do not link evaluations to their decision-making/office planning schedules in a timely manner.	<p>Ensure country programme evaluations country thematic evaluations and country-led evaluation harmonize with the country programme and UNDAF cycles</p> <p>Ensure the schedule for corporate evaluations harmonize with UNICEF planning and budgeting cycles and the mechanisms established by Member States to review progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals</p>
Offices lack adequate capacity to quality assure their evaluation-related work	<p>Heads of Offices and Evaluation Specialists ensure the provisions of the Evaluation Policy for quality assurance are met.</p> <p>Evaluation Office and Regional Offices establish measures to strengthen the capacity of staff to quality assure evaluations managed by Country Offices</p> <p>Evaluation Office establishes measures to strengthen the capacity of staff to quality assure evaluations managed by Regional Offices</p> <p>Ensure Office work plans and budgets, and review processes are informed by evaluation evidence</p>
Lack of funding for evaluation work may hinder the implementation of evaluation work	<p>Evaluation Office advocates for sustained funds commitment for evaluation work</p> <p>Offices plan and identify options towards meeting the target of 1% of programme resources on evaluation</p>

DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT INFORMATION PAGE

Document Title	Implementation of the 2018 UNICEF Evaluation Policy
Document Number	EVAL/PROCEDURE/EVAL/2018/001
Effective Date	18 October 2018
Mandatory Review Date	18 October 2020
Responsible Business Owner	Evaluation Office
Responsible Manager	George Laryea-Adjei
Document Summary	As per the organization's regulatory framework, this Procedure provides the management and staff of UNICEF with the requirements for the implementation of the evaluation policy. It seeks to provide a coherent approach to implementing the evaluation policy throughout the organization, under the leadership of the Evaluation Office. It focuses on measures to ensure that evaluations undertaken by UNICEF meet international standards including the United Nations Evaluation Group Norms and Standards. The Procedure also outlines the key responsibilities for the Evaluation Office, Headquarters Divisions and Offices, and Regional Offices, and Country Offices.
Regulatory content the Document Replaces	https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/files/2013-14-Revised_evaluation_policy-ODS-English.pdf
Topics Covered	Rationale, Policy Statements, Policy Elements (Coverage Benchmarks, Quality Assurance, Evaluation Use, Evaluation Funding, Key Accountabilities), Review and Reporting on the Policy
Corporate Risk Area	Results-based management
Reference / Links to Enabling Legislation and Background	revised Evaluation Policy of UNICEF(E/ICEF/2018/14)
Links to Relevant Policy	revised Evaluation Policy of UNICEF(E/ICEF/2018/14)
Links to Relevant Procedure	
Links to Relevant Guidance	Forthcoming
Links to Relevant Training Materials	Forthcoming
Links to Other Knowledge & Information Resources	https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/