In 2012 UNICEF completed an external global evaluation of its implementation of the Human Rights Based Approach to Programming (HRBAP). The Evaluation noted that UNICEF displays strong global leadership in the conceptualization and application of HRBAP. However, the evaluation found inconsistencies in the practical application of the approach across UNICEF programmes, highlighting the need to reinforce staff capacity in relation to HRBAP.

UNICEF’s application of HRBAP is articulated in Executive Directive 1998-004, ‘Guidelines for Human Rights-Based Programming Approach’ and is guided by the Common Understanding on the Human Rights-Based Approaches to Development Cooperation, as developed under the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) in 2003. According to the Common Understanding, all programmes of development cooperation should advance the realization of human rights, and human rights standards and principles, including equality, non-discrimination, participation and accountability. These principles guide the UN’s role in supporting programme countries and strengthening national capacity to integrate human rights in national policies and fulfil their treaty obligations.

In 2010, the incoming Executive Director reaffirmed the organizational commitment to uphold the rights of all women and children by introducing an organization-wide refocus on equity. For UNICEF, equity means that all children deserve an equal opportunity to survive, develop, and reach their full potential. To the degree that any disadvantaged child does not have that opportunity, her or his rights are violated. This interpretation of equity is an expression of the CRC and other human rights instruments, which guarantee the fundamental rights of every child, regardless of gender, race, religious beliefs, income, physical attributes, geographical location, or other status.

UNICEF’s renewed focus on equity resulted from a thorough analysis of the situation of children’s rights around the world. Despite recent advances in child health, nutrition, HIV-AIDS, water and sanitation, education and protection, an analysis of disaggregated data across a range of social indicators reveals widening disparities. In many cases, children from better-
off households benefit disproportionally from development programmes, compared to those from the poorest and most vulnerable households. Cognizant that inequitable development processes impede the realization of human rights, UNICEF initiated a global effort to prioritize the rights and development outcomes of those children who risk being left behind by the socio-economic progress of their societies. An equity-based approach to UNICEF’s programmes and policies seeks to understand and address the causes of inequity in order to protect the right of every child to survive and thrive.

The management response to the HRBAP Evaluation highlights UNICEF’s efforts to translate its commitment to the CRC into concrete programme results for children, and provides direction for implementing the Evaluation’s recommendations. It focusses on four key areas of action: Organizational Commitment; Capacity Development; Engagement with the Treaty Body System; and Accountability. To expedite implementation, the action points outlined in the response are linked to ongoing organizational processes, wherever possible.

The Management Response lists specific follow-up actions and corresponding focal points from all Divisions concerned. The overall responsibility for implementing the Management Response rests with the PD Deputy Director for Gender, Rights and Civic Engagement (GRaCE), under the guidance and oversight of the PD Director.
**UNICEF Management Response Report**

- Report Generation Date: 27-December-12
- Evaluation Title: Global Evaluation of the Application of the Human Rights-Based Approach to UNICEF Programming
- Evaluation Year: 2012
- Office in charge: NYHQ - Programme Division
- Focal Point(s) in charge: Nicholas Alipui

Overall response to the evaluation: The evaluation’s findings are a timely contribution to the agency’s ongoing discussions on the preparation of new 2014-2017 MTSP and the post-2015 agenda.

Planned use of the evaluation: The evaluation’s findings will be used to inform ongoing efforts to strengthen UNICEF policies and programmes that promote children’s rights.

**Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 1**

UNICEF should develop an HRBAP policy to replace the 1998 Executive Directive. This policy should reflect important changes in the normative environment, the external environment and the aid environment that affect HRBAP, thus providing a single and clearly expressed conceptualization of HRBAP for the whole organization.

**Management Response: Partially Agree**

UNICEF’s HRBAP is articulated in an Executive Directive issued in 1998 as well as in numerous organizational documents, including the 2006-2013 MTSP and the updated roadmap to and outline of the 2014-2017 MTSP. (E/ICEF/2013/5.30 November 2012). In addition, within the context of Delivering as One, the UN has issued several policies and guidance notes on HRBAP, including the Common Understanding on the Human Rights-Based Approach to Development Cooperation (Stamford Consensus, 2003), and the UN common learning packages. Rather than developing a new policy, UNICEF will update the 1998 Executive Directive to reflect recent changes in relevant norms, policies and results. The revised Executive Directive will explain how UNICEF’s renewed emphasis on equity constitutes a practical expression of the agency’s fundamental commitment to human rights, and will clarify how equity-focused programmes advance child rights. UNICEF will make explicit in its internal and external communications the conceptual and programmatic linkages between human rights and equity. It is essential that the two be and remain interrelated, for the sake of efficiently achieving results in the lives of the children whose rights are most at risk.
Action 1

- Office/Section: NYHQ/PD/GRS
- Focal Point(s): Susana Sottoli, Anju Malhotra, with approval from OED
- Expected Completion Date: 12/26/2013
- Implementation State: Pending

Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 2

UNICEF should, at the highest level, take action to develop an overall strategy for applying a human rights-based approach (along with gender) as the ‘foundation strategy’ for its work.

Management Response: Partially Agree

UNICEF’s equity focus is a practical expression of its mandate to support Member States, communities and families in the universal realization of children’s rights. Ongoing preparations for the 2014-2017 MTSP provide an opportunity to clarify the relationship between the agency’s core commitment to human rights principles and equity-focused programme strategies.

Action 1

- Office/Section: NYHQ/PD
- Focal Point(s): Christian Salazar, Susana Sottoli, Anju Malhotra
- Expected Completion Date: 9/1/2013
- Implementation State: Ongoing

- Action Planned: HRBAP translates the principles and articles of CRC into the design and implementation of UNICEF’s Country Programmes of Cooperation. The 2014-2017 MTSP will emphasize the principles of human rights as the basis for equity-focused policies and programmes. Specifically, the forthcoming MTSP will: a) define measurable results and indicators for vulnerable groups of children and women; b) incorporate outcomes that strengthen the accountability of policy makers and service providers in relation to reaching marginalized children, and reinforcing the capacity of communities, families and children to demand quality services; c) apply the recommendations of treaty bodies such as the CRC Committee to UNICEF programmes in
order to identify and address disparities that affect specific groups of children; d) strengthen private sector engagement on child rights principles and corporate social responsibility.


### Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 3

UNICEF should provide staff with further practical guidance on how to link HRBAP and Results-Based Management.

**Management Response: Agree**

UNICEF is taking steps to clarify the relationships among human rights, equity and results-based management. The agency recently launched the Monitoring Results for Equity System (MoRES) – a results-based monitoring framework that relies on real-time data and analysis to identify and monitor changes in the barriers that impede the realization of child rights, particularly in communities where their rights are most denied. UNICEF is also updating its Programme Policy and Procedures Manual (PPPM) to emphasize the importance of real-time data and analysis in testing and refining programme strategies to better address the realities facing the most disadvantaged children and families.

### Action 1

- **Office/Section:** NYHQ/DPS; NYHQ/PD/GRS
- **Focal Point(s):** Robert Jenkins
- **Expected Completion Date:** 12/31/2013
- **Implementation State:** Ongoing
- **Action Planned:** UNICEF continues to strengthen results-based management within the context of operationalizing MoRES. Existing programme guidance (PPPM) will be reviewed and, where necessary, revised to emphasize that human rights principles and results-based management are critical to the organization’s ability to achieve equitable results for children.
• Action Taken: Human rights indicators and equity-focused strategies are being developed for MoRES and related programme guidance.

Action 2

• Office/Section: NYHQ-DPS; NYHQ/PD/GRS
• Focal Point(s): Robert Jenkins, Susana Sottoli, Anju Malhotra
• Expected Completion Date: 12/31/2013
• Implementation State: Ongoing
• Action Planned: Continue to sharpen the focus on equity within the HRBAP guidance developed for COAR, MTR reports and Consolidated Results Reports.
• Action Taken: Human rights indicators and equity-focused strategies are being integrated within relevant programme guidance.

Action 3

• Office/Section: NYHQ/PD/GRS
• Focal Point(s): Anju Malhotra
• Expected Completion Date: 6/1/2013
• Implementation State: Pending
• Action Planned: Reinforce efforts to collect and disseminate good practice in the area of integrating human rights principles across the programming cycle.
• Action Taken: Pending

Action 4

• Office/Section: NYHQ/DPS; NYHQ/PD/GRS
• Focal Point(s): Lakshmi Narasimhan Balaji, Etona Ekole
• Expected Completion Date: 6/20/2013
• Implementation State: Ongoing
• Action Planned: Reinforce the conceptual and practical linkages among human rights, equity and results-based management within programme guidance, including the PPPM.
• Action Taken: UNICEF played an important role in linking the UNDG Handbook on results-based management to HRBAP. UNICEF also organized a UNSSC Training of Trainers in July 2012, equipping core staff from across the UN system with the concepts and skills needed to link results-based management, human rights and equity-focused programmes. The UNDG RBM Handbook can be accessed at http://www.undg.org/docs/12316/UNDG-RBM%20Handbook-2012.pdf.
**Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 4**

UNICEF Division of Policy and Strategy and the Programme Division should clarify the linkages between HRBAP and equity to explain how the terms ‘rights holder’ and ‘duty bearer’ fit within the focus on equity.¹

**Management Response: Partially Agree**

UNICEF recognizes the value of clarifying the relevance of terms such as duty-bearers and rights holders to the renewed focus on equity, which is an expression of the agency’s fundamental commitment to human rights and the CRC. UNICEF must avoid creating separate reporting streams for different sets of terms, and diverting financial and human resources away from programmes that support the rights of children.

**Action 1**

- Office/Section: NYHQ/PD; NYQH/DPS
- Focal Point(s): Christian Salazar, Susana Sottoli, Lakshmi Narasimhan Balaji, Beatrice Duncan
- Expected Completion Date: 9/1/2013
- Implementation State: Ongoing

Action Planned: The revised Executive Directive and the 2014-2017 MTSP will clarify the relationship between HRBAP and the agency’s renewed emphasis on equity. In addition, UNICEF is developing a background technical paper that will elaborate on the following points:

a) For UNICEF, equity means that all children deserve an opportunity to survive, develop, and reach their full potential, without discrimination, bias, or favoritism. This interpretation is an expression of the CRC, which guarantees the fundamental rights of every child, regardless of gender, race, religious beliefs, income, physical attributes, geographical location, or other status.

b) Consistent with the UN Common Understanding, the HRBAP continues to guide UNICEF on the practical application of human rights principles (such as equality, non-discrimination, participation and accountability), including programmatic approaches to capacity development. Within the context of MoRES, UNICEF will intensify efforts to improve the capacity of national and local authorities to identify and overcome the barriers and bottlenecks that

¹The wording of the recommendation does not reflect the structural changes introduced in UNICEF HQ in May 2012, which involved renaming the Division of Policy and Practice (DPP) the Division of Policy Strategy (DPS) and relocating the Gender and Rights Unit from DPP to PD.
impede the realization of children’s rights (i.e. to meet their obligations to children). UNICEF will also seek to strengthen the capacities of communities, families and children to hold authorities accountable and demand their rights to survival, development and protection.

**Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 5**

The UNICEF Gender and Rights Section (GRS) should continue to lead and engage in both inter-agency and internal policy discussions to bring clarity and coherence with respect to HRBAP within the context of the current programming environment.

**Management Response: Agree**

**Action 1**

- **Office/Section:** NYHQ/PD/GRS; Senior Advisor Post-2015
- **Focal Point(s):** Susana Sottoli, Anju Malhotra and Richard Morgan
- **Expected Completion Date:** 9/1/2014
- **Implementation State:** Ongoing
- **Action Planned:** UNICEF GRS recently completed its tenure as co-chair of the UNDG Human Rights Mainstreaming Mechanism alongside OHCHR, and remains active in contributing to and shaping the global human rights agenda through avenues such as Rio+20, the QCPR and post-2015 framework. Furthermore, UNICEF and UN-Women are co-leading the global thematic consultations on Inequalities as a part of the post-2015 consultations process.
- **Action Taken:** (i) UNICEF successfully advocated for HRBAP as one of five core programming principles for the UNDG. UNICEF continues to engage the UNDG so that the guidance, support and training available to UN country teams remains relevant to the continuously evolving development context. (This is done by the Human Rights Cluster of PD, DPS and GMA). (ii) Through the HRM and other avenues, UNICEF developed human rights advocacy messages for Rio+20, the QCPR and post-2015 framework.

UNICEF and UN-Women jointly prepared a concept paper for the global thematic consultation on equity and inequalities.

- **Supporting Documentation Links:**
  - [http://uniapps84.unicef.org/epp/EvaluationTracking.nsf/0/3BCA8DC475FBE7DA85257A5A007C2509/$FILE/UNDG HRMRio+20.docx](http://uniapps84.unicef.org/epp/EvaluationTracking.nsf/0/3BCA8DC475FBE7DA85257A5A007C2509/$FILE/UNDG HRMRio+20.docx)
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 6

In its application of HRBAP at the global level, UNICEF GRS Geneva should take a more systematic approach to its engagement with special procedures and other human rights mechanisms.

Management Response: Agree

UNICEF GRS Geneva, alongside NY, is systematizing the agency’s engagement with special procedures and other human rights mechanisms. Since the release of the HRBAP evaluation, UNICEF has engaged all treaty monitoring bodies, for the first time in some instances, as well as the Universal Periodic Review mechanism, and some Special Procedure mandate holders. This effort will continue throughout 2013.

Action 1

- Office/Section: NYHQ/PD/GRS
- Focal Point(s): Susana Sottoli, Anju Malhotra
- Expected Completion Date: 12/31/2012
- Implementation State: Ongoing
- Action Planned: As part of the refocus on equity, UNICEF is reinforcing its strategy for engaging special procedures and other human rights mechanisms, such as the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, within the context of the UN Human Rights Mainstreaming Mechanism. As part of this effort, UNICEF will systematically track, support and follow up on special procedure country visits.
- Action Taken: In 2011 and 2012, UNICEF engaged all treaty monitoring bodies. GRS Geneva discussed with country offices country reviews completed by the Universal Periodic Review mechanism and treaty bodies. UNICEF maintains regular interaction with Special Procedure mandate holders during their annual meetings.

Action 2

- Office/Section: NYHQ/DPS; NYHQ/PD/GRS
- Focal Point(s): Susana Sottoli, Anju Malhotra and Robert Jenkins
- Expected Completion Date: 6/1/2013
• Implementation State: Ongoing
• Action Planned: Update guidance for country offices on how to integrate CRC Concluding Observations into their programme planning process, to be integrated inter alia into the resource guide for UNICEF engagement with the CRC reporting process and to be shared separately with countries going through their country programme planning process.
(http://www.intranet.unicef.org/pd/pdc.nsf/0/3DF1DB115EB3A4CE8525793E0062E8C1/$FILE/PRO_programme%20documents_final12_12_11.pdf). This will be updated for 2013 and further reinforced.
• Action Taken: The actions noted above are underway.

Action 3

• Office/Section: NYHQ/PD/GRS
• Focal Point(s): Susana Sottoli, Anju Malhotra
• Expected Completion Date: 12/31/2012
• Implementation State: Pending
• Action Planned: Reinforce country office capacity to support government counterparts in responding to the recommendations of relevant treaty bodies, the Universal Periodic Review and Special Procedure mandate holders, especially those that promote equity and child rights.
• Action Taken: Pending

Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 7

UNICEF should take appropriate steps to ensure that all HRBAP principles are implemented equally strongly throughout its programming, as well as at all stages of the project cycle.

Management Response: Agree

Action 1

• Office/Section: NYHQ/DPS; NYHQ/PD/GRS
• Focal Point(s): Robert Jenkins, Anju Malhotra
• Expected Completion Date: 12/31/2013
• Implementation State: Ongoing
• Action Planned: Identify programme-indicators for the five human rights principles: 1) normativity, 2) non-discrimination, 3) participation, 4) transparency and 5) accountability and the rule of law
and integrate them into performance benchmarks for UNICEF-supported programmes. The baseline for the benchmarks will be established in country programme annual reports, as of 2013.

- Action Taken: Ongoing

Action 2

- Office/Section: NYHQ/DPS; NYHQ/PD/GRS
- Focal Point(s): Susana Sottoli, Robert Jenkins and Anju Malhotra
- Expected Completion Date: 6/1/2013
- Implementation State: Ongoing
- Action Planned: Technical guidance on MoRES will recommend strategies for implementing the five human rights principles and sharpening the programmatic focus on equity. Innovations and good practices will be documented as part of the annual reporting process and the roll-out of MoRES.
- Action Taken: Ongoing

Action 3

- Office/Section: NYHQ-General/NYHQ/PD/GRS
- Focal Point(s):
- Expected Completion Date:
- Implementation State: Pending
- Action Planned: See action points under Recommendation #13 for measures to reinforce staff capacity.
- Action Taken: Pending

Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 8

UNICEF should assist staff in interpreting and operationalizing HRBAP in each Focus Area by ensuring that they have access to appropriate guidelines and tools.

Management Response: Partially Agree

As noted, UNICEF views the refocus on equity as a practical expression of its commitment to human rights and the CRC. All technical sections that support the five Focus Areas of the 2006-2013 MTSP developed detailed strategies for sharpening the focus on equity.

Action 1

- Office/Section: NYHQ/DPS; NYHQ/PD/GRS
• Focal Point(s): Susana Sottoli, Anju Malhotra and Robert Jenkins
• Expected Completion Date: 12/31/2013
• Implementation State: Ongoing
• Action Planned: Emphasize human rights principles within the MoRES tool kit and related guidance on identifying and reaching the most vulnerable children e.g. indigenous, minority and afro-descendants. Clarify existing guidelines on integrating CRC Concluding Observations into the country office programme planning process. The same guidelines will be integrated within the resource guide on UNICEF engagement with the CRC reporting process, which will be shared with countries during the country programme planning process.
• Action Taken: Ongoing

Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 9

UNICEF should provide specific guidance and assistance to staff in interpreting and applying HRBAP when dealing with difficult country contexts.

Management Response: Agree

Action 1

• Office / Section: NYHQ/EMOPS; NYHQ/PD
• Focal Point(s): Genevieve Boutin, Saudamini Siegrist
• Expected Completion Date: 12/31/2013
• Implementation State: Pending
• Action Planned: Develop a Legal and Policy Memorandum on International Legal Protections in Situations of Armed Conflict, and a Q&A to be completed and disseminated to UNICEF staff working in humanitarian situations.
• Action Taken: Pending

Action 2

• Office/Section: NYHQ/EMOPS; NYHQ-PD
• Focal Point(s): Genevieve Boutin, Saudamini Siegrist, Christian Salazar
• Expected Completion Date: 12/31/2013
• Implementation State: Interdivisional Committee on Children in Armed Conflict established (chaired by DED Yoka Brandt); draft guidance note on MRM ready for review
• Action Planned: A resource mobilization plan for the MRM mechanism will be developed.

Action 3

• Office/Section: NYHQ-EMOPS; NYHQ/PD/GRS
• Focal Point(s): Genevieve Boutin
• Expected Completion Date: 12/31/2013
• Implementation State: Pending
• Action Planned: Incorporate the equity focus, including human rights principles, in any new Humanitarian Policy Guidelines and Tools developed for difficult country contexts.
• Action Taken: Pending

Action 4

• Office/Section: NYHQ-EMOPS; NYHQ/PD/GRS
• Focal Point(s): Genevieve Boutin, Saudamini Sigrist
• Expected Completion Date: 9/1/2013
• Implementation State: Ongoing
• Action Planned: Within the new MTSP, integrate measurable results for children’s rights in humanitarian action.
• Action Taken: Ongoing

Action 5

• Focal Point(s): Susana Sottoli, Christian Salazar, Gunilla Olsson
• Expected Completion Date: 12/31/2013
• Implementation State: Pending
• Action Planned: Develop a Legal and Policy Memorandum on Child Rights in Sensitive Political Situations that are not overtly humanitarian.
• Action Taken: Pending

Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 10

UNICEF EMOPS and the GRS should prepare guidelines for the application of HRBAP in humanitarian situations.

Management Response: Agree

Action 1
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 11

UNICEF should examine the cost and benefits of different organizational staffing options to strengthen the ability of its staff to implement HRBAP. Integrating the Competency Framework on HRBAP is one way to identify potential trainers and future leaders in-house.

Management Response: Partially Agree

UNICEF’s competency framework includes a strong normative dimension and is aligned with other UN competency frameworks. Hence, adding other competencies or “non-competency-based” criteria to UNICEF’s competency framework would deviate from UN norms and standards.

Furthermore, the validity of finding 38 is questionable, since the evaluators did not review actual recruitment cases. (“Finding 38: HRBA competencies are considered in fewer than half of recruitments, and there is even less attention given to HRBA in critical post-recruitment stages.”)

UNICEF will review job descriptions and job profiles in relation to human rights competencies. A similar exercise was successfully conducted on gender equality.

Action 1

- Office/Section: NYHQ/DHR; NYHQ/PD/GRS
- Focal Point(s): Richard Bridle
- Expected Completion Date: 12/31/2013
- Implementation State: Pending
- Action Planned: With GRS, DHR will: a) select and review a cross-section of GJDs/GJPs; b) where necessary, incorporate human rights language within the technical competencies; and c) post the revised competencies on the intranet.
- Action Taken: Pending

Action 2
• Office/Section: NYHQ-General/NYHQ/DHR; NYHQ/PD/GRS
• Focal Point(s): Richard Bridle, Anju Malhotra
• Expected Completion Date: 12/31/2013
• Implementation State: Pending
• Action Planned: To strengthen the organization-wide refocus on equity, DHR will create a database of staff with expertise in HRBAP. The database will be used and maintained by GRS, as necessary. Action Taken: Pending

Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 12

UNICEF should make deliberate efforts to recruit, select, train and coach CO Representatives and Regional Directors as champions of the HRBAP.

Management Response: Partially Agree

Action 1

• Office/Section: NYHQ/DHR; NYHQ/PD/GRS
• Focal Point(s): Richard Bridle
• Expected Completion Date: 12/31/2013
• Implementation State: Pending
• Action Planned: The PER system provides a framework for assessing staff performance. DHR will: a) assess references to human rights principles in PERs; b) research and identify good examples of human rights-related objectives for PERs; c) integrate these good practices into current and future performance management training materials, as well as guidance notes on PER; and d) add good HRBAP-related objectives for staff performance as intranet resources.
• Action Taken: Pending

Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 13

UNICEF should improve the quality of HRBAP training by identifying core competencies, developing a training curriculum and ensuring that the facilitators of PPP have sufficient background in HRBAP to deliver quality training.

Management Response: Partially Agree

The responsibility for human rights competencies is not limited to the PPP; collaboration between GRS, OLDs and DPS is critical in this regard.
Action 1

- Office/Section: NYHQ-PD/HQ/PD/GRS, DHR/OLDS
- Focal Point(s): Anju Malhotra, Richard Bridle, Robert Jenkins
- Expected Completion Date: 12/31/2013
- Implementation State: Pending
- Action Planned: Review, consolidate and update relevant training material and toolkits.
- Action Taken: Pending

Action 2

- Office/Section: NYHQ-PD/NYHQ/PD/GRS
- Focal Point(s): Anju Malhotra, Richard Bridle
- Expected Completion Date: 6/1/2013
- Implementation State: Pending
- Action Planned: Develop a global roster of HRBAP trainers that can be used to implement the refocus on equity.
- Action Taken: Pending

Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 14

UNICEF should increase accountability for HRBAP at all levels of the organization (country, regional and global levels) and track costs and resources allocated to HRBAP.

Management Response: Disagree

As human rights principles inform every aspect of the organization’s programmes, policies and oversight mechanisms, establishing a new and separate process for monitoring and reporting on resources allocated to HRBAP would duplicate existing reporting procedures, diverting organizational resources, including staff time, away from programmes supporting child rights.