

Road map and outline of the revised evaluation policy of UNICEF

UNICEF Executive Board
Informal Briefing
16th January 2018

Rationale for the revised evaluation policy

- Changes in the environment in which UNICEF operates
 - The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015
 - The adoption of resolution 71/243 (2016 QCPR)
- In response to reviews of UNICEF's evaluation function, *inter alia*:
 - JIU 2014 Analysis of the evaluation function in the UN system
 - MOPAN 2015-16 Institutional Assessment of UNICEF
 - UNEG/OECD-DAC 2017 Peer Review of UNICEF's Evaluation Function
- To reflect updated best practice
 - Revised UNEG Norms and Standards 2016

What do we want a new policy to achieve?

- Reinforce the **use** of evaluations for learning, decision making and accountability in UNICEF and amongst its partners
- Strengthen the application of **UNEG Norms and Standards** to all evaluations throughout UNICEF
- Enhance the **capacity and professionalism** of UNICEF staff who manage evaluations
- Increase mutual support between evaluation and **other learning and accountability functions** (monitoring, audit, data, research)
- Enhance UN **partnerships** and support for **national evaluation capacity** in the context of the SDGs; strengthen the contribution of UNICEF to the independent review of progress towards the SDGs

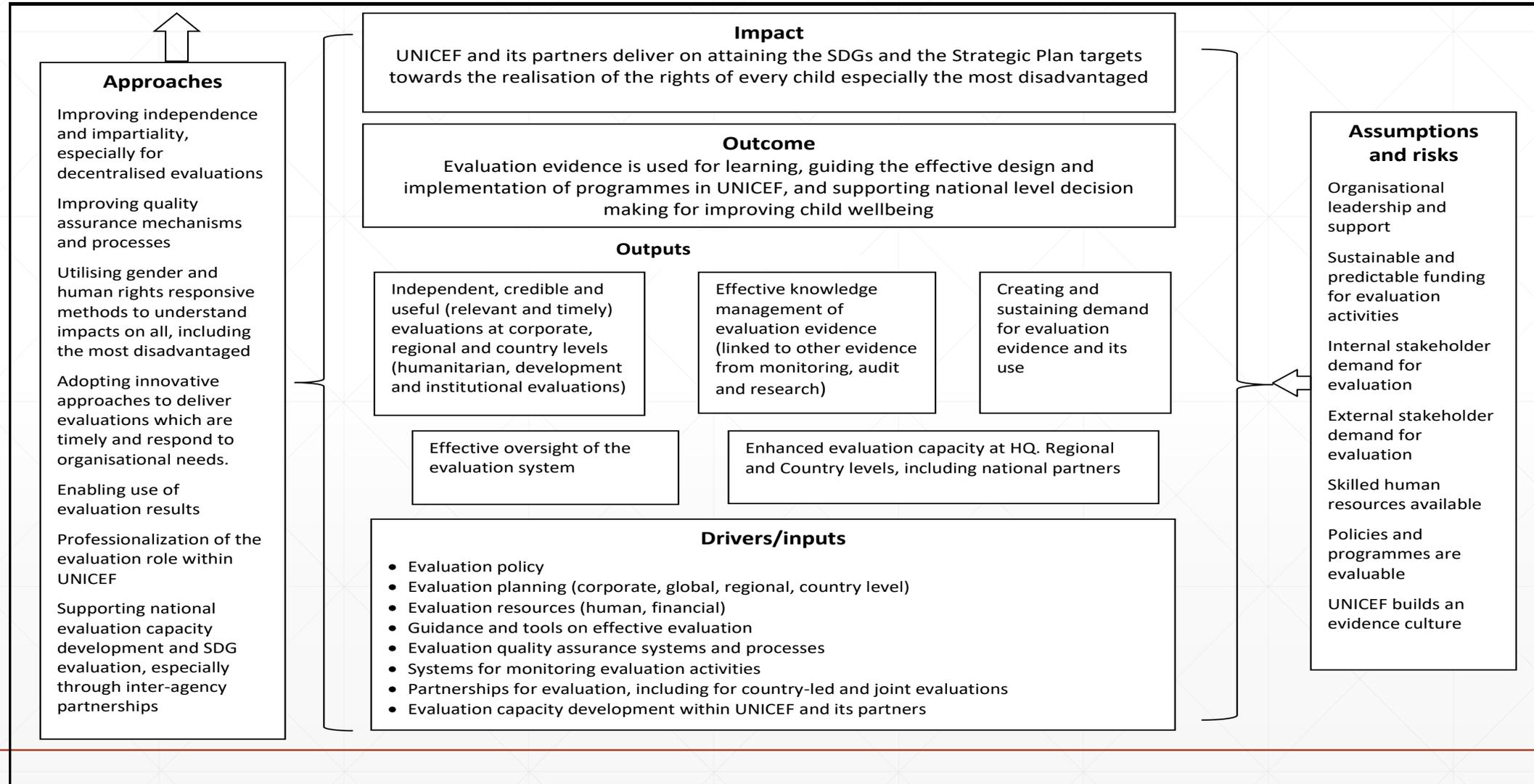
Principles and purpose of evaluation

- Evaluation serves UNICEF's mission, and supports the organization in the delivery of programmes to fulfil the rights of all children; as well as the broader principles and values of the UN, including commitment to human rights and gender equality, and the attainment of the SDGs.
- In UNICEF, evaluation's purpose is:
 - Learning: evaluations support better decision making and promote learning for continuous improvement in delivery of results for children
 - Accountability: evaluations help improve performance management and accountability for results at all levels; improve accountability for learning from evaluations in the organization
 - Improved national evaluation capacity: supporting countries to assess and enhance progress in achieving the SDGs and fulfilling children's rights

How will evaluation strengthen a culture of learning and accountability?

- The theory of change for evaluation outlines the expected pathways through which evaluative thinking, behavior and systems will be embedded into UNICEF's culture of learning and accountability
- Drivers of change implemented by the Evaluation Office will need to be supported by other parts of the organization with responsibilities for evaluation activities (eg Regional and Country Offices)
- To realize the outcome of the theory of change will also require collaboration with other parts of the organization with responsibilities for learning and accountability (eg Monitoring, Audit, Research)

Evaluation Theory of Change



What organizational architecture will support evaluation within UNICEF?

- Evaluation at UNICEF works at 3 mutually supporting levels:
 - Corporate and strategic governance level
 - Regional and Country level
 - External stakeholder level
- The policy will seek to apply UNEG Norms and Standards at each of these levels and to the entirety of the evaluation system
- Evaluations will support decision making at each of these levels

The Three Levels of the UNICEF Evaluation System

- Corporate and strategic governance level:
 - Independent corporate/ global evaluations undertaken by Evaluation Office; evaluation of joint global programmes; Evaluation Office oversight of the evaluation system
 - Regional and Country level:
 - By Regional Offices, multi-country thematic evaluations, Country Programme Evaluations; technical assistance and quality assurance to Country Offices
 - By Country Offices, evaluations of national policies and programmes in which UNICEF is a partner; support to country-led evaluations; UN joint and system-wide evaluations
 - External stakeholder level:
 - Evaluation of UNICEF's evaluation function
 - Contribute to review of progress towards the SDGs, and provide feedback on the evidence to UNICEF
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How will evaluation performance standards be met?

- The UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation will form the basis for performance standards for evaluation in UNICEF
- The policy will establish safeguards to ensure the application of UNEG Norms and Standards at all levels
- A key aspect of these safeguards will be a clear framework for quality assurance at all levels of the organisation
- Key Performance Indicators will be updated upon approval of the policy and reported through the Annual Report to the Executive Board

Safeguards to be considered (to be elaborated in the policy)

UNEG norm /standard	Safeguards for upholding norms and standards	
Independence Impartiality	<p>Director heads an independent and impartial evaluation function in UNICEF</p>	<p>HQ Division and Regional Directors, Country Representatives</p> <p>The Head of Office ensures application of the provisions of the Evaluation Policy in the conduct of evaluations at Divisional/Regional/Country level</p>
<p>Ethics</p> <p>Independence</p> <p>Impartiality</p>	<p>All evaluation managers and evaluators conform to the UNICEF procedures for ethical standards, UNEG ethical standards, UNEG code of conduct and UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation</p> <p>All evaluation consultants sign the Code of Conduct for Evaluators in the United Nations system.</p>	
<p>Human rights and gender equality</p>	<p>Key stakeholders, including children (when appropriate), marginalized groups, national partners, and governments should be engaged at relevant stages of the evaluation.</p>	
<p>Credibility</p>	<p>The Evaluation Office provides quality assurance for evaluations at HQ and regional office level.</p>	<p>The Regional Evaluation Advisor provides technical guidance and quality assurance for country level evaluations.</p>
<p>Impartiality</p> <p>Credibility</p>	<p>Country Programme Evaluations will be managed by Regional Evaluation Advisors with support from the Evaluation Office.</p>	
<p>Impartiality</p>	<p>Evaluations for L3 emergencies will be managed by the Evaluation Office in consultation with the Emergency Management Team</p>	<p>L2 evaluations will be managed by the Regional Office in consultation with the Evaluation Office; L1 evaluations by the Country Office in consultation with the Regional Office.</p>
<p>Professionalism</p>	<p>Every staff member of UNICEF responsible for managing evaluations will undergo basic training for purposes of upholding the norms and standards of the profession</p>	

How will the policy ensure adequate coverage of evaluations of UNICEF's work?

- Principles: regular evaluation of performance at country level; areas of potential risk and or opportunity should be prioritized; evaluations should be done when context changes sharply
- Corporate level:
 - Evaluations undertaken in support of the Strategic Plan and other policies and plans approved by the Executive Board
 - In support of policies and programmes initiated by the Executive Director
 - Of other global and multi-region initiatives, including joint programmes
- Regional level:
 - Evaluations undertaken in support of multi-country initiatives
 - Of country programmes through Country Programme Evaluations

How will the policy ensure adequate coverage of evaluations of UNICEF's work?

- Country level:
 - All country programmes subject to Country Programme Evaluation at least once every 10 years. Sequencing should enable CPEs to inform the next country programme and contribute to the UNDAF
- Additional evaluation effort when:
 - Monitoring information identifies significant shift in programming context or increase in level of risk
 - The declaration of an L2 or L3 emergency. Evaluations should provide rapid and timely evidence to support decision making in a fast changing context

How will use of evaluations be enhanced?

- The policy can promote and support key actions to enhance the use of evaluation findings and recommendations, including:
 - Timely evaluations, linked to key decision making moments in programming, policy development and planning
 - Supporting evaluability assessment to improve programme design
 - Promoting high quality evaluations through actions such as use of subject matter experts as evaluators, applying OECD-DAC evaluation criteria
 - Using new and better technology in both the conduct and dissemination of evaluation findings and recommendations
 - Ensuring a robust evaluation management response system, with appropriate monitoring and follow up of management responses
 - Regular feedback to senior management on evaluation findings and recommendations

What are the accountabilities for ensuring implementation of the policy?

- Given UNICEF's complex decentralized structure, the policy will identify accountabilities at all levels to support management and governance throughout the organization.
- Accountabilities will be identified for all entities responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented.
- Accountabilities will be defined for specific leaders/managers to ensure clarity of roles.
- Accountability for learning from evaluations will also be defined.

Specific provisions to enhance accountabilities for safeguards

- As per the UNICEF Management Response to the UNEG/ OECD-DAC Peer Review of the Evaluation Function
- Expansion of the role of the external Audit Advisory Committee to include matters pertaining to the oversight of the evaluation function
- Establishment of an external Evaluation Advisory Panel to advise the Evaluation Director on improvements to methodologies, procedures, quality assurance mechanisms, and the management response mechanism
- Establishment/strengthening the position of Regional Evaluation Adviser – to provide quality assurance to Country Offices
- Streamlining reporting lines for Regional Evaluation Advisers and country level specialists responsible for evaluations

How will UNICEF promote partnerships and support national evaluation capacity?

- UNICEF will continue to promote and support joint UN and system wide evaluation, including UNDAF evaluations and evaluation of joint programmes at country and global levels
- Country-led evaluations will continue to be a key area of partnership with national partners, particularly in support of the 2030 Agenda, and as a key plank of support to national evaluation capacity development
- Evaluation partnerships at country, regional and global levels with other entities can support both partner capacity development as well as enhancing capacity and knowledge within UNICEF

Ongoing UN reform agenda and evaluation

- The evaluation policy will specify UNICEF's contribution to joint programme evaluations at the global and country level, and to UNDAF evaluations.
- The policy will also make provisions to support Member States in evaluating progress towards the SDGs
- The reform agenda on system-wide evaluations is currently under discussion by the Secretary-General and Member States. The UNICEF evaluation policy will include a clause on addressing the outcome of the ongoing discussions with Member States.

What human resource capacity will be required to implement the evaluation policy?

- UNICEF staff who have an evaluation role should demonstrate the UNEG competencies appropriate to their role and level
- The Evaluation Office will play a stronger role in evaluation capacity strengthening within UNICEF, including support for professional development for evaluation staff
- Dedicated capacity in the Regional Offices will be enhanced
- The policy should ensure that there is sufficient capacity to support effective evaluation quality assurance processes throughout the organisation

Enhancing the capacity and professionalism of UNICEF staff who manage evaluations

- Evaluation Office will take a stronger role in evaluation capacity strengthening within UNICEF
- All staff with evaluation responsibilities will undergo training provided by the Evaluation Office and in accordance with UNEG competencies, including on professional conduct
- Training opportunities and technical support will be provided to programme managers to be able to fulfil their roles in evaluation
- Where feasible, staff in pursuit of a career in evaluation will be supported by ensuring that rotation is possible across evaluation positions

Financial resources

- The policy will maintain UNICEF's commitment to allocating at least 1% of programme expenditure to evaluation
- The Evaluation Office will establish a pooled fund to complement expenditure by all levels of the organization and to support capacity development
- The use of the Costed Evaluation Plan at country level will enable better monitoring and planning of allocations and coverage

Implementation and reporting arrangements

- UNICEF will issue appropriate instructions to carry forward the implementation of the policy
- The Evaluation Director will report annually to the Executive Board on the status of implementation of the policy
- An independent review of the performance of the policy should be undertaken in 2022

Proposed outline of UNICEF 2018 evaluation policy

1. Definition and purpose of evaluation in UNICEF
 2. Guiding principles underlying the policy
 3. Evaluation Theory of change
 4. Performance standards for evaluation (including safeguards and coverage)
 5. Use of evaluations
 6. Accountabilities for evaluation
 7. Synergies with other evidence and knowledge functions in UNICEF
 8. Partnerships for evaluation and national evaluation capacity
 9. Evaluation resources: financial and human resources
 10. Implementation, reporting and review
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Critical timelines

Timeline	Activity
2014	JIU system wide assessment of evaluation
2016	UNEG Norms and Standards updated
2016-2017	MOPAN Institutional Assessment of UNICEF
2017	UNEG/OECD-DAC Peer Review of the UNICEF Evaluation Function
2017 September	UNICEF Management Response to the Peer Review
Oct 2017 - Jan 2019	Internal Consultations on the evaluation policy
Dec 2017 - Feb 2018	Consultation with external Audit Advisory Committee
Jan-Feb 2018	Consultation with external Evaluation Advisory Panel
Jan 16 2018	Informal Briefing for Executive Board on the revised Evaluation Policy
Feb 6-9 2018	First Regular Session of the Executive Board
Feb 12 2018	Workshop with Member States and independent experts (material for workshop shared by 30 Jan 2018)
Feb 15 2018	Remaining feedback received
Feb 26 2018	Draft policy shared informally with the Executive Board
March 5 2018	Deadline for feedback on draft policy
March 23 - 4 April 2018	Final draft Evaluation Policy dispatched for editing and procession for the Annual Session of the Executive Board
May 22 2018	Informal briefing of the Executive Board
June 11 2018	Presentation of final draft evaluation policy at the Annual Session of the Executive Board