

# **Towards Improved Emergency Responses**

Synthesis of Humanitarian Evaluations 2010-2016

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## Key message

- UNICEF's humanitarian action has **matured** since 2010. It has provided **relevant** support for affected populations, acted in **close partnership**, and delivered **significant results** for affected populations.
- But evaluations find, after six years of humanitarian action, some **weaknesses** which need to be addressed. If addressed, these weaknesses present an important **opportunity for further progress** in the near term.

# What did the Synthesis ask?

- **Three questions:**

1. How has UNICEF's humanitarian action from 2010-2015 performed, and how has it improved over time?
2. What factors have supported or constrained improvement?
3. What can be learned, and what improvements made for the future?

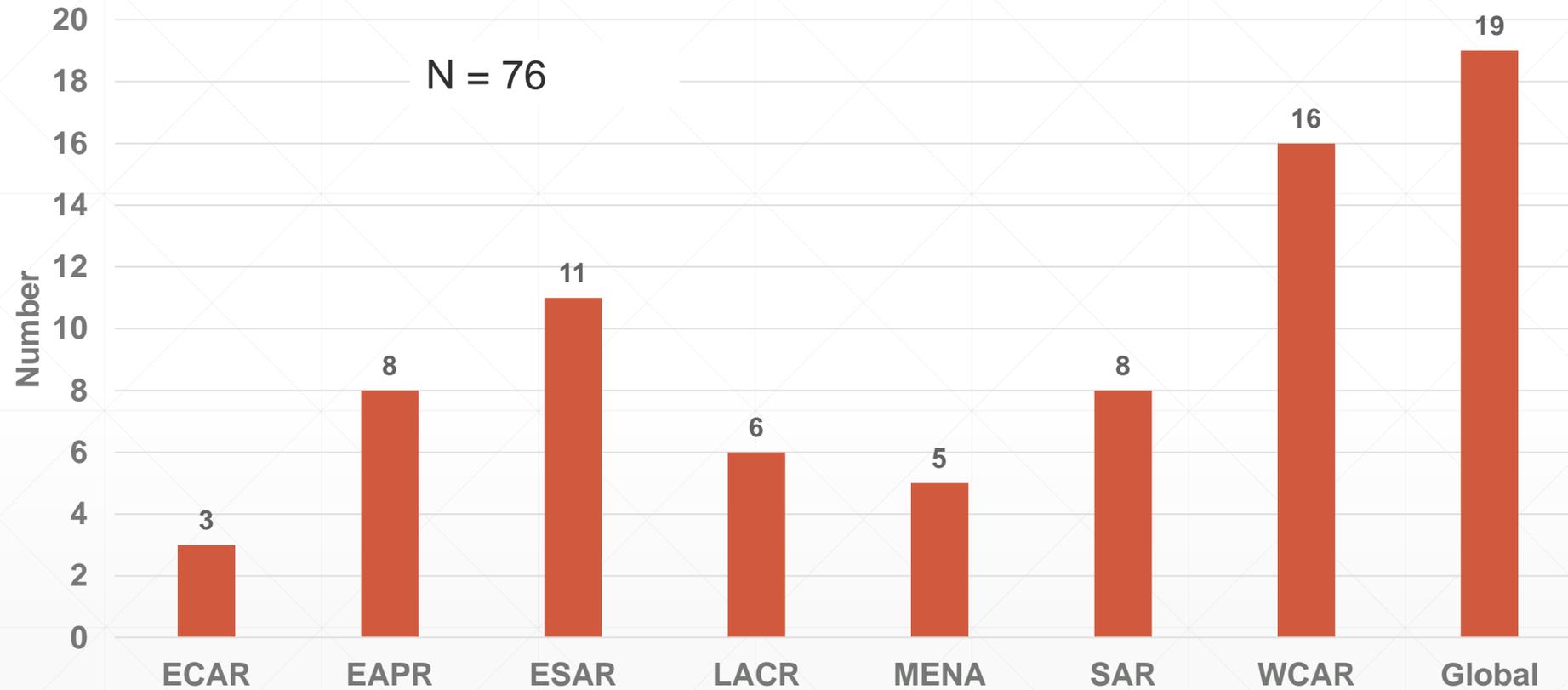
# How was the Synthesis conducted?

- **30** evaluations, distilled from 76 in total
- **Other sources:**
  - Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluations
  - Learning from Humanitarian Action: a synthesis of non-evaluative documents on UNICEF's humanitarian action from 2010-2016

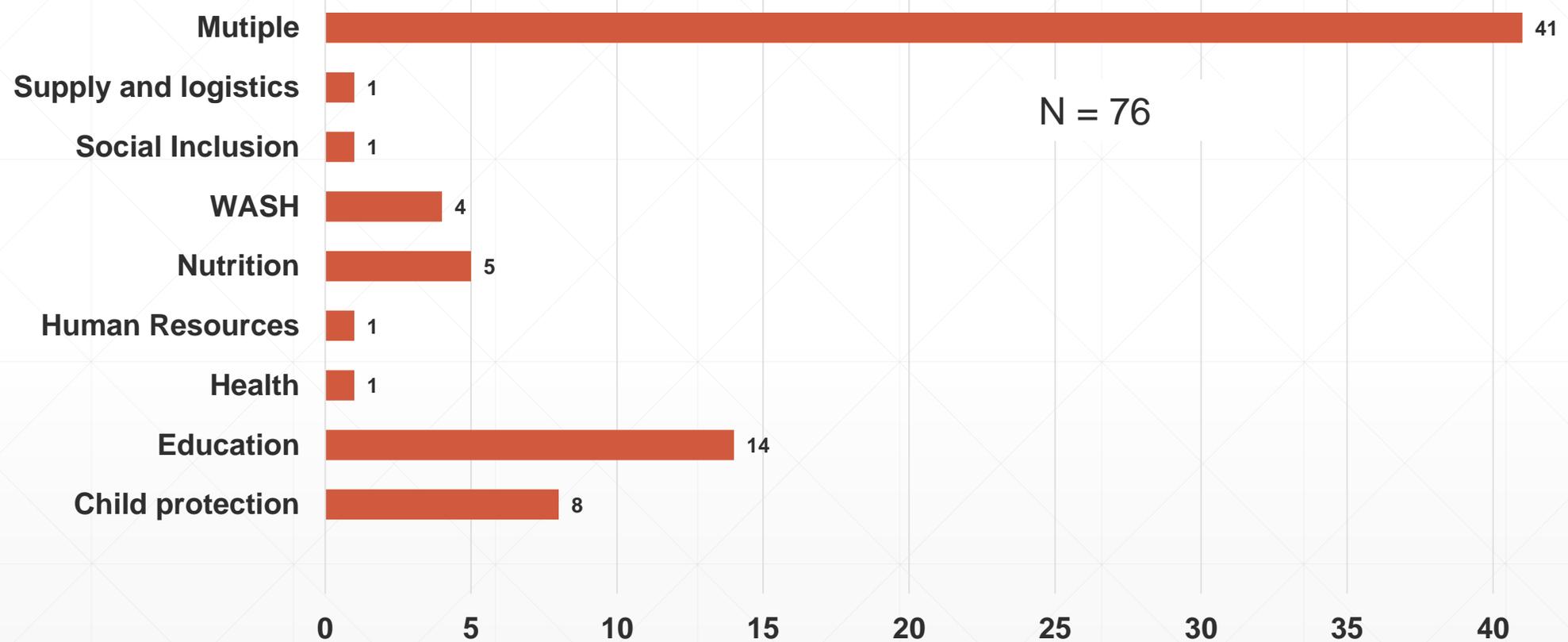
Key characteristics	Number of evaluations
Evaluation of global operational systems	3
Evaluation of global approaches or key humanitarian functions of UNICEF	4
Evaluation of multi-country responses	5
Evaluation of single country responses	18
Total	30

- **Systematic evaluation framework**

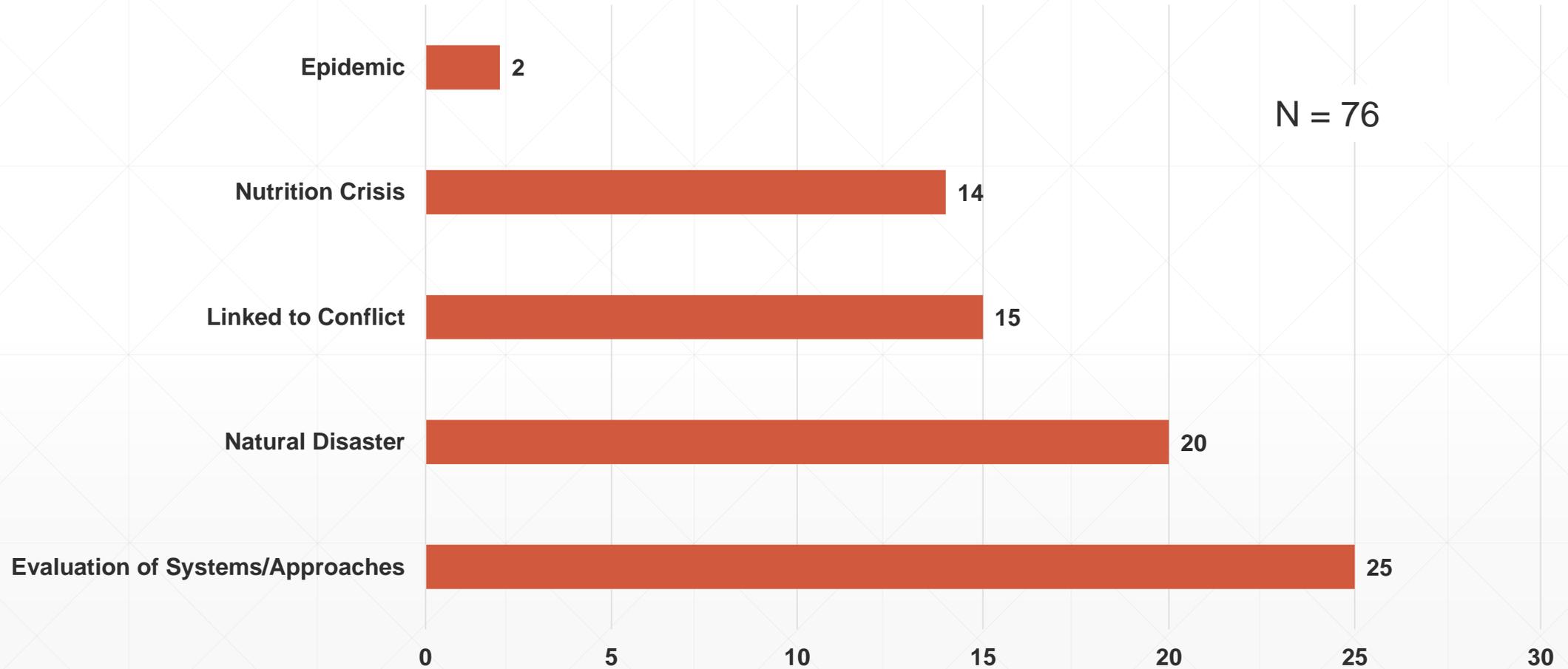
# Regional distribution of humanitarian action evaluations



# Sectors covered by humanitarian action evaluations



# Features of humanitarian action evaluations



# Findings on evaluation coverage

- **Comprehensive sectoral coverage**
- **Broad geographical /emergency type spread**
- **Gaps and weaknesses:**
  - Weaker coverage below L2 and L3s
  - Some duplication and overlap
  - Gaps in coverage – IHPs and CCCs
  - Joint commissioning weaker than 2013

# How relevant was UNICEF's humanitarian action?

Generally very relevant.

- **Strengths**

- Strong **alignment with humanitarian needs**
- Strong **alignment with national priorities**
- Mixed **strategic appropriateness** but willingness to **adapt**

- **But**

- Some **opportunity- rather than needs-based** programming
- Weak **strategic frameworks** or designs
- **Assumptions** made in response planning
- **Contextual challenges** in aligning with the CCCs

# How effective was UNICEF's Humanitarian Action?

## Mixed performance in achieving results

- **Outputs:**
    - Half of evaluations = moderate/mixed achievement
    - Variability across programme areas
  - **Outcomes**
    - Some significant gains e.g. reduced disease prevalence, children returned to families, reintegration of child soldiers
  - Notable gains in **system-strengthening** for humanitarian action
  - **Why were intended results not achieved?**
    - Technical weaknesses - design
    - Coverage limitations
    - Over-ambitious targets
    - Immediate effects but limited longer-term results
    - Need for more structured engagement with government
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# How efficient was UNICEF's Humanitarian Action?

## Mixed timeliness overall

- **Why?**
    - Delays – context-related
    - Slow starts/swift starts followed by slowdown
    - Limited preparedness
  - **Revised SSOPs** supported timeliness (L2 and L3)
    - Rapid staff deployment (IRTs)
    - Swift HR (recruitment, deployment)
    - Shortened admin procedures
    - Swift procurement
  - **But: SSOPs not consistently employed**
  - **Cost-effectiveness – evidence of progress**
    - Efficiency measures implemented
    - Cost savings delivered
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# How connected were the interventions?

## An area of weakness:

- Planning for **transition/resilience** not consistently embedded
  - Rapid emergency responses not always **linked to recovery**
  - **Lessons: Need**
    - Clear transition plan/links from response to early recovery
    - Preparedness and ability to 'flex'
    - Consistency across sectors in response plans
    - Seize opportunities to address social change
    - Shift emergency-transition as soon as conditions permit
    - Clarity on exit process
  - **Weak sectoral integration:**
    - Insufficiently holistic needs assessments
    - Lack of inter-section planning/preparedness
    - Lack of internal operational co-ordination
    - Siloed approaches at RO level
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# How coherent was UNICEF's humanitarian action with partners?

## Generally **strong external coherence**

- ...With joint response plans
- ...With other partners working in the context
- ...In cluster leadership

## **Strengths:**

- Collaboration = based on UNICEF's **comparative advantage**
- UNICEF willing to **address gaps** unfilled by other actors.
- Working with the '**right**' **partners** incl. non-traditional ones

## **But:**

- Coordination was generally weaker with **partner UN agencies.**

# Equity, Protection and AAP?

- **Equity**
  - Not consistently integrated into responses
- **Protection**
  - Limited evidence, but also inconsistent
- **AAP**
  - Gaps and weaknesses - but also gradual improvement

# Conclusions

- UNICEF's humanitarian action has **matured** since 2010
- Mostly **relevant and aligned** to humanitarian needs and national priorities
- Serious '**humanitarian citizen**' – joint responses and partnerships
- Delivered **important results** for children
- **Risk-willing** (mostly)

# Conclusions

- **Weaknesses outstanding:**
  - Needs assessments for affected populations
  - AAP
  - Strategies and designs
  - Implementation of L2 and L3 procedures
  - Internal coherence
  - Articulation of position vis-à-vis IHPs
  - CCCs/HPM –contextualisation
  - Utilize learning

# Recommendations

Recommendation	Action
More <b>stringent requirements</b> to evaluate	<b>Explicit triggers</b> for evaluation
Centralise <b>needs in design</b>	Clearer <b>logic chains</b> Monitor progress against <b>needs</b> <b>Learn lessons</b> on implementing needs assessments Robust approach to <b>AAP</b>
Build a <b>culture of confidence in procedures</b>	<b>Training/awareness raising</b> on SSOPs <b>Partner awareness</b> on PCA commitments
<b>Risk-informed programming</b> within the localization agenda	Stronger <b>risk analysis</b> Build <b>local capacity for response</b> PCAs include <b>adaptive capacity</b>
Revisit the <b>CCCs</b>	Revise/Addendum for <b>new challenges</b>
<b>Accountability with flexibility</b>	HPM - <b>aligned with country monitoring</b> - <b>extend outcomes</b>
Link <b>programme integration to recovery</b>	<b>Collective planning</b> – multi-sector <b>Cross-sectoral support</b> from ROs Define strategy for <b>protracted crises</b> <b>Transition/resilience</b> within programme cycle

# Thank You

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Questions and discussion