

Discussion Paper: 2018 Revised Evaluation Policy for UNICEF

For the attention of Member States

UNICEF Evaluation Office

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Contents

Introduction..... 3
Purpose, status and scope of the policy..... 4
Rationale for a revised policy 5
Definition and purpose of evaluation..... 6
Evaluation principles 6
Evaluation procedures and quality assurance 9
Enhancing the use of evaluations..... 14
Complementarity with other accountability and learning functions 15
Responsibilities for evaluation..... 16
Partnerships and system-wide evaluation support 21
National Evaluation Capacity Development..... 21
Resources 22
Risks..... 24
Implementation, reporting, and review 24

Introduction

This discussion paper presents proposals for the revised evaluation policy for UNICEF.

Key considerations for the revised policy are to advance the use of evaluations in support of the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Sustainable Development Goals and other relevant recent global accords.

Changes in the environment in which UNICEF operates have also helped shape the revision of the policy, including the 2015 adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) of operational activities for development of the United Nations system; the ongoing reform agenda on Repositioning the UN Development System and the increasing demand for country level evaluations, including systematically evaluating UNICEF's response to emergencies.

The updated UN Evaluation Group norms and standards for evaluation also provide an opportunity to revise related provisions in the policy, and to apply these consistently not only to the work of the Evaluation Office, but to all levels of the organization. The revised policy proposals emphasize that evaluations must be useful for learning and decision making, and for accountability at all levels of the organization, and should support the delivery of programmes for children.

The discussion paper also reflects on the consistency between UNICEF's proposals and recently revised evaluation policies of other UN agencies, namely, UNDP, UNESCO, WFP and ILO.

The purpose of the paper is to seek feedback on the proposed provisions for UNICEF's revised policy. Feedback may be shared at the Workshop with Member States on 12 February 2018 or sent by email to evaluation@unicef.org by 18 February.

Proposals for the UNICEF Evaluation Policy	Comparison with WFP, UNDP, UNESCO and ILO evaluation policies
<p>Purpose, status and scope of the policy</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Evaluation Policy sets out the purpose and use of evaluation in UNICEF, provides definitions, principles and norms, and outlines accountabilities and performance standards for the function. It guides UNICEF staff and partners on the organization’s requirements for the conduct and use of evaluations. The policy applies to all levels and parts of the organisation. 2. The Evaluation Policy is aligned with UNICEF’s mission as defined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the UNICEF mission statementⁱ: <i>“to advocate for the protection of children’s rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential”</i>ⁱⁱ. At the core of this mission is a culture which uses evaluation for better performance and continuous improvement. The evaluation policy promotes and supports the development of this culture at all levels of the organisation. 3. The Evaluation Policy is also aligned with the United Nations Charterⁱⁱⁱ and humanitarian principles^{iv}, with a commitment to human rights and gender equality. It is oriented to support the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, responding to the call for <i>“rigorous evidence, informed by country-led evaluations, that are high-quality, accessible, timely and reliable”</i>; and the requirements of the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review^v for national evaluation capacity development in partnership with other United Nations entities. 4. The Evaluation Policy is also guided by the norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and international principles and good practice in evaluation, including of humanitarian assistance, such that evaluations are independent, impartial, credible and useful and that evaluation processes are transparent and fully engaged with stakeholders. 	<p>UNICEF similar content to UNDP, WFP and ILO policies</p>

<p>Rationale for a revised policy</p> <p>5. Since the endorsement of the 2013 evaluation policy^{vi} there have been significant changes in the environment in which UNICEF operates. Wide-ranging global accords reached in recent years have transformed the landscape in which evaluations are conducted, including those on sustainable development (2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development^{vii}); disaster risk reduction (United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction); climate change (United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris); and financing for development (Third International Conference on Financing for Development). The 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) of operational activities for development of the United Nations system emphasizes the importance of strengthening national evaluation capacities and UN joint and system-wide evaluations. The ongoing reform agenda on Repositioning the UN Development System requires greater attention to system-wide evaluations at global and country levels. Together with the Grand Bargain arising from the World Humanitarian Summit^{viii}, these accords provide key directions for scope of and approaches to evaluations the coming years.</p> <p>6. Evaluation norms and standards, and related methods and approaches are being enhanced on a continual basis to address emerging development needs. The revised UNICEF evaluation policy reflects the 2016 updated norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group^{ix} and standards for evaluating humanitarian assistance.</p> <p>7. The conclusions of a series of recent reviews of the UNICEF evaluation function^x, provide an indication of how evaluation in UNICEF might respond to these evolving demands and expectations. Key to this is an evaluation policy which supports the development of an organisation wide evaluation function, which covers all of UNICEF’s work at global, regional and country levels.</p> <p>8. In this context, the revised evaluation policy aims to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. reinforce the use of evaluations for learning, decision-making and accountability in UNICEF and amongst its partners, b. apply the UNEG norms and standards to all evaluations undertaken throughout UNICEF c. enhance the capacity and professionalism of UNICEF staff who manage evaluations, and of those who have a role in discharging the evaluation function d. while acknowledging the distinctiveness of each function, to strengthen the complementarity between evaluation and other functions, particularly monitoring, audit, data management and research, to deepen learning and accountability in UNICEF 	<p>UNICEF similar content to WFP, ILO and UNESCO.</p>
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<p>e. in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, enhance UNICEF’s support for national evaluation capacity development and for UN joint and system-wide evaluations</p> <p>9. The specific pathways through which the evaluation function is expected to achieve these aims is shown in the Theory of Change attached at Annex 1.</p> <p>Definition and purpose of evaluation</p> <p>10. UNICEF follows the UNEG definition of evaluation as <i>“an assessment, conducted as systematically and impartially as possible, of an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector, operational area or institutional performance. It analyses the level of achievement of both expected and unexpected results by examining the results chain, processes, contextual factors and causality using appropriate criteria such as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should provide credible, useful evidence-based information that enables the timely incorporation of its findings, recommendations and lessons into the decision-making processes of organizations and stakeholders”</i>^{xi}.</p> <p>11. Evaluation in UNICEF serves inter-related purposes in support of the organization’s mission. It supports <i>learning and decision-making</i>, which in turn supports better results from programmes for children. Evaluation promotes <i>accountability</i>, helping to hold UNICEF accountable for contributing to results for children, or lack thereof. The UNICEF evaluation function supports the <i>development of national evaluation capacity</i>: working with Member States and the UN family, evaluation, and evaluation capacity development, should enhance the provision of timely evidence on the attainment of the sustainable development goals and the fulfilment of the rights of all children.</p> <p>Evaluation principles</p> <p>12. Evaluations should meet UNEG and other international norms and standards to fulfil their purpose in UNICEF. Safeguards in place for upholding these standards are given in Table 1 below.</p>	<p>UNICEF similar in content to UNDP, WFP, ILO, UNESCO. All confirm the UNEG definition of evaluation and the primacy of UNEG norms and standards for evaluation</p> <p>Similar focus on principles based on UNEG norms and standards in all policies; Both WFP and UNICEF utilise a table of safeguards as a key aspect of ensuring application of principles</p>
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Table 1 Safeguards for upholding UNEG norms and standards

UNEG norms/standards	Safeguards for upholding norms	
	Evaluation Office	Regional Directors, Country Representatives
Ethics	<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 and uphold the Code of Conduct for Evaluators in the United Nations system.</p>	
	<p>Risks including potential conflicts of interest are assessed prior to selecting evaluation teams.</p>	
Professionalism	<p>Every staff member of UNICEF responsible for managing evaluations^{xii} undergoes basic training for purposes of upholding the norms and standards of the profession.</p>	
Transparency	<p>All evaluations and associated management responses are made publicly available, except under exceptional circumstances approved by the Director of Evaluation</p>	
Independence and Impartiality	<p>Director of Evaluation reports directly to the Executive Director and heads an independent and impartial evaluation function in UNICEF.</p> <p>Director of Evaluation prepares and submits to the Executive Board an Annual Report on the evaluation function in UNICEF</p>	<p>The Head of Office ensures application of the provisions of the Evaluation Policy in the conduct of evaluations at Regional/Country level</p> <p>The Regional/Country Evaluation Specialist/Advisor manages evaluation responsibilities in line with the principles, norms and standards set out in the Evaluation Policy, reporting to the Head of Office (Regional Director, Country Representative).</p>
	<p>The evaluation of corporate programmes/initiatives will be undertaken by the Evaluation Office. Headquarters Divisions will invest in activities that lay the foundations for evaluations, including establishment of baselines, testing new initiatives or pilots for scaling up, and undertaking programme reviews for purposes of continuous improvement in delivery.</p>	<p>Country Programme Evaluations will be managed by the Regional Evaluation Advisers with support from the Evaluation Office.</p>
	<p>Evaluation managers manage evaluations in line with the principles, norms and standards set out in the Evaluation Policy</p>	
	<p>Evaluations will be undertaken by independent consultants/firms. Dedicated evaluation staff from the Evaluation Office and Regional Evaluation Advisers may directly support independent consultants in the conduct of evaluations as deemed appropriate by the Evaluation Director.</p>	
	<p>The budget for the Evaluation Office is approved by the Executive Board in the context of UNICEF's Integrated Budget. The Director Evaluation has full discretion and control over resources allocated.</p> <p>A pooled fund to support the evaluation function will be</p>	<p>The budget for the Country level Costed Evaluation Plan (CEP) is approved by the Executive Board as part of the CPD, whose budget includes resources that are earmarked for evaluations identified in the CEP.</p> <p>The financial framework accompanying annual or multi year work plans of Regional and Country Offices should include a line budget for evaluations.</p>

UNEG norms/standards	Safeguards for upholding norms	
	Evaluation Office	Regional Directors, Country Representatives
	established and managed by the Evaluation Office.	Responsibility for quality control and technical support of the CEP lies with the Regional Evaluation Advisors in consultation with the Evaluation Office.
	The evaluation of the UNICEF evaluation function will be managed by an independent panel (e.g. UNEG, OECD-DAC, etc.)	
Credibility	A stakeholder reference group and/or a technical experts group is established at the start of an evaluation, including participation of an independent stakeholder from outside UNICEF.	A stakeholder reference group is established at the start of an evaluation which includes the Regional Evaluation Adviser and/or a member external to UNICEF.
	Evaluation Office provides quality assurance services for evaluations undertaken at Regional level	Regional Evaluation Adviser provides quality assurance services for evaluations undertaken at country level.
	Evaluation Office ensures independent quality assessment of all evaluation reports	
	All staff with evaluation responsibilities undergo training in evaluation design and methods	
Human rights and gender equality	Key stakeholders, including children (when appropriate), women, marginalized groups, national partners, and governments should be engaged at relevant stages of the evaluation.	
Use	Use of evaluations builds on the norms and standards mentioned above - to enable learning to occur. Refer section on page 14 below on provisions to promote use of evaluations	

Proposals for UNICEF Evaluation Policy	Comparison with WFP, UNDP, UNESCO and ILO evaluation policies
<p>Evaluation procedures and quality assurance</p> <p>13. Evaluations should be properly planned, effectively managed and conducted, quality assured, and the quality of evaluation reports assessed systematically.</p> <p><i>Evaluation Planning</i></p> <p>14. Evaluations should be adequately planned and an evaluation plan should contain an appropriate mix of different types of evaluations. Evaluation plans are prepared at various levels of the organisation, specifically:</p> <p>a. The Plan for Global Evaluations, a multi-year costed corporate evaluation plan is prepared by the Evaluation Office and approved by the Executive Board in support of the UNICEF strategic plan and other corporate policies and strategies; it builds on regional and multi-country evaluations and country level evaluations.</p> <p>b. Regional plans are prepared by Regional Offices for evaluating multi country initiatives; they build on country level evaluations</p> <p>c. Country Costed Evaluation Plans are prepared by Country Offices and approved by the Executive Board concurrently with the Country Programme Document</p> <p>15. Evaluation plans should ensure adequate coverage of evaluations, including in humanitarian situations, and appropriate preparation to ensure high quality evaluations. Evaluation plans should enable evaluations to respond to the critical challenges in the delivery of programmes; make provision for timely delivery of products in accordance with decision-making schedules and programming cycles; and spell out how use of findings and recommendations will be promoted. Table 2 below provides details of the minimum expected evaluation requirements. These requirements are intended to provide for regular evaluation of performance at all levels of the organisation, to prioritize areas of potential risk and/or opportunities for learning, and to ensure that when there are sharp changes in a given context an evaluation should take place.</p> <p>16. Country Programme Evaluations (CPEs) will be a key evaluation product at country level. CPEs will support both learning and accountability and will assess the performance of the country programme of cooperation. The methodology for CPEs will be determined by the Evaluation Office, learning from earlier experience and from other UN agencies.</p>	<p>UNICEF similar to WFP and UNESCO; more detail than UNDP on procedures for planning, especially at regional and country level. UNESCO, UNDP and WFP make distinction between centralised and decentralised evaluation. ILO includes a section on evaluation types and responsibilities, which is similar to the information given in Table 2 of UNICEF policy; UNESCO and WFP also articulate coverage expectations similar to this table</p>

17. All evaluations should yield results which are timely for decision making. This is particularly so for humanitarian evaluations: the evaluation should focus on yielding rapid, timely evidence to support decision-making in a fast-changing humanitarian context. Approaches for rapid and timely evaluation of emergency response will be guided by the Evaluation Office. In regular programming environments, evaluations should provide results which can feed in to key programming processes and should be planned accordingly.

Management and conduct of evaluations

18. Evaluations should be designed and managed in line with UNEG standards and the standards set out in this Policy. Staff responsible for designing, conducting and managing evaluations should conform to UNEG ethical standards, including in the conduct of evaluations in humanitarian situations. The Evaluation Office should ensure that staff responsible for managing evaluations have been trained in the ethics of the profession.

19. Safeguards for upholding the UNEG norms and standards in the management and conduct of evaluations are outline in Table 1 above. More detailed steps for ensuring useful and credible evaluation results are:

- Management arrangements for each evaluation should ensure the independence and impartiality of the evaluation. The designated evaluation manager should not have been part of the team that designed and/or manages the programme (see Table 2). The designated evaluation manager supervises the selection of external consultants, manages the consultants and has the authority to hold them to a high standard of performance. The evaluation manager is ultimately responsible for the quality of the evaluation.
- Key stakeholders, including excluded groups, as appropriate, should be engaged at relevant points, starting in the design phase. Such stakeholders may include children and young people. Involvement of children and young people should follow appropriate ethical guidelines and requires approval as per UNICEF procedure^{xiii}.
- The team leader and team members responsible for conducting an evaluation should be selected through an open and transparent process. The composition of the team should be balanced in terms of geographical and gender diversity, and should include professionals from the region or country concerned in the evaluation.
- Terms of reference should conform to UNEG standards and should make provision for the eventual use of the evaluation. They should be shared with stakeholders, promoting transparency and engagement, and should be subject to quality assurance processes.
- When a preliminary risk assessment deems it necessary, an ethical review should be conducted by an objective and qualified body.

UNICEF presents more detail than WFP and ILO; UNDP also has more detail than WFP and ILO, but is less directive than UNICEF, which aims to embed the norms and standards at regional and country level and so proposes keeping this level of detail.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The evaluation design and methods should be clearly presented in the inception report and should be quality reviewed in the same way as the ToR.• The evaluation design should pay explicit attention to the human rights, gender equality, and sustainability aspects of the programme or policy to be assessed.• The evaluation report should meet UNICEF's evaluation reporting standards and should be quality reviewed in the same way as the ToR and inception reports.• The quality of all evaluation reports should be assessed by a specialist external to UNICEF. | |
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Table 2: Minimum evaluation coverage norms

Evaluation	Frequency	Evaluation Manager	Quality Assurance Services	Accountability for use of evaluation results
Country Programme Evaluation	At least once every 2 programme cycles, sequenced to feed in to subsequent CPD and UNDAF At least 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	Regional Evaluation Adviser	Evaluation Office	Country Representative Regional Directors
Country Programme Component and thematic Evaluations including cross cutting themes	At least one country programme component evaluation and/or thematic evaluation per year	Country Office Evaluation Specialist	Regional Evaluation Adviser/External experts	Country Representative Regional Directors Division Directors
Evaluation of humanitarian action	Evaluation of L1 emergencies must be included in Country Programme Evaluations. Protracted L1 emergencies should be evaluated at least every 3-5 years.	Country Office Evaluation Specialist	Regional Evaluation Adviser	Country Representative Regional Directors Divisional Directors
	Short term L2 emergencies must be evaluated at least once. Protracted L2 emergencies should be evaluated once every three years	Regional Evaluation Adviser	Evaluation Office	Country Representative Emergency Management Team
	Short term L3 emergencies must be evaluated at least once. Protracted L3 emergencies should be evaluated once every three years	Evaluation Office	Evaluation Office/ External experts	Country Representative Emergency Management Team
Corporate evaluations	Each Strategic Plan Goal area is to be evaluated during the SP period, including humanitarian aspects of the Goal, in accordance with the Plan for Global Evaluations	Evaluation Office	External experts	Deputy Executive Directors, Division Directors, Regional Directors
	SP Change Strategies and Enablers to be evaluated according to the Plan for Global Evaluations	Evaluation Office	External experts	Deputy Executive Directors, Division Directors, Regional Directors
Evaluability assessments;	Coverage and frequency determined by commissioning office	Evaluation Office; Regional Evaluation Adviser; Country	Evaluation Office; Regional Evaluation	Division Directors Regional Directors

Evaluation	Frequency	Evaluation Manager	Quality Assurance Services	Accountability for use of evaluation results
evaluation synthesis; meta evaluations		Office Evaluation Specialist	Adviser; External experts	Country Representatives
Reviews in support of policies, plans, strategies	Coverage and frequency determined by commissioning office	Divisions, Regional Offices, country Offices	Evaluation specialists at required level	Division Directors Regional Directors Country Representatives
Regional level multi-country evaluations	Coverage and frequency determined by the Regional Office	Regional Evaluation Adviser	External reference group/experts	Regional Director Country Representatives Divisional Directors
Joint UN and system wide evaluations including UNDAFs and Joint Programmes	Coverage and frequency determined by interagency mechanism	Determined by interagency mechanism	Determined by interagency mechanism	UN Heads, Governments, partners
Country-led evaluation	Coverage and frequency determined by partner governments	Determined by Governments and partners	Determined by Governments and partners	Determined by Governments and partners

Proposals for the UNICEF Evaluation Policy	Comparison with WFP, UNDP, UNESCO and ILO evaluation policies
<p>Enhancing the use of evaluations</p> <p>20. Evaluations that are not properly utilized represent wasted investment and missed opportunities for learning to improve UNICEF’s performance. The use of evaluation results is driven by examining appropriate questions at the appropriate time. This means clearly linking Country Programme Evaluations and multi country evaluations to the country programme cycle; country-led evaluations to government planning cycles, and to the timing of advocacy initiatives; corporate evaluations to the UNICEF planning and budgeting cycle as well as to the mechanisms established by Member States to review progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Use is also dependent on the credibility of the evaluation, which in turn is dependent on rigour, impartiality, and professionalism.</p> <p>21. Use can be enhanced by selecting the appropriate type of evaluation for the needs at hand. The Evaluation Director will provide guidance on the appropriate types of evaluation for the diverse contexts in which UNICEF works and the diverse purposes of evaluation.</p> <p>22. Use is also dependent on whether evaluations are delivered in a timely manner. The Evaluation Director will provide guidance on improving the timeliness of evaluations, including for fast-changing humanitarian contexts.</p> <p>23. All levels of the evaluation system should invest in technologies to advance the use of evaluations. Key to this will be effective communication and dissemination of evaluation results and syntheses. All evaluations should have a dissemination plan at the outset., and as per UNEG guidance evaluation reports and management responses are made public.</p> <p>24. Evaluation results are of limited value unless timely steps are taken to implement evaluation recommendations, and lessons incorporated into decision-making systems. UNICEF offices must prepare a formal management response to evaluation recommendations and make appropriate arrangements to maximize the use of evaluation results. For purposes of accountability, the Evaluation Office should periodically undertake an assessment of the implementation of management responses throughout the organisation. For purposes of learning and continuous improvement, the Evaluation Office should also establish guidelines for iterative approaches to the evaluation of programmes in especially challenging contexts.</p>	<p>All policies encompass this as an objective of evaluation, though UNESCO and UNICEF propose significant attention to the issue of use; for UNICEF, this is to address concerns raised by external reviews, including the Peer Review of the Evaluation Function noting that use should be enhanced.</p>

25. Knowledge management is a key aspect of institutional learning. The Evaluation Office will create syntheses of evaluation findings, issuing them as reports to be shared with the Executive Board and to be made public. Such syntheses may lead to thematic recommendations for the organisation. The Evaluation Office will work with other parts of the organisation to support the use of evaluation findings in generating and disseminating evidence which is relevant and accessible.

Complementarity with other accountability and learning functions

26. Evaluation is one of a number of distinct functions which complement each other, including monitoring and broader results-based management, research, and audit. These functions can support an enabling environment for evaluation. Data from monitoring and research informs evaluation; methods from research complements those used for evaluation; Audit findings help shape evaluations and contribute to assessments of organisational efficiency. While maintaining its independence, evaluation in UNICEF will coordinate with complementary functions that enhance the process of managing evaluations and their use.

UNESCO, ILO and UNDP make similar points regarding the links between these functions, particularly in the context of results based management.

<p>Responsibilities for evaluation</p>	
<p>27. UNICEF’s institutional architecture which supports the implementation of the evaluation policy is outlined below.</p> <p><i>Executive Board</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endorses the evaluation policy, considers annual reports on its implementation and on the status and effectiveness of the evaluation function, and issues decisions conveying expectations and guidance on improving performance; approves Costed Evaluation Plans as part of Country Programme Documents; approves the Plan for Global Evaluations; and draws on the findings and recommendations of evaluations and evaluation syntheses for the purposes of governing the organization. <p><i>Executive Director</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguards the integrity of the evaluation function. The Executive Director fosters a culture of accountability, learning and continuous improvement at all levels of the organization; creates demand for evaluation evidence, ensures evaluation recommendations are acted upon and provides opportunities for use of the evidence; and supports the necessary provision of human and financial resources for the evaluation function. The Executive Director is responsible for the appointment of UNICEF’s Director of Evaluation and oversees the work of the Director. <p><i>The Audit Advisory Committee</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Audit Advisory Committee, which includes an external expert on evaluation, advises the Executive Director on matters pertaining to the oversight of the evaluation function, including upholding the norms and standards set out in the evaluation policy. <p><i>Global Evaluation Committee</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advises the Executive Director on the relevance and use of evaluations. Creates opportunities for use of evaluation evidence and follows-up the implementation of the Management Response. The Committee, which meets regularly, is chaired by the Deputy Executive Director (Management) with membership comprising all Deputy Executive Directors, relevant Divisional Directors, the Director of Internal Audit, the Director of the Office of Research, and all Regional Directors. 	<p>All policies address this in a similar way, notwithstanding differences in structures and accountabilities. UNICEF, like UNDP, UNESCO and ILO proposes an external committee to advise the Executive Director/ Administrator/ Director General; UNICEF and UNDP also propose an external committee to advise the Director Evaluation. UNICEF, ILO and WFP propose measures to strengthen evaluation capacity at regional level.</p>

Evaluation Director

28. The UNICEF Director of Evaluation (“the Director”) reports directly to the UNICEF Executive Director, and heads an Evaluation Office which is functionally independent within the organisation.

29. The Director is appointed by the Executive Director in consultation with the Audit Advisory Committee and the Executive Board, and with external evaluation expert as part of the selection panel. The Director is appointed for a term of five years, renewable once for a maximum of five years, and is barred from re-entry into the organisation after the expiry of his/her term^{xiv}.

30. The Director has accountability for oversight of the evaluation function throughout UNICEF. The Director leads the implementation of the evaluation policy within the organisation including through:

- Establishing and updating the Evaluation Policy; setting performance standards for evaluation across UNICEF and monitoring achievement against these standards; providing an independent report annually to the Executive Board on the implementation of the Evaluation Policy.
- Preparing and periodically revising the Plan for Global Evaluations (PGE), laying out strategic priorities for evaluation and identifying major corporate thematic evaluations to be undertaken independently by the Evaluation Office; ensuring adequate resources for the implementation of the Plan for Global Evaluations and for support to the funding of evaluations and evaluation capacity development throughout the organisation.
- Designing, commissioning and managing independent corporate evaluations which meet international standards of best practice; and providing timely dissemination of the results for action by management and other stakeholders.
- Establishing a comprehensive assessment system to gauge the quality and coverage of UNICEF evaluations undertaken throughout the organisation; providing quality assurance services to all levels to ensure that evaluations undertaken meet the standards set out in the policy; maintaining systems to monitor and report on management responses to evaluation recommendations and comprehensive databases to facilitate public access to all UNICEF evaluations and management responses; informing the Executive Director and the UNICEF Global Management Team, staff and UNICEF stakeholders about relevant and useful evaluation results.
- Promoting the use of evaluations and knowledge management for evaluation, including through innovative approaches.
- Promoting strategies and systems to build internal evaluation capacity, including technical review of candidates for evaluation positions; providing guidance and support to offices in designing and staffing the function and to staff in long-term career development; implementing strategies to enhance the professionalization of the function.

- Developing and sharing innovative approaches and methodologies for evaluation work, particularly methods for improving the timeliness of evaluations.
- Promoting partnerships especially by promoting national ownership and leadership of evaluation activities; supporting global partnerships and networks; and working through these to support innovation and evaluation-capacity development; engaging with UNEG to harmonize evaluation norms and practices and to build United Nations evaluation capacity; and contributing to United Nations system-wide evaluations.

Evaluation Advisory Panel

- An independent and external body that advises the Evaluation Director on the implementation of the Evaluation Policy, the Plan for Global Evaluations and other global policy documents; recommends improvements to evaluation methodologies, procedures, quality assurance mechanisms, and management response; recommends innovative ways to speed up conduct and use of evaluations, including improvements to knowledge sharing and dissemination.

Headquarters Division Directors

- Supports activities that enable evaluations, including establishment of baselines, testing new initiatives or pilots for scaling up, and undertaking programme reviews for purposes of continuous improvement in delivery. Provides access to data and information for evaluations
- Ensures the preparation and implementation of management response to evaluations
- Promotes the use of evaluation results for decision making and improved programming
- Supports evaluation capacity development.

Regional Directors

- Ensure that the norms and standards set out in the evaluation policy are upheld in the management and conduct of evaluations at Regional level.
- Provide data and information for evaluations
- Oversee the implementation of management responses to evaluation in the region.
- Promote the use of evaluation results in the region for decision making and improved programming.
- Respond to performance information regarding evaluation activities in the region.
- Promote strategies for adequate financing of evaluations in the region.
- Promotes evaluation capacity development and contribute to system-wide evaluation capacity in the region.

Regional Evaluation Adviser

31. Maintains a structured reporting, comprising management oversight and guidance from the Regional Director, and technical guidance from the Director of Evaluation as follows:

- Develops and leads in the implementation of a regional multi-year plan and annual work plans for thematic and multi-country evaluations in the region (reports to Regional Director)
- Provides technical and quality assurance support to the Regional Office and to Country Offices for the planning and management of evaluations towards improved timeliness and credibility of evaluation products (to Regional Director)
- Prepares and disseminates reports on the management of the evaluation function to the Regional Evaluation Committee, Regional Management Team (RMT) and the Evaluation Office (to Regional Director)
- Contributes to efforts by the Evaluation Office to strengthen technical oversight for evaluation management processes across the organization towards greater responsiveness, improved timeliness and quality, and better utilization of evaluation products in the region (to Evaluation Director)
- Contributes to reinforcing the strategic involvement of UNICEF in National Evaluation Capacity Development, UNDAF evaluation as well as joint evaluations with governments and other development actors (to Regional Director).
- Provides UNICEF inputs into and coordinates effectively with regional inter-agency evaluation mechanisms, intergovernmental fora and other regional partnerships and organizations relevant to the evaluation function (to Regional Director)
- Contributes to efforts by the Evaluation Office to develop and facilitate utilization of innovative products and processes in the area of evaluation methodology, evaluation management and use of evaluations (to Evaluation Director).
- Contributes to efforts by the Evaluation Office to implement initiatives towards the professionalization of the evaluation function (to Evaluation Director)
- Provides oversight and support to country programme evaluations (to Regional Director)
- Keeps abreast of developments in the field of evaluation and knowledge management and provides/coordinates regional contributions and recommendations in connection with the development and implementation of the evaluation policy, global evaluation plan and related strategies and guidance (to both Regional Director and Evaluation Director).

Country Representative

- Ensures that the norms and standards set out in the evaluation policy are upheld in the management and conduct of evaluations at Country level.
- Ensures the preparation of a Costed Evaluation Plan for the country programme that provides timely evaluation evidence for the appropriate integration of evaluation into programme review processes
- Allocates necessary funds for evaluations and ensures the necessary level of human resources. Ensures staff have the knowledge necessary to meet their evaluation accountabilities, including relevant professional development opportunities for evaluation staff; ensures appropriate integration of evaluation into staff performance reviews.
- Oversees the preparation of an appropriate management response to evaluation recommendations; monitors action to implement agreed recommendations; promotes the use of evaluation results in the country for decision making and improved programming.
- Responds to performance information regarding evaluation activities in the country office.
- Works with the United Nations Country Team to integrate evaluation evidence into the UNDAF and inter-agency work; promoting joint evaluation work with the United Nations system and other partners, including United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) evaluations; and contribute system-wide evaluations.
- Advocates for and promotes national evaluation systems; and supports efforts to strengthen evaluation capacities in government, Parliament, civil society and other partners, including through SDG evaluation and reporting.
- Supervises the evaluation functions of staff members with evaluation management responsibilities

Country Office Evaluation Specialist (or staff assigned to manage evaluations)

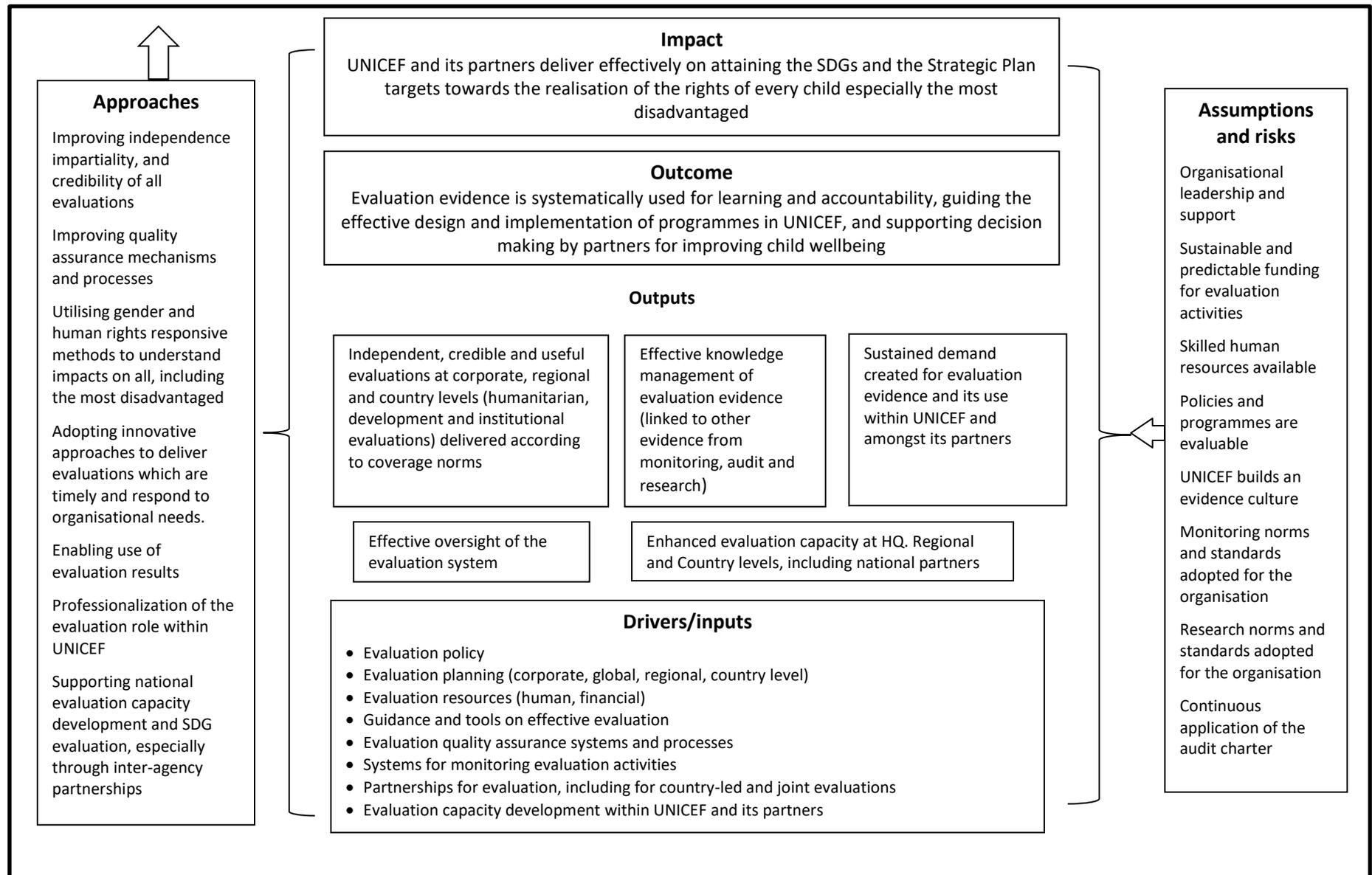
- Manages evaluations at the country level in accordance with the norms and standards stated in the evaluation policy, including those for quality assurance.
- Compiles the list of intended evaluations, studies, research, reviews etc to be included in the Costed Evaluation Plan and annual Integrated M&E Plan, and applies the UNICEF taxonomy to determine which products are to be treated as evaluations.
- Engages competent evaluators that conduct their work conforming to the norms and standards set out in the evaluation policy.
- Supports the development and implementation of management responses to evaluations; promotes the use of evaluation results for decision making and improved programming
- Supports the design, implementation and use of country-led evaluations.

<p>Partnerships and system-wide evaluation support</p> <p>32. UNICEF will maintain partnerships in support of the aims of the evaluation policy. UNICEF will maintain active partnerships at all levels with a wide range of institutions, including United Nations agencies, international financial institutions, Governments, evaluation associations, non-governmental organizations, foundations and academic institutions.</p> <p>33. UNICEF will continue to support partnerships for system-wide evaluation activities. UNICEF will actively engage in joint evaluations, including evaluation of the UNDAF and joint programmes, recognizing the benefits of promoting learning in the UN system, shared accountability and reduced transaction costs. UNICEF will support the systematic application of UNEG Norms and Standards in all joint evaluations and evaluations of joint programmes at country, regional and global levels. UNICEF will further support the work of UNEG in enhancing partnerships for evaluation.</p> <p>34. In response to national demand, UNICEF will pursue partnerships with evaluation units of government departments and government evaluation agencies to ensure credible and timely evaluation of child-focused national programmes. Where appropriate, such country-led evaluations may provide the opportunity for UNICEF to support national evaluation capacity development in those sectors and focus areas related to UNICEF’s mandate.</p> <p>35. UNICEF will continue to support country, regional and global evaluation partnerships, particularly those focused on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and on child-focused initiatives.</p> <p>National Evaluation Capacity Development</p> <p>36. UNICEF will continue to advocate for and support national evaluation capacity development especially in those sectors and focus areas related to UNICEF’s mandate and in partnership with other United Nations agencies and other partners. [This section to be further developed following feedback from Member States on 12th February]</p> <p>37. When UNICEF is a partner in but does not commission or manage an evaluation, the specific provisions of this policy do not apply. Nevertheless, UNICEF will promote adherence to international evaluation norms and standards in such situations.</p>	<p>All policies address this issue, though UNICEF perhaps with more detail given its previous and ongoing role in supporting evaluation partnerships and national evaluation capacity development.</p>
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<p>Resources</p> <p><i>Human resources</i></p> <p>38. The evaluation function requires adequate skilled human resources to manage evaluations and to provide effective quality assurance. The most significant human resource requirement is at the country level, where the largest proportion of evaluations is carried out. External specialist assistance is required in the form of consultants to undertake evaluations managed by UNICEF evaluation staff. Consultants must have appropriate skills to conduct high quality, impartial and useful evaluations. Regional Offices and the Evaluation Office will support the identification of consultants by maintaining a quality controlled roster of qualified individual evaluators, service providers and centres of excellence.</p> <p>39. Country Offices should establish adequate capacity for the management of evaluations. Evaluation responsibilities are often undertaken by staff who also hold other responsibilities such as monitoring, research and planning. To establish dedicated evaluation positions, Country Offices may decide (in large programmes) to have an Evaluation Specialist post or, where appropriate, smaller offices should replicate arrangements such as pooling resources with other UNICEF offices to fund a multi-country post dedicated to evaluation. Where such arrangements are not possible, staff with responsibility for evaluation should be supported by the Country Representative to devote adequate time to evaluation duties and, in the conduct of these duties, report directly to the Country Representative. Arrangements should be made by the Representative to ensure the integrity of the evaluation function, in particular to ensure the application of safeguards noted in this policy.</p> <p>40. Regional Offices will have at least one staff member at P5 level, who meets the requirements of the UNEG competency framework, fully dedicated to evaluation activities. A significant role for the Regional Evaluation Advisor will be to provide technical assistance and quality assurance services for evaluation at country level. Such services may be provided directly by the Regional Evaluation Advisor or through Long Term Agreements or similar arrangements with consultants or centres of excellence.</p> <p>41. The Evaluation Office staff will meet the requirements of the UNEG competency framework. The Evaluation Director will ensure that the staff the Evaluation Office and Regional Evaluation Advisors have the required evaluation management and leadership skills and experience aligned with UNEG evaluation competencies.</p> <p>42. All staff with evaluation responsibilities will undergo training as provided by the Evaluation Office to improve their professional skills. Additional opportunities for professional development will also be identified. Training opportunities and technical support will be provided for programme staff managers to be able to fulfil their roles in evaluation.</p>	<p>All policies note the need for skilled capacity. Similar approach to WFP and ILO in the context of internal evaluation capacity development.</p>
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<p>43. Where feasible, UNICEF will support staff in the pursuit of a career in evaluation by ensuring that rotation is possible across evaluation positions. Increasing the number of dedicated evaluation positions will increase the behavioural independence of evaluation staff.</p> <p><i>Financial resources</i></p> <p>44. High-quality evaluations require the necessary investment of financial resources. Globally, to meet minimum evaluation coverage along the lines indicated in the evaluation policy, UNICEF will allocate <i>at least</i> 1 per cent of its overall programme expenditure to evaluation. Planning studies, monitoring, surveys and research should be financed separately from evaluation.</p> <p>45. The Executive Director will establish a pooled fund to support strategic evaluations at all levels, to support evaluations of new initiatives and innovations, and to support evaluation capacity development. This fund will supplement, not replace regular spending on evaluation. Key objectives of the fund are to increase the coverage and quality of evaluations, especially of country programme evaluations and regional multi-country evaluations; support the establishment of innovative processes and methods aimed at increasing the timeliness of evaluations and their use; and support activities aimed at professionalizing the evaluation function especially at regional and country level.</p> <p>46. In country offices, the Costed Evaluation Plan forms the basis for resource allocation decisions. Actual budget allocations for evaluation should reflect the aims set out in the Costed Evaluation Plan and the types of evaluation needed to generate evidence of the required quality.</p> <p>47. Regional Offices and the Evaluation Office should follow similar steps in actively mobilizing support for Regional Costed Evaluation plans and the Plan for Global Evaluations.</p>	<p>All policies make a commitment on proportion of expenditure devoted to evaluation and mechanisms to achieve this, including in WFP, UNESCO and ILO policies issues of fundraising for evaluations of OR/extra budgetary funded activities; UNDP notes the level of core resources for evaluation.</p>
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Annex 1: Theory of Change for the Evaluation function in UNICEF



The theory of change for evaluation within UNICEF outlines how evaluative activities will contribute to UNICEF and its partners delivering on attaining the SDGs and supporting the progressive realisation of the rights of every child especially the most disadvantaged. The Strategic Plan 2018-2021 guides UNICEF's efforts to respond to the complex and challenging 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which requires a robust evidence base to guide UNICEF in its programming and decision making. The evaluation function plays a key role in such decision making by providing impartial assessment and validation of strategic choices, programme performance and results, and meaningful feedback on operational effectiveness and efficiency. Evaluation also plays a vital role in UNICEF's governance and accountability.

The responsibility for evaluation is shared across the organisation and the change model reflects this. The inputs noted are in some cases driven by the Evaluation Office as the entity responsible for oversight of the function (e.g. evaluation policy, guidance and tools), and in other cases shared across the organisation (e.g. evaluation planning, use of evaluation results and partnerships for evaluation). Further detail on the division of these responsibilities is noted in the Evaluation Policy. The logic of the theory of change is that if the Evaluation Office implements the drivers of change, this will support the achievement of the outputs: high quality evaluations, better knowledge management of evaluation evidence, creating and sustaining demand for evaluation evidence and its use, better oversight of the evaluation function, and improved capacity for high quality evaluation within the whole organisation. These outputs in turn will support the achievement of the outcome of systematic use of evaluation evidence to drive organisational learning, decision making and accountability, which in turn will support UNICEF to achieve the impact statement of the 2018-2021 Strategic Plan – realising the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged.

Endnotes

ⁱ https://www.unicef.org/about/who/index_mission.html

ⁱⁱ The UNICEF Mission Statement: https://www.unicef.org/about/who/index_mission.html

ⁱⁱⁱ United Nations. 1945. United Nations Charter, Chapter IX, art. 55 c), United Nations Conference on International Organizations.

^{iv} United Nations General Assembly Resolutions 46/182 (1991) and 58/114 (2004)

^v General Assembly Resolution 71/243 (QCPR)

^{vi} Revised Evaluation Policy of UNICEF E/ICEF/2013/14

^{vii} UNGA Resolution, Outcome document of the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, 12 August 2015, document A/69/L.85

^{viii} <https://www.worldhumanitariansummit.org/>

^{ix} UNEG: Norms and Standards for Evaluation (2016);

^x Multinational Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN), Institutional Assessment of UNICEF, 2016, <http://www.iodparc.com>; DAC/UNEG Peer Review of the Evaluation Function of UNICEF, July 2017; Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), Analysis of the evaluation function in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2014/6)

^{xi} UNEG, Norms and Standards for Evaluation, 2016, page 10

^{xii} Every evaluation has a designated manager (eg Evaluation Specialist or staff member in a Country Office whose functions include evaluation, a Regional Evaluation Adviser, or Evaluation Specialist in the Evaluation Office); in addition, any staff member that authorizes or funds evaluations, sits on a reference group or similar, has a role in managing evaluations (eg including Representatives, Deputy Representatives, Regional Directors, Division Directors) and should receive training.

^{xiii} UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis (2015).

^{xiv} These terms are the same as those for appointment of UNICEF's Head of Audit, as set out in the UNICEF Audit Charter