

The 2018 evaluation policy of UNICEF

George Laryea-Adjei

Informa Briefing of the UNICEF Executive Board
22 May 2018

Process for preparing the Evaluation Policy

Timeline	Activity
2017	UNEG/OECD-DAC Peer Review of the UNICEF Evaluation Function
Sept 2017	UNICEF Management Response to the Peer Review
Oct 2017 - Feb 2018	Internal Consultations on the evaluation policy
Dec 2017 - April 2018	Consultation with external Audit Advisory Committee
Jan-March 2018	Consultation with external Evaluation Advisory Panel
Jan 16 2018	Informal Briefing for Executive Board on the revised Evaluation Policy
Feb 6-9 2018	Presentation at the First Regular Session of the Executive Board
Feb 12 2018	Workshop with Member States and UN experts on zero draft evaluation policy
Feb 26 2018	Draft evaluation policy shared with the Executive Board
March 9 2018	Informal Consultation with Executive Board on draft policy
April 2018	Revised draft evaluation policy posted for the Annual Session of the Executive Board
May 22 2018	Informal briefing of the Executive Board
June 12 2018	Presentation at the Annual Session of the Executive Board

Outline of the revised Evaluation Policy

- 1. Purpose, status and scope of the policy**
 - 2. Rationale for a revised policy**
 - 3. Definition and purpose of evaluation**
 - 4. Evaluation principles**
 - 5. Evaluation procedures and quality assurance**
 - 6. Enhancing the use of evaluations**
 - 7. Complementarity with other accountability and learning functions**
 - 8. Governance of evaluation**
 - 9. System-wide evaluation and Partnerships**
 - 10. National Evaluation Capacity Development**
 - 11. Resources**
 - 12. Risks**
 - 13. Implementation, reporting, and review**
-

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

Rationale for the Revised Evaluation Policy

- **Changes in the environment in which UNICEF operates**
 - **The adoption of the 2030 Agenda (SDGs+), 2016 QCPR**
 - **Ongoing reform agenda on Repositioning the UN Development System**
 - **In response to review of UNICEF's evaluation function, *inter alia*:**
 - **JIU and MOPAN Institutional Assessment of UNICEF**
 - **2017 Peer Review of UNICEF's Evaluation Function**
 - **To reflect updated best practice**
 - **Updated UNEG Norms and Standards 2016; best practice from across regions**
 - **Advance the use of evaluations especially at the country level - increasing demand for evaluation by govts, donors and civil society**
-

Theory of Change for the Evaluation Function

Approaches

- Improving independence impartiality and credibility of all evaluations
- Improving quality-assurance mechanisms and processes
- Using gender and human rights-responsive methods in all evaluations to understand impacts on all, including the most disadvantaged
- Adopting innovative approaches to deliver evaluations that are timely and respond to organizational needs.
- Enabling the use of evaluation results
- Professionalizing the evaluation role within UNICEF
- Supporting national evaluation capacity development and Sustainable Development Goal evaluation, especially through inter-agency partnerships

Impact

UNICEF and its partners deliver effectively on attaining the Sustainable Development Goals and the Strategic Plan targets towards the realization of the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged.

Outcome

Evaluation evidence is systematically used for learning and accountability, guiding the effective design and implementation of programmes in UNICEF, and supporting decision-making by partners for improving child well-being.

Outputs

Independent, credible and useful evaluations at the corporate, regional and country levels (humanitarian, development and institutional) delivered in line with coverage norms

Effective knowledge management of evaluation evidence

Demand generated for evaluation evidence and its use within UNICEF, the Executive Board, and amongst its partners

Drivers/inputs

- Evaluation policy
- Evaluation planning (corporate, global, regional, country levels)
- Evaluation resources (human, financial)
- Guidance and tools on effective evaluation
- Evaluation quality-assurance systems and processes
- Systems for monitoring evaluation activities, including key performance indicators at all levels
- Partnerships for evaluation, including for country-led and joint evaluations
- Evaluation capacity development within UNICEF and its partners

Assumptions and risks

- Organizational leadership and support
- Sustainable and predictable funding for evaluation
- Availability of skilled human resources
- Evaluable policies and programmes
- The building of an evidence culture in UNICEF
- Timely presentation of management responses to the Executive Board and timely follow-up action
- Adoption of monitoring and research norms and standards for the organization
- Continuous application of the audit charter.

Table 1: Provisions in UNICEF for Upholding UNEG Norms

United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) general norms	Provisions in UNICEF for Upholding UNEG Norms	
Internationally agreed principles, goals and targets	Plans for evaluations at the corporate, regional and country levels should directly contribute to evidence for the realization of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Sustainable Development Goals and other relevant internationally agreed goals.	
Utility	<p>Terms of reference should include provisions for the timely commissioning and conduct of evaluations and the dissemination of findings, and should specify the intended use of the evaluation and the intended users of evaluation results.</p> <p>All evaluations must have a management response produced in accordance with timelines set out in guidance issued by the Evaluation Office.</p> <p>The Evaluation Office monitors and reports on the implementation status of management responses.</p>	
Credibility	All staff with evaluation responsibilities undergo training in evaluation methods, integrating human rights and gender equality in evaluations, results-based management, report writing and analysis.	
	A stakeholder reference group and/or a technical expert group that includes an independent stakeholder is established at the start of an evaluation.	A stakeholder reference group that includes the regional evaluation adviser and/or a participant external to UNICEF is established at the start of an evaluation.
	The Evaluation Office provides quality assurance services for evaluations undertaken at the regional level.	Regional evaluation advisers provide quality assurance for evaluations undertaken at the country level.
	Regional evaluation advisers, in consultation with the Evaluation Office, provide quality assurance and technical support to country offices in development of	

Table 1: Provisions in UNICEF for Upholding UNEG Norms

United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) general norms	Provisions in UNICEF for Upholding UNEG Norms	
Independence	Evaluation Office	Regional Directors, Country Representatives
	The Evaluation Office ensures the independent quality assessment of all evaluation reports.	
	The Director of Evaluation prepares and submits to the Executive Board an independent plan for global evaluations and an independent annual report on the evaluation function in UNICEF.	
	The Director of Evaluation is appointed by the Executive Director in consultation with the Executive Board and the Audit Advisory Committee; reports directly to the Executive Director; and heads an independent evaluation function in UNICEF.	Heads of offices ensure the application of the provisions of the evaluation policy in the conduct of evaluations at respective levels of the organization.
	The budget for the Evaluation Office is approved by the Executive Board in the context of the UNICEF integrated budget. The Director of Evaluation has full discretion and control over the allocated resources.	The budget for the country-level CEP is approved by the Executive Board as part of the country programme document, whose budget includes resources earmarked for evaluations identified in the CEP. The financial framework accompanying annual or multi-year workplans of regional and country offices should include a line budget for evaluations.
	A pooled fund will be established to support evaluation capacity development, especially at the decentralized level; organization-wide professionalization; innovation in evaluation; and strategic evaluations.	
	The evaluation of the UNICEF evaluation function is undertaken by an independent panel.	

Table 1: Provisions in UNICEF for Upholding UNEG Norms

United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) general norms	Safeguards for upholding norms	
	Evaluation Office	Regional Directors, Country Representatives
Impartiality	<p>The evaluation of corporate programmes and initiatives is undertaken by the Evaluation Office. Headquarters divisions invest in activities that lay the foundations for evaluations, including the establishment of baselines, the testing of new initiatives or pilots for scaling up and the undertaking of programme reviews for the purpose of continuous improvement in delivery.</p>	<p>Country programme evaluations are managed by the regional evaluation adviser, with support from the Evaluation Office.</p>
	<p>Evaluation managers at all levels of the organization manage evaluations in line with the norms and standards set out in the evaluation policy.</p>	<p>Evaluation managers at all levels of the organization manage evaluations in line with the norms and standards set out in the evaluation policy.</p>
	<p>Evaluations are undertaken by independent consultants/firms and dedicated evaluation staff from the Evaluation Office, or regional evaluation advisers.</p>	<p>Evaluations are undertaken by independent consultants/firms and dedicated evaluation staff from the Evaluation Office, or regional evaluation advisers.</p>
Ethics	<p>All evaluation managers and evaluators conform to the ethical standards, code of conduct and norms and standards for evaluation of UNEG.</p> <p>All evaluation managers and evaluators conform to the UNICEF procedures for ethical standards, including those related to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment.</p> <p>All evaluation consultants sign and uphold the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the United Nations system.</p> <p>Risks, including potential conflicts of interest, are assessed before the selection of evaluation teams.</p>	

Table 1: Provisions in UNICEF for Upholding UNEG Norms

UNEG norms	Provisions in UNICEF for upholding UNEG Norms	
	Evaluation Office	Regional Directors, Country Representatives
Transparency	All completed evaluations are made publicly available in a timely manner, as are associated management responses when finalized, unless otherwise informed by the provisions set out in Executive Board decision 2012/13 involving instances that include endangering the security of individuals when a report is made available.	
Human Rights and Gender Equality	<p>Evaluation planning, design, methodology and analysis explicitly addresses human rights, gender equality and sustainability aspects of the programme or policy to be addressed.</p> <p>Evaluation practice follows UNEG guidance on integrating human rights and gender equality.</p> <p>Key stakeholders, including girls and boys (when appropriate), women, marginalized groups, national partners and Governments, are engaged at relevant stages of the evaluation.</p> <p>Evaluation methodology explicitly address issues of gender equality and the empowerment of women.</p> <p>The quality assessment of evaluation reports includes an assessment against the criteria of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.</p>	
National Evaluation Capacities	<p>The plan for global evaluations and country-level costed evaluation plans include provisions for strengthening national evaluation capacities.</p> <p>Evaluations are planned and conducted in partnership with national authorities, addressing issues relevant to the national agenda.</p>	
Professionalism	<p>Every UNICEF staff member responsible for managing evaluations undergoes basic training in upholding the norms and standards of the profession.</p> <p>Evaluators should be recruited or contracted on the basis of their professional knowledge, skills and experience</p>	

Evaluation coverage norms

Evaluation Coverage Norms

Evaluation	Frequency
Country Programme Evaluations	<p>At least once every two programme cycles, sequenced to feed into subsequent CPD and UNDAF</p> <p>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</p>
Country office-level thematic evaluations	<p>At least one country thematic evaluation, country programme component evaluation or project evaluation per year for each country programme. For small country programmes, evaluation frequency may be reduced to three per programme cycle.</p>
Evaluation of humanitarian action	<p>Evaluation of level 1 (L1) emergencies must be included in country programme evaluations. Protracted L1 emergencies should be evaluated at least every three to five years.</p>
	<p>Short-term level 2 (L2) emergencies must be evaluated at least once. Protracted L2 emergencies should be evaluated once every three years.</p>
	<p>Short term level 3 (L3) emergencies must be evaluated at least once. Protracted L3 emergencies should be evaluated once every three years.</p>

Evaluation Coverage Norms

Evaluation	Frequency
Corporate evaluations	Themes under each Strategic Plan Goal Area Cross-cutting priorities of the Strategic Plan, namely humanitarian action and gender equality Strategic Plan change strategies and enablers
Evaluability assessments, evaluation syntheses, meta-evaluations	Coverage and frequency determined by commissioning office
Reviews in support of policies, plans and strategies	Coverage and frequency determined by commissioning office
Regional level multi-country evaluations	Coverage and frequency determined by the regional office

Evaluation Coverage Norms

Evaluation	Frequency
Joint United Nations and system-wide evaluations including UNDAFs and joint programmes, and the Strategic Plan common chapter	Coverage and frequency determined by interagency mechanism
Country-led evaluation	Coverage and frequency determined by partner Governments

Enhancing The Use of Evaluations

- **Linking evaluations to planning cycles, and to review and advocacy initiatives**
 - **Credibility, rigor, impartiality**
 - **Timeliness**
 - **Technologies to advance the use of evaluations, including for communication and dissemination**
 - **Formal management response and periodic assessment of the implementation of management responses**
 - **Iterative approaches to the evaluation of programmes in especially challenging contexts**
 - **Knowledge Management; Complementarity with other accountability learning functions - Monitoring and broader results-based management, research, and audit.**
-

National Evaluation Capacity Development

- In line with the GA resolution 69/237 “Capacity building for the evaluation of development activities at country level” and the 2016 QCPR, UNICEF will continue supporting national evaluation capacity development (NECD)
 - Support NECD in partnership with other United Nations agencies
 - Support national authorities to evaluate their own programmes and to contribute to the strengthening of evaluation capacity
 - Partnerships with evaluation units of government departments and government evaluation agencies with a child-focus
 - Work with a range of stakeholders including government partners, evaluation associations and networks, other civil society organizations, parliamentarians, other UN agencies
 - Support centres of excellence that produce impartial evidence
-

System-wide evaluation and support for partnerships

- UNICEF will collaborate with UNEG to respond to the decisions of Member States regarding system-wide evaluation.
 - UNICEF will seek out opportunities with other UN agencies and, at the country level, in consultation with national Governments, for the joint evaluation of joint programmes, the common chapter of the Strategic Plan, 2018–2021 and the UNDAF UNICEF will contribute to the application of UNEG norms and standards in all joint evaluations.
 - UNICEF remains committed to improving its performance against key indicators set out in the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the aim of which is to ensure that gender analysis is used to inform evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations.
 - UNICEF will maintain partnerships in support of the aims of the evaluation policy, including with UN agencies, IFIs, Governments, evaluation associations, non-governmental organizations, foundations and academic institutions. It will also support the work of UNEG in enhancing partnerships for evaluation.
-

Governance of Evaluation (see details in policy)

- *Executive Board*
 - *Executive Director*
 - *The Audit Advisory Committee*
 - *Evaluation Director*
 - *Evaluation Advisory Panel*
 - *Global Evaluation Committee*
 - *Headquarters Division Directors*
 - *Regional Directors*
 - *Regional Evaluation Advisers*
 - *Country Representative*
 - *Country Office Evaluation Specialist (or staff assigned to manage evaluations)*
-

Resources- Financial Resources

- UNICEF will allocate *at least* 1 per cent of its overall programme expenditure to evaluation.
 - The Executive Director will establish a pooled fund to support innovation, professionalization, multi country capacity development, strategic evaluations.
 - 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.
 - Regional Offices and the Evaluation Office should follow similar steps in actively mobilizing funds for multi country evaluations.
-

Implementation

- An Executive Directive will outline implementation responsibilities
 - Implementation will be reviewed through annual reports
 - Annual report to the Executive Board
 - An independent review on the performance of the policy should be undertaken in 2022
-

Establishing the UNICEF Supplementary Pool Fund for Evaluations

Executive Board Informal Briefing
22 May 2018

Background

- In line with Executive Board decisions, UNICEF has committed to increase the proportion of the programme budget that goes to evaluation from 0.6% in 2014-2017 to at least 1% in 2018 and beyond.
 - In response to the 2017 Peer Review, UNICEF has committed to establishing a pool fund mechanism as one of the strategies for achieving the 1% target.
 - This presentation summarizes the features of the proposed pool fund.
-

Purpose of the pool fund

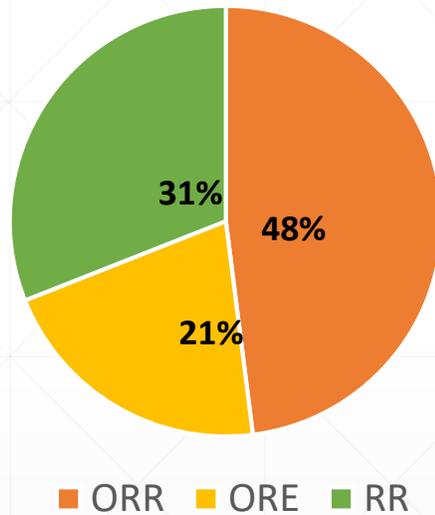
- Evaluation capacity development to increase coverage and improve quality and timeliness;
 - Professionalization throughout the organization;
 - Innovation in evaluation, including methodologies for timely evaluations
 - Initiatives for sharing completed evaluations and management responses in a timely manner
 - Wider dissemination of findings and recommendations
 - External advisory support, including the work of the independent Evaluation Advisory Panel
 - Strategic evaluations, including to increase coverage of country programme evaluations and humanitarian evaluations.
-

Purpose of the pool fund

- By emphasizing capacity development, the pool fund will promote an enabling environment for offices to invest more in evaluation towards the organizational goal of at least 1 per cent of programme expenditure.
 - The pool fund will contribute to meeting the target of 1% programme expenditure. Current estimates indicate a need to invest an additional \$20m to \$22m a year for all levels of the organization to meet the 1% target.
-

Funding evaluations

Sources of funds for current expenditure on evaluation



Proposed evaluation budget (\$m)

	2018	2019	2020	2021
Expected evaluation budget, after fund-raising	30.0	31.0	32.0	33.0
Funding gap	20.0	20.7	21.3	22.0
Total budget need for evaluation (1% of programme budget)	50.0	51.7	53.3	55.0

Funding Arrangement

- Of the estimated \$50m required to meet the 1% target, some 60% will be funded directly through country programme expenditures from both Other Resources (including thematic fund) and Regular Resources.
 - As a complement and to reach the 1% target of programme expenditures on evaluation, the balance of 40% is proposed to be funded from Regular Resources.
-

Impact on 2018- 2021 Integrated Budget

- UNICEF will also continue to identify resources within the approved Institutional Budget to further strengthen the evaluation function and related proposals presented at the MTR of the Strategic Plan and Integrated Budget.
 - For purposes of transparency, activities and expenditure will be reported annually in the Annual Report on the Evaluation function.
 - The proposal will have no impact on the cost recovery rate.
-

Thank you!