2. Revised Evaluation Policy

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Annual Report on the Evaluation Function
Purpose

Evaluation at UNICEF promotes organizational learning, accountability and transparency, with a view to strengthening performance and delivering better outcomes for children.

The purpose of this report is to describe the status and performance of UNICEF’s evaluation function in 2012 and to review trends over recent years.

This report is complemented by two separate papers:

• A thematic synthesis of recent evaluations of UNICEF’s humanitarian action
• A draft Revised Evaluation Policy.
Overview

This report presents information on the following:

• evaluation efforts at the global level, especially inter-agency activities within the United Nations system;

• the performance of the evaluation function within UNICEF itself, as measured against a set of 6 key indicators;

• the human and financial resources allocated to evaluation;

• measures in hand to strengthen UNICEF’s evaluation function;

• efforts to strengthen evaluation capacity at national and global levels.
Support to evaluation actions at global level

These activities fall mainly into three areas:

• **Harmonizing technical knowledge and good practices:** (e.g. on UNDAF evaluation and national evaluation capacity building);

• **Inter-agency and joint evaluations and related initiatives:** (e.g. joint evaluations of UNGEI, Joint Gender Programmes, Real Time Evaluations of humanitarian response);

• **Overall leadership and governance processes:** mainly conducted through the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC).
The evaluation function in UNICEF: key performance indicators

Indicator 1: Coverage of evaluations managed, and rate of submission to the Global Evaluation Database

Indicator 2: Topical distribution

Indicator 3: Types of evaluations conducted

Indicator 4: Quality of UNICEF evaluations

Indicator 5: Use of evaluation, including management responses

Indicator 6: Corporate-level evaluations
The evaluation function in UNICEF: performance and results

Coverage: number of evaluations submitted annually is dropping:
  - only 80 submitted in 2012, down from 140 in 2010

But quality is improving:
  - Satisfactory or better: 61% in 2012, up from 36% in 2010
  - Poor quality: 8% in 2012, down from 32% in 2010

Management Responses are now completed for most evaluations:
  - 93% in 2011, up from 10% in 2009

Implementation of agreed actions is increasing:
  - 82% in 2012, from 62% in 2011
The evaluation function in UNICEF: human resources

- UNICEF has a largely decentralized evaluation function with around 90% of M&E staff in the field, giving UNICEF an unparalleled M&E field presence - but posing many challenges.
- Building and sustaining internal evaluation capacity is a key challenge.
- In 2012, a new online training course was introduced, plus new guidance materials on equity-focused evaluation.
## The evaluation function in UNICEF: financial resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>2010 (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of field office programme budget spent on evaluation</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of total UNICEF programme budget spent on evaluation (field plus NYHQ)</td>
<td>0.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percentage of total UNICEF programme budget spent on evaluation, monitoring, research, study, surveys</td>
<td>2.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Evaluation Office budget coming from non-core resources: actual spending</td>
<td>38 (2010-2012)</td>
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• **Global partnership to enhance evaluation capacities:** *EvalPartners* established in 2012 to strengthen civil society evaluation capacity.

• **Global learning, including global learning platform ‘MyM&E’:**
  - 250,000 visitors and one million page downloads in 2012;
  - a new e-learning programme on development evaluation: some 8,000 learners enrolled in 2012.

• **Strengthening country-led evaluation systems:**
  - Translation and dissemination of UNEG task force output: *Practical tips on how to strengthen national evaluation systems.*
Revised Evaluation Policy
This presentation outlines UNICEF’s draft Revised Evaluation Policy and notes changes from UNICEF’s 2008 Evaluation Policy.

The policy was updated to take account of changes within UNICEF and in the rapidly changing context of UNICEF’s work.

It is expected that the Revised Evaluation Policy will be complemented by:

- A global evaluation strategy
- A Global Evaluation Plan
The Executive Board requires periodic review and update of UNICEF’s Evaluation Policy.

To inform the update, the Evaluation Office undertook the following:

- A self-assessment of the policy against UNEG norms and standards;
- Rapid review of evaluation policies of other agencies;
- An external review of the evaluation function, including surveys, case studies and interviews with UNICEF directors, managers and staff.
• The 2008 evaluation policy has served well. The basic content is sound.

• The multi-level structure (HQ/RO/CO) will be retained for the evaluation function, with a strong emphasis on the CO level: i.e. reflecting UNICEF’s decentralized structure.

⚠️ This means recognizing the diversity within UNICEF and the operational context – while setting out a policy to guide evaluation activities across all of UNICEF…

⚠️ …and establishing mechanisms and measures to ensure effective implementation of the policy.
Contents

- Introduction
- Background and strategic context
- Purpose and use of evaluation
- Guiding principles and general standards
- Accountability for evaluation
- Performance standards for the evaluation function
- Evaluation resources
- Partnerships for evaluation
- Policy implementation and review
  Annex: oversight functions
More explicit linkage to UNICEF’s mission, equity and gender equality.

Clear definition of evaluation:

*What works for whom; in what circumstances and in what respects; and how?*

Emphasis on intentionality and use (within the wider framework of UNEG norms and standards).
Key updates: accountabilities

Greater clarity in accountabilities, at each level.

Clarification of the reporting line of the Director of the Evaluation Office, and amended terms of service to safeguard impartiality:

- *Limit of two four-year terms*
- *Re-entry to the organization barred*
Key updates: performance standards

Performance standards for the evaluation function aim to provide a basis for improved management of the evaluation function, especially at country level.

Emphasis on stronger evaluation planning and coverage. Evaluations to be undertaken:

- *Before replication or scaling up*
- *When responding to major emergencies*
- *Following long periods of unevaluated programme implementation*
- *For each outcome component when expenditure has reached $10 million*
Key updates: resources for evaluation

Human resources and professionalization:

• Evaluation a shared responsibility
• Internally, clearer roles, responsibilities and relevant skills
• Appropriate use of external capacity.

Financial resources:

• UNICEF will allocate a minimum of 1% of overall programme expenditure to evaluation
• VISION will need to be updated to allow tracking of evaluation expenditure
Partnerships for evaluation are of increasing importance:

- Country-led evaluation
- Joint evaluation
- National evaluation capacity development - in particular partnerships to strengthen evaluation capacity in civil society, through the EvalPartners initiative.
Thank you!