

DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW

2016-2019

TERMS OF REFERENCE

EVALUATION OFFICE, UNICEF
OCTOBER 2019

1. INTRODUCTION

To learn more about UNICEF's development effectiveness, the Evaluation Office is commissioning a review that will synthesize findings from evaluations over the 2016 to 2019 period. The findings, conclusions, and recommendations will inform ongoing policy, strategy and programme development, collaborative approaches, and support UNICEF in achieving better results for children. The overarching objective of this DER is two-fold, (i) to contribute to the improvement of the organization's accountability for its programme performance by generating a body of credible information on a set of effectiveness criteria and (ii) to explore positive and negative factors and processes, facilitating or hindering development performance, including the role that collaborative work plays in UNICEF advancing development effectiveness objectives.

Since the previous DER, UNICEF has continued its commitment to generate systematic and credible evidence for planning, collaboration, and accountability purposes, both within UNICEF as well as across the broad UN system. This commitment is clearly reflected in UNICEF's responsibility to the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR; 2016)ⁱ of operational activities for development of the United Nations system.ⁱⁱ Additionally, the most recent 2018-2021 Strategic Plan's accompanying Results Framework, further reflect UNICEF's efforts to systematically generate data, with a focus on development effectiveness.ⁱⁱⁱ

Similarly, important efforts have also been put in place to stress the importance of collaborative work, as a way to advance UNICEF's development results, reflected in the 2018-2021 SP's Common Chapter's "working together" commitments.^{iv} This exploration will generate evidence to guide concrete actions toward strengthening the effectiveness of UNICEF's programmes and systems, better position the organization within the UN system, and to better deliver on results for children by 2030.

2. EVALUATION PURPOSE

The main purpose of this Development Effectiveness Review (DER) is to assess the performance trends and underlying factors that both, positively contribute and negatively hinder the achievement of UNICEF's programmatic development performance. This review will shed light on UNICEF's continued efforts to improve its performance, ensuring its development effectiveness across key implementing areas and programmes, monitoring efforts, as well as multi-sectoral and multi-agency collaboration work.

The currently commissioned DER report will be the third in this series. The first DER was completed in 2013 by the Government of the Netherlands on behalf of OECD countries, covering the period 2009-2011.^v The second DER was commissioned by the UNICEF Evaluation Office covering the period 2012-2015.^{vi} The third DER will cover the period 2016-2019, and it will be managed by UNICEF Evaluation Office with the support of a team of external consultants.

The previous DER was presented at the Executive Board and informed key decision-making points including the development of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021. The intended audience for this review will

be UNICEF senior management, regional and country office management, the Executive Board, national governments and partner organizations. This report will also be an important resource for stakeholders within the UNICEF Evaluation Function. This review will serve to inform decisions on issues related to adjustments to results-based management systems, determining which sectors or areas of activity need reinforcement, and the type of collaboration processes that could lead to more effective development outcomes. The DER reflects the commitment made to and accepted by the Executive Board in the [Plan for global evaluations, 2018–2021](#).^{vii}

3. EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

This review's main objective is to examine UNICEF's performance and the observed factors facilitating (or hindering) the achievement of UNICEF's programmatic development objectives, including the role of UNICEF's collaborative work. In addition to updating performance trends and comparing them to the previous estimates, the current DER will expand its review scope to an exploration of intra-sector and intra-agency collaborative work. The review will use a similar methodology and effectiveness criteria to explore areas of performance advancement and potential areas of improvement in programming, monitoring, and collaboration work.

Evidence from the series of systematic DERs will be utilized to track UNICEF's performance over the last decade (2009 to 2019). The objectives of the current DER are (i) to assess UNICEF's performance across all Development Assistance Committee (DAC) guidance developmental effectiveness criteria^{viii} and (ii) to explore positive and negative factors and processes (current and changes over time), facilitating or hindering UNICEF's developmental effectiveness and overall programme performance, including the current role of collaborative work within UNICEF's programme areas as well as with other UN agencies.^{ix} Special focus will be placed on the role of humanitarian and gender-related work.

4. EVALUATION SCOPE AND CONTEXT

The current review will use a meta-synthesis analytical technique, gathering information from documentation spanning from 2016 through 2019, developed under the [2014-2017 Strategic Plan](#) and the [2018-2021 Strategic Plan](#). The review will assess UNICEF's programmatic performance, in the context of these two Strategic Plans, and the 2030 Agenda. Under this scenario, UNICEF's development performance should be reviewed with a forward-looking view of a more integrated, focused, accountable, stronger, and clearly defined collective identity, aligned with the child-focused principles and its pledge to leave no one and no child behind, and to reach the farthest behind first. This information will be supplemented with interviews to key stakeholders from selected regional and country offices and HQ-NY.

5. EFFECTIVENESS CRITERIA

The review will gather evidence to assess how well UNICEF meets the six overarching effectiveness criteria, as prescribed in the [Guidance Document](#)^x:

1. Relevance of UNICEF interventions (both programmatic and joint/multisectoral) in the changing global context.
2. The progress and efficiency in the management of development programmes and activities (cost, time, and monitoring system-wise).
3. Management of cross-cutting themes (promoting gender equity equality, human rights and environmental sustainability).
4. Ensuring the sustainability of performance and benefits.
5. Effectiveness of working in partnership with UN entities, National Governments, and national and international private and civil society actors.
6. Using results-based management, evaluation and monitoring systems to improve humanitarian and development effectiveness.

In addition to the six overarching criteria, the 20 sub-criteria presented in the DER 2016 report will be used in the review (Annex 1). The criteria and sub-criteria will be modified during the inception phase to capture the current evaluation context and main objectives of this review. The team will review and modify previously used DER instruments and tools to ensure consistency across the review criteria, sampling, classification and reporting methods across DERs and to adequately reflect the current global and UN-system environment.

The review will also explore UNICEF's main areas of collaborative advantage (i.e. working collaboratively with other sectors / UN agencies to achieve development objectives) as well as those falling into a collaborative inertia (i.e. working frustratingly slow to produce objectives or uncomfortably conflict-ridden). Mapping these collaborations will provide a clear picture of the interconnections of UNICEF's work, providing an understanding not only on the context and stakeholders involved, but most importantly, the processes behind these collaborations. These analyses will provide critical information to identify UNICEF's collaborative efforts' performance and positioning, as we move forward towards a more collaborative and integrated system.

6. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

The review will be grounded in a systematic meta-synthesis analysis of the reported findings of UNICEF evaluations conducted between 2016 and 2019, as its main source of evidence. Analyses will be built from evidence, conducting a meta-analysis of selected UNICEF evaluation reports through the identification and review of all UNICEF evaluation reports and other key relevant documents. This information will be complemented with interviews with selected UNICEF stakeholders at headquarters and selected regional and country offices. Selected UNICEF partners could be considered for additional interviews. By combining the secondary and primary data, the review will address the following questions:

- To what extent have UNICEF supported programmes built sustainability considerations in design and implementation to support national ownership?
- To what extent have UNICEF resources and activities had a catalytic effect at the different levels (global, regional and national)?
- To what extent do programme interventions facilitate linkages and synergies with partners to accelerate efforts towards UNICEF's development performance objectives?
- To what extent do UNICEF's programme area collaborations, inter-agency joint programmes and collaborations lead to collaborative advantages or collaborative inertia.?
- To what extent does UNICEF have in place adequate planning, monitoring and reporting mechanisms to capture processes and factors (positively and negatively affecting development performance), learning from interventions, both sector specific and multi-sector / multi-agency collaborations?
- Does UNICEF adequately address the cross-cutting priorities of gender equality and humanitarian action?
- Which factors facilitate or prevent the achievement of effective development performance, at CO, RO, and HQ level, linked to specific processes, institutional context, government/legislative environment, and social/cultural norms?. Have these factors changed over time or has their effect on performance changed over the past 10 years?

7. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The current DER will use a combination of secondary and primary data, including a systematic meta-synthesis of UNICEF's evaluations (as main source of secondary information), supplemented with interviews to key stakeholders from selected regional and country offices as well as HQ-NY and possibly selected UNICEF's partners (primary data). The documentation review will draw from available evaluations (e.g. country programme evaluation, thematic or programme evaluations, etc.) between January 2016 and November 2019. Other relevant documentation published during the same period would be explored, as they relate to the criteria of the development effectiveness. Consultations with selected UNICEF staff at HQ-New York, UNICEF Regional and Country Offices, and key UNICEF partners are also proposed. The team will conduct four-day country (four, to be selected during inception phase), regional (two, to be selected during inception phase), and HQ-NY visits, to collect primary data. The selection of country, regional, HQ, and partner stakeholders will be defined during the inception phase.

To maintain continuity with the approach and comparability of the results from the first two development effectiveness review exercises, the current assessment will use the same criteria and methodology, to make the report consistent with these earlier exercises. The common approach and methodologies for both reviews (2012 and 2016), developed under the guidance of the [Development Assistance Committee \(OECD DAC\) Network on Development Evaluation](#), will be used for this third DER.^{xi} Additionally, the review will explore UNICEF's collaborative work, examining areas with strong collaborative advantages (i.e. effectively contributing to developmental goals) and those confronting collaborative inertia (i.e. slowly, conflict-ridden, or not contributing to developmental effectiveness).^{xii} The team of consultants will update the methodologies and tools used in two previous UNICEF DER reports to reflect the current global and changing UNICEF context.

Documentary review and secondary data: A preliminary list of relevant documentation (together with electronic copies) including previous evaluation reports and any other relevant corporate document references. These documents would include previous thematic, country, or programme evaluations, as well as other relevant documents including reviews, audits and assessments carried out by UNICEF and key partners. In addition, the review team will be responsible for identifying and researching further information (both qualitative and quantitative) at global, regional and country levels. A full set of available documents will be shared with the team of consultants during the inception phase. It will include GEROS Reports 2016-2019 and UN-SWAP reports on the performance of the mainstreaming of gender into UNICEF evaluations 2016-2019.

Sampling of evaluation reports: The team will proceed with drawing a purposive sample of evaluation reports. The start for this will be all evaluation reports uploaded to the UNICEF data base of published evaluations and other relevant documentation in the period from the beginning of 2016 to November 2019. The full sampling approach will be outlined in the inception report produced by the review team.

Quality review of evaluation reports: The quality of the evaluation reports is annually assessed in UNICEF through the Global Evaluation Report Oversight System (GEROS).^{xiii} The review team will proceed with an internal quality review based on the same criteria used for the previous [DER](#). This 2020 DER exercise will follow the same methodology as the 2016 DER exercise in this regard.

Interviews with key informants: Conduct key informant interviews with staff at UNICEF headquarters and selected country and regional offices. Interview protocols will be developed during the inception phase.

Country and regional visits: Two Regional Office and four UNICEF Country Office visits to assess the operationalization at a programmatic level. The criteria to identify and select country studies will be further developed by the team members during the inception phase in close collaboration with the Evaluation Specialist.

8. EVALUATION WORKPLAN

The DER will be conducted in **five** phases:

- I. Preparatory Phase: The UNICEF Evaluation Office leads the preparatory work in consultation with technical teams. This phase includes:
 - The drafting of terms of reference for the evaluation;
 - The initial document collection and review;
 - The selection and recruitment of the independent team members;
- II. Inception Phase: The review team will develop the design and build onto the existing DER methodology in consultation with the UNICEF Evaluation Office. During this phase the review team will produce a 15-page inception report. It will further refine the assessment's objectives, scope and key questions to be answered by the review. The team leader will submit the draft inception report to the EO Evaluation Manager and present it to the reference group in person in New York-HQ. The Evaluation Manager will provide a matrix with stakeholder comments for the attention of the review team, who will address the comments receive and prepare both a final report and an annotated

matrix indicating how comments have been addressed. The final report will be submitted to the EO evaluation manager. The inception report shall be considered final upon approval by the UNICEF Evaluation Office. This phase includes:

- A briefing from the Evaluation Office and discussions with selected UNICEF staff at NY headquarters, regional and country offices.
- A review of all evaluation reports uploaded to the global evaluation database for the period under review as well as relevant documents available.
- The development questions, the identification of the assumptions to be assessed and the respective indicators, sources of information and methods and tools for the data collection.
- The development of a data collection and analysis strategy.
- A concrete work plan including a plan for field mission.
- Propose a list of countries to be visited, criteria for the selection and what are we looking for in the countries and what is expected support from the countries.
- Defining how the team expects to manage its interaction with UNICEF-Evaluation Office during the review in a way that places the minimum necessary burden on UNICEF.
- Organizing the work among the team members. The approach/methodology (work plan) of the Development Effectiveness Review of UNICEF should provide information.

III. Document Review, Data Collection and Analysis Phase: This phase of the review will involve an extensive desk review and analysis. It will also include global, regional and country level visits. The Review Team will carefully review the sources and reliability of information before drawing conclusions.

IV. Reporting Phase: In this phase a series of debriefing meetings will be held to validate major findings of the draft report. The exercise will culminate with the completion of the DER. The report should not exceed 70 pages including the executive summary but excluding annexes. The final report will be formally approved by the UNICEF Evaluation Office.

V. Dissemination Phase: The consultant team may be requested to assist in dissemination and follow-up activities, participating in for instance webinars and conference presentations on the findings and conclusions of the exercise. In the dissemination and follow-up phases, relevant units will prepare a management response to the recommendations in the final report.

The DER will be conducted by an external review team of consultants to be recruited by UNICEF's Evaluation Office. Direct supervision is provided by an Evaluation Specialist at the Evaluation Office, supported by members of the evaluation team. The Evaluation Office will be responsible for the day-to-day oversight management of the evaluation. The Evaluation Office may participate in country visits as needed and interviews that the review team is conducting with stakeholders. The Evaluation Office will be fully involved in throughout the DER process.

The implementation of the evaluation is expected to follow the following time schedule.

October 2019	Finalization of the Terms of Reference; Issuance of call for Expressions of interest
November 2019	Contracting of DER Team
December 2019-January 2020	Inception phase
January -March 2020	Document review, interviews and country visits
April 2020	Drafting of DER report
May 2020	Draft Report
June 2020	Final report submission

Expected deliverables include the following:

- I. An Inception report (max 15 pages): following an initial desk review, which outlines the scope, methods and chapter plan for the DER including a work plan. The report should consist:
 - The sampling strategy for inclusion of completed evaluations and for selection of the countries for visits
 - Full description of tools to be utilized
 - Matrix relating to the methods to be used for the questions to be answered and the final report outline, highlighting differences from the previous DERs
 - A time table for completion the work
 - Work plan
- II. A draft report (max 50 pages including a 5 page executive summary and excluding annexes)
- III. A Final Report. A second and third draft review based on comments received on the draft report during the validation phase, the team lead will finalize the DER as required, and submit the Final Report and Summary to the UNICEF Evaluation Office.
- IV. A workshop (one day workshop) to discuss the report findings with the stakeholders.

The proposed review team will consist of a total of 4 members: 2 senior level consultants (team leader, and a co team leader) with experience in evaluation and institutional analysis, and two researchers. The ideal consultants would have previously conducted comprehensive multi-sectoral evaluations and meta-syntheses and be familiar with the UN system and UNICEF. The proposed timeframe and expected products will be discussed with the review team and refined in the inception report. The UNICEF Evaluation Office reserves the right to ensure the quality of products submitted by the review team and will request revisions until the product meets the quality standards as expressed by the ERG.

9. DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW TEAM: REQUIREMENTS AND QUALIFICATIONS

TEAM LEADER WITH THE FOLLOWING CREDENTIALS (60 DAYS):

- Strong team leadership and management track record and commitment to delivering timely and high-quality evaluation report;
- Extensive evaluation expertise (at least 10/15 years) of comprehensive scope with strong mixed-methods skills and flexibility in using non-traditional and innovative evaluation methods;
- Familiarity and knowledge of the UN's 2030 agenda, UNICEF's programming, policy and evaluation function
- Good interpersonal and communication skills; ability to interact with various stakeholders and to concisely express ideas and concepts in written and oral form;
- Commitment and willingness to work in a challenging environment and ability to produce quality work under limited guidance and supervision;
- Language proficiency: Fluency in English is mandatory; good command of French is desirable.

ONE TEAM MEMBER WITH COMPLIMENTARY BACKGROUNDS TO TEAM LEADER (60 DAYS)

- Strong conceptualization, analytical and writing skills and ability to work effectively in a team.
- Experience in collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data;
- Familiarity and knowledge of the UN's 2030 agenda, UNICEF's programming, policy and evaluation function
- Good communication and people skills; ability to communicate with various stakeholders and to express ideas and concepts concisely and clearly in written and oral form;
- Language proficiency: Fluency in English is mandatory; good command of French and or Spanish is desirable.

TWO RESEARCHERS/ANALYSTS (40 DAYS EACH)

Data will be generated during the review process that will need to be organized, cleaned, stored appropriately, analysed and presented in a logical manner. Researchers will work directly under supervision of the team leader and deputy team leader.

- A university degree in social sciences, humanities or economics or related fields
- Knowledge of international development assistance
- Experience with literature/document search and analyses
- Experience in storing, handling and analysing data
- Statistical programming skills
- Data visualization experience
- Good writing skills

Annex 1

Six effectiveness criteria and it's 20 sub-criteria used in the 2016 DER

1. Relevance
1.1 Programs are suited to the needs of target group members 1.2 Programs are aligned with national humanitarian and development goals 1.3 Effective partnerships with government, civil society and humanitarian and development partners
2. Achievement of Development and Humanitarian Objectives and Expected Results
2.1 Programs and projects achieve stated objectives 2.2 Positive benefits for target group members 2.3 Substantial numbers of beneficiaries/contribution to national humanitarian and development goals 2.4 Significant changes in national development policies/programs
3. Cross Cutting Themes: Inclusive Development and Humanitarian Which can be Sustained (Gender Equality, Environmental Sustainability and Equity)
3.1 Programs effectively address gender equality 3.2 Changes are environmentally sustainable 3.3 Programs effectively address the issue of equity
4. Sustainability
4.1 Program benefits are likely to continue 4.2 Programs support institutional and community capacity 4.3 Programs strengthen enabling environment for humanitarian and development
5. Efficiency
5.1 Program activities are cost efficient 5.2 Programs are implemented/objectives achieved on time 5.3 Systems for program implementation are efficient
6. Using Evaluation and Monitoring to Improve Humanitarian and Development Effectiveness
6.1 Systems and processes for evaluation are effective 6.2 Systems and processes for monitoring are effective 6.3 Results-based management systems are effective 6.4 Evaluation results used to improve humanitarian and development effectiveness

ⁱ Quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system
<https://undocs.org/A/RES/71/243>

ⁱⁱ The 2016 QCPR emphasizes that in terms of the contribution of United Nations operational activities, *'development is a central goal in itself, and that in countries in conflict and post-conflict situations the development work of the entities of the United Nations development system can contribute to peacebuilding and sustaining peace, in accordance with national plans, needs and priorities and respecting national ownership, and stresses in this regard the need to improve coordination and synergy to maximize the impacts, results and effectiveness of support for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.'* <https://undocs.org/A/RES/71/243>

ⁱⁱⁱ UNICEF Strategic Plan 2018-2021: https://www.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/2017-17-Rev1-Strategic_Plan_2018-2021-ODS-EN.pdf

^{iv} For additional information, see: https://www.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/2017-Annex-Common_Chapter-2017.07.31-EN-FINAL.pdf

^v Review of UNICEF's Development Effectiveness Final Report:
https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/files/UNICEF_DE_Review_Report_final_2013.pdf

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- ^{vi} United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF): Review of Development Effectiveness, 2012-2015: https://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/UNICEF_Review_of_Development_Effectiveness_2012_2015.pdf
- ^{vii} Plan for Global Evaluations: https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/files/2018-3-Plan_for_global_evaluations-EN-ODS_version.pdf
- ^{viii} <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/dcdndep/50540172.pdf>
- ^{ix} Whenever possible, with governments and other development organizations
- ^x Assessing the Development Effectiveness of Multilateral Organizations: Guidance on the Methodological Approach (<http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/dcdndep/50540172.pdf>)
- ^{xi} DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance: <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/dacriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>
- ^{xii} A wicked problem framework and a collaborative advantage theory are proposed to be utilized to understand the complexities of these interactions. Interactions could be mapped using a system interaction intervention model (systematic perspective mapping – Cytoscape system) and analyzed using a visual plot to understand all the observed connections. See Pryshlakivsky, Jonathan & Searcy, Cory. (2012). Sustainable Development as a Wicked Problem. 10.1007/978-94-007-5515-4_6; Vangen, Siv & Huxham, Chris. (2009). Introducing the theory of collaborative advantage. 10.4324/9780203861684; and D. Lasker, Roz & Weiss, Elisa & Miller, Rebecca. (2001). Partnership Synergy: A Practical Framework for Studying and Strengthening the Collaborative Advantage. The Milbank quarterly. 79. 179-205, III. 10.1111/1468-0009.00203. To understand which sectors maximize their collaborative advantages and which ones only work in collaborative inertia, it is map the presence of collaborative work, but also the processes behind that led to the collaborations and connections.
- ^{xiii} Global Evaluation Reports Oversight System (GEROS) https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/index_GEROS.html