



# TERMS OF REFERENCE

## Mid-Term Evaluation of UNICEF WASH Strategy 2016–2030

Evaluation Office (13 May 2024)

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| TITLE/PURPOSE          | Mid-Term Evaluation of UNICEF Strategy for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene 2016–2030 |
| LOCATION OF ASSIGNMENT | Global Evaluation (UNICEF NYHQ)  |
| CONTRACT MODALITY      | LTA  |
| DURATION OF CONTRACT   | May-Dec 2024   |
| RECRUITING OFFICER     | Elke Johanna de Buhr (Evaluation Specialist, WASH & CEED)                          |

### Introduction

The UNICEF Evaluation Office located in New York Headquarters (HQ) provides global leadership and oversight of the evaluation function in the organization. As such, it manages independent, corporate evaluations and evaluation syntheses, provides technical assistance and quality assurance for evaluations commissioned at the decentralized level (country and regional offices), develops evaluation methods, and reports to the UNICEF Executive Board. The work of the Evaluation Office is guided by the Plan for Global Evaluations<sup>1</sup>, an Executive Board-approved document.

The Mid-Term Evaluation of the UNICEF Strategy for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (2016-2030) is part of the UNICEF Plan for Global Evaluation 2022-2025 and conducted in accordance with the provisions of the UNICEF Evaluation Policy (2023) and UNEG norms and standards. Focusing on the first half of WASH Strategy implementation (2016-2023), these Terms of Reference outline the Evaluation Office’s proposed overall approach to this evaluation including the evaluation purpose and objectives, the evaluation questions, the proposed methodology and available data sources, the expected results, considerations for implementation and an indicative timeline.

The Mid-Term Evaluation of the UNICEF WASH Strategy is scheduled to be conducted in 2024 and submitted to the UNICEF’s Executive Board in either 2024 or 2025. The evaluation will be managed by the UNICEF Evaluation Office, in close consultation with staff from UNICEF’s WASH Section.

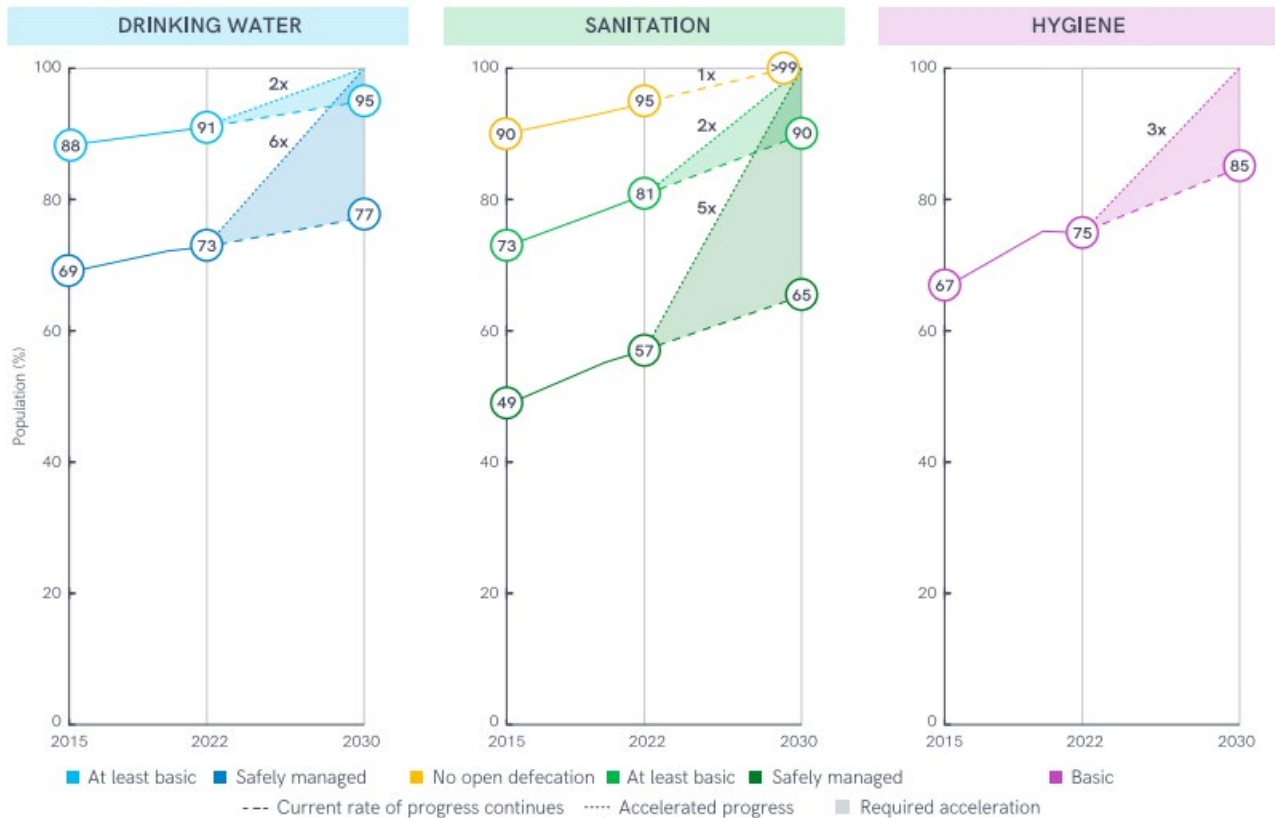
### Evaluation Background and Context

The most recent WHO–UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (JMP) data from 2022 indicates that 2.2 billion people still lacked safely managed drinking water, 3.5 billion people lacked safely managed sanitation services, including 1.9 billion with basic services, and 2 billion people lacked basic hygiene services, including 1.3 billion with limited services and 653 million with no facility. While access to water, sanitation and hygiene has increased since 2015 (see Figure 1), progress is uneven and there continue to be disparities between and within countries, with women and girls being at a particular disadvantage.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Children’s Fund. Plan for global evaluations, 2022–2025 Executive Board First regular session 2022, 8–11 February 2022.

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organization and the United Nations Children’s Fund, Progress on household drinking water, sanitation and hygiene 2000-2022: special focus on gender, 2023.

Figure 1: Global Coverage of WASH Services, 2015–2022 (%), and Acceleration Required to Reach Universal Coverage (>99%) by 2030<sup>3</sup>



Addressing infrastructure, services and behaviours worldwide, the UNICEF WASH Programme has for several decades been a catalyst of change at the global, regional, and national levels. Since 2016, the WASH programme is guided by the [UNICEF Strategy for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene 2016-2030](#)<sup>4</sup>, which supports planning processes, and the implementation of WASH programmes by defining the principles to be applied to all WASH work. The Strategy articulates a vision and objectives that mirrors SDG 6, and defines a set of programming principles and programming approaches, which are used by UNICEF country offices (COs) to determine context-specific interventions in the programming areas of Water, Sanitation, Hygiene, WASH in Institutions and WASH in Emergencies.

The WASH Strategy’s vision and overarching objectives, programming principles and approaches, and results areas are outlined in the WASH Strategy Strategic Framework (see Figure 2). The Strategy’s vision is to realize the human rights to water and sanitation<sup>5</sup> and its objective is to achieve universal access by 2030 (SDG 6). The Framework identifies 7 programming principles (reduce inequality; sustain access to services at scale; promote resilient development; strengthen accountability at all levels; contribute across SDGs; integrate humanitarian and development programming; and strengthen national systems), 6 programming approaches (strengthening enabling environments; utilizing evidence to promote child rights; leveraging sustainable financial resources; building sustainable markets; empowering communities; and delivering services and supplies), and 5 results areas (water; sanitation; hygiene; WASH in institutions; and WASH in emergencies).

The UNICEF WASH Strategy is aligned with the UNICEF Strategic Plans including the [UNICEF Strategic Plan 2014-2017](#), the [Strategic Plan 2018-2021](#), and the [Strategic Plan 2022-2025](#). Key aspects of the WASH Strategy are further refined in subsequently developed UNICEF strategic guidance documents including [UNICEF’s Game Plan to End Open Defecation](#), the [UNICEF Game Plan to Accelerate Safely Managed Sanitation for All](#), [UNICEF’s Water Game Plan](#), the [UNICEF](#)

<sup>3</sup> World Health Organization and the United Nations Children’s Fund, Progress on household drinking water, sanitation and hygiene 2000-2022: special focus on gender, 2023.

<sup>4</sup> UNICEF. Strategy for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene 2016-2030, 2016.

<sup>5</sup> United Nations General Assembly resolution 64/292. The human right to water and sanitation, 2010. And General Assembly resolution 70/169. The human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation, 2015.

[Guidance Note \(Climate Resilient WASH\)](#), the [UNICEF Guidance on Gender-Responsive Water, Sanitation and Hygiene](#), the [UNICEF Guidance on Market-Based Sanitation](#), and the recently released [Sustainability and Climate Change Action Plan](#) (see Figure 3).

Figure 2: UNICEF 2016-2030 WASH Strategic Framework<sup>6</sup>

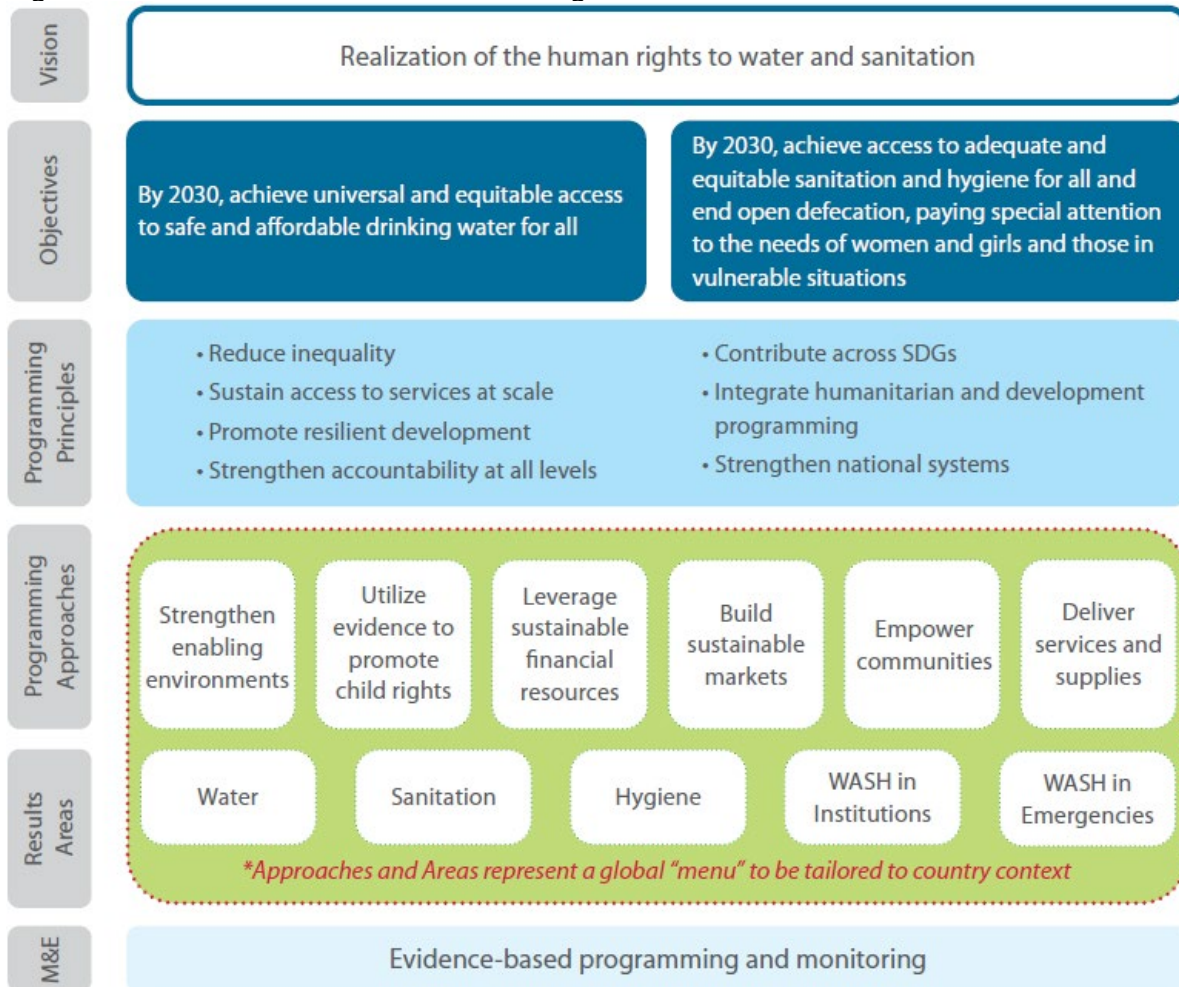
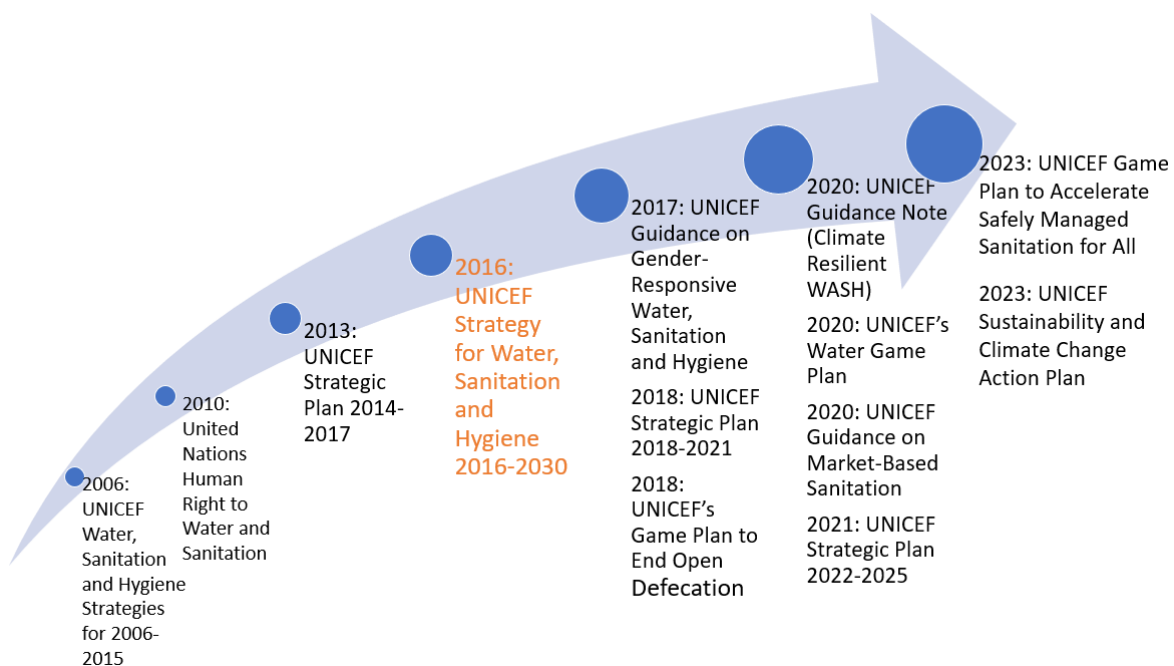


Figure 3: UNICEF WASH Strategy in the Context of Other Guidance Documents



<sup>6</sup> UNICEF. Strategy for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene 2016-2030, 2016.

Three years into Strategy implementation, UNICEF conducted a Progress Review and Information Gap Analysis of the UNICEF Strategy for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene 2016–2030.<sup>7</sup> The upcoming Mid-Term Evaluation of the UNICEF WASH Strategy is intended to build on the previous review.

The purpose of the Progress Review and Information Gap Analysis was two-fold. The first was to conduct a light-touch review of UNICEF progress on operationalising the Strategy three full years since its launch using existing data and information sources. The second was to use this exercise to conduct an information gap analysis of these data and information sources and make recommendations on the need for additional sources of information for future reviews. The progress review focused primarily on three areas of the WASH Strategy: the programming principles, the programming approaches, and three emerging areas of focus identified in the document (climate resilient WASH, urban programming and work with the private sector). It assessed the extent to which UNICEF is implementing the Strategy and, where possible, results associated with these efforts.

The Progress Review and Information Gap Analysis broke down the UNICEF WASH Strategy's programming approaches and programming principles into distinct components. The results of this exercise produced a total of 31 monitoring components from the 13 principals and approaches. While these components are not indicators, they are more measurable than the approach and principles statements, each of which are multi-faceted. The analysis of the emerging programming areas used a different approach: each of these areas are covered – to varying extents – within the programming principles and approaches, and thus a secondary analysis of the data in each area was used to assess progress towards Strategy implementation.

The next step of the review involved a survey of the available data and information sources appropriate for assessing progress within the 33 monitoring components of the principles and approaches. Since there was no specific monitoring or reporting system developed for the WASH Strategy, the survey focused on existing UNICEF systems for the monitoring of programming results. These systems are designed primarily for the assessment of outputs and outcomes of UNICEF's Strategic Plans but provide data and information that can also be employed to monitor progress of the Strategy.

Internal systems and information sources for results monitoring include the Strategic Monitoring Questions (SMQs) data survey, the Country Office Annual Reports (COARs), global annual results reports (for synthesized results) as well as other systems and sources (see Box 1). The review also used select external information sources including reports from the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (JMP), the UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-water (GLAAS), and other reporting related to progress on the SDG Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. The available information sources were matched to each of the 31 monitoring components and used to the extent possible to assess progress. An additional gap analysis of the information sources used in the assessment was also conducted. It included an assessment of the data availability of each of the monitoring components, and on that basis recommended additional sources of information and monitoring channels.

### Box 1: UNICEF Internal Information Sources

- Strategic Monitoring Questions (SMQs)
- Country Office Annual Reports (COARs)
- WASH Annual Results Reports
- Goal Area Four Global Annual Results Reports
- Result Assessment Module (RAM) reporting
- Evaluations, including meta-evaluations and other evaluative exercises such as sustainability checks
- UNICEF WASH publications (courses, guidelines, advocacy documents, journal papers)
- Financial expenditure data

<sup>7</sup> UNICEF. UNICEF Global Wash Strategy 2016-2030. Progress Review and Information Gap Analysis, 2019.

The Progress Review and Information Gap Analysis concluded that progress on operationalising the UNICEF WASH Strategy in the three years since its launch in 2016 had been mixed. Some progress or substantial progress had been made in over 80% of the principles, approaches and emerging areas assessed (13 of 16). In the assessment of the monitoring components in most of these areas, there was some evidence that UNICEF WASH programmes were indeed shifting in response to the changing sectoral landscape and the new directions outlined in the Strategy. However, in other areas progress had been limited, and necessary programmatic shifts were not occurring quickly enough. Specifically, there were three “red” areas in which the available evidence had shown only limited progress: leveraging financial resources, building markets, and engagement with the private sector. While these ratings were not surprising given the comparative recentness of the Strategy and UNICEF’s relatively limited experience in these areas, it was a cause for concern, since these areas were directly linked to the need to significantly scale up national programmes to meet the SDG targets.

## Evaluation Purpose and Objectives

The primary purpose of the Mid-Term Evaluation is to examine if the WASH Strategy is working for UNICEF and UNICEF’s stakeholders including governments, civil society, vulnerable children, their families and communities as well as UNICEF’s donors. The evaluation intends to provide evidence if and how the WASH Strategy’s programming approaches and principles across results areas have allowed UNICEF to mobilize the required resources, implement programmes, and achieve targets and impact. The evaluation will examine constraints and success factors that contributed to these results and provide learnings and recommendations for adjustments in the second half of Strategy implementation (2024-2030). The evaluation will further contribute to organizational accountability by assessing the degree to which Strategy implementation enabled UNICEF to meet expectations and commitments to stakeholders, including donors, national governments and other partners, and target populations, and contributed to the overall strength and growth of the WASH programme within UNICEF as well as to global progress towards achieving SDG 6 and other WASH-related SDGs.

The Mid-Term Evaluation of the UNICEF WASH Strategy has the following three specific objectives:

1. Assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, coherence, impact and sustainability of the UNICEF WASH Strategy as a tool for:
  - a. Informing WASH programme planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation including programming approaches across sub-sectors and the enabling environment for WASH,
  - b. Enhancing UNICEF’s contribution to the achievement of the SDGs, and especially SDG 6, and realizing the human rights to water and sanitation, and
  - c. Mobilizing the required resources for strategy implementation and effectively communicating the WASH programme’s vision, strategic objectives and implementation strategy to donors and other stakeholders.
2. Focusing on priority thematic areas, document “what works” through WASH Strategy implementation and drawing lessons from Strategy implementation to date.
3. Develop detailed conclusions and recommendations that support and inform strategic, policy and WASH programme-related decision-making, and provide actionable recommendations for WASH Strategy revisions and refinements moving towards 2030 and beyond.

The primary intended audiences for this evaluation are the UNICEF WASH programme and UNICEF Senior management at HQ, regional and country office levels, the UNICEF Programme Group more broadly, UNICEF’s Data, Analytics, Planning and Monitoring (DAPM) unit, and UNICEF’s donors. Secondary users include national governments, programme implementing partners at country level, and communities and individuals targeted by UNICEF’s programmes. Secondary intended audiences also include other UN agencies, NGOs/CSOs and academic researchers working on WASH.

This Mid-Term Evaluation of the UNICEF WASH Strategy has been identified by the Evaluation Office (EO) and the UNICEF WASH Programme Group (PG-WASH) as a priority evaluation for the Strategic Plan 2022-2025 period. It provides a key learning opportunity on WASH sector strategy performance, and it is expected to result in course corrections and strategic shifts, where needed. Specifically, the evaluation will inform UNICEF WASH Strategy revisions/additions for the second half of Strategy implementation (2024-2030) as well as the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2026-2029. The evaluation will be

aligned with other ongoing UN WASH strategy evaluations and feed into efforts towards developing a UN system-wide strategy for water, where applicable. Considering the strategic importance and broad scope of work covered, the evaluation is expected to inform future evaluative work including evaluations of other UNICEF sectoral strategies.

## Evaluation Scope

| Variable               | In scope  |
|------------------------|---|
| Timeframe              | As a mid-term evaluation, this evaluation will focus on the first half (2016-2023) of the UNICEF WASH Strategy's 15-year implementation period.                 |
| Levels                 | UNICEF HQ, Regional and Country Offices.  |
| Organizational unit(s) | Units with direct or indirect involvement supporting UNICEF WASH programming (e.g., Country Offices; Regional Offices; Programme Group; Supply Division; DAPM). |
| Geographic             | A global evaluation with all regions covered. Selected countries with major UNICEF WASH programmes may be of particular focus.                                  |
| Programme context      | All countries where UNICEF works to achieve SDG 6. Focus on both development settings and humanitarian contexts.  |

## Evaluation Criteria and Questions

The Mid-Term Evaluation will address the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.<sup>8</sup> The evaluation questions and sub-questions in Table 1 are preliminary and will be finalized during the inception phase of the evaluation.

Table 1: Preliminary Evaluation Questions and Sub-Questions

| Criteria  | Evaluation questions  |
|-----------|---|
| Relevance | <p><i>EQ 1: To what extent do UNICEF WASH Strategy objectives and design respond to beneficiaries, global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent do the UNICEF WASH Strategy's objectives and programming principles and approaches respond to beneficiaries, global, country, and partner/institution identified needs, policies, and priorities?</li> <li>To what extent is the disproportionate burden of household work on girls and women considered, and its implications for designing WASH interventions (e.g., security risk in travelling to distant wells, gender norms restricting mobility of women, limited menstrual hygiene management facilities, etc.)?</li> <li>To what extent does the UNICEF WASH strategy contribute to ensuring that the needs of marginalized and excluded populations, including women and girls, adolescents and youth, persons with disabilities, and indigenous communities, are taken into account in both the planning and implementation of the UNICEF-supported interventions?</li> <li>In a context of multiple crises (e.g., COVID-19 pandemic, climate emergency, wars/conflicts), to what extent are the Strategy's objectives and programming principles and approaches regularly reviewed and adjusted, if needed, and did the WASH Strategy remain relevant?</li> </ul> |
| Coherence | <p><i>EQ 2: To what extent is there compatibility of the UNICEF WASH Strategy with other strategies within UNICEF and in the broader WASH sector?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent is there compatibility of the UNICEF WASH Strategy with the UNICEF Strategic Plans 2014-2017, 2018-2021 and 2022-2025, and Regional and Country Office WASH-related strategy documents?</li> <li>To what extent is there compatibility of the UNICEF WASH Strategy with the WASH strategies of governments, donors, civil society, sister UN agencies and international financial institutions?</li> <li>How does the UNICEF WASH Strategy align with other strategies, plans, programmes and priorities in the area of gender and disability inclusion?</li> <li>What changes, if any, are needed to the UNICEF WASH Strategy and/or its implementation to continue to ensure/enhance coherence?</li> </ul>  |

<sup>8</sup> Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Evaluation criteria, 2022.

| Criteria      | Evaluation questions  |
|---------------|---|
| Effectiveness | <p><i>EQ 3: To what extent did the UNICEF WASH Strategy achieve, or is expected to achieve, its objectives?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent does the UNICEF WASH Strategy facilitate innovative WASH programming at scale that is the benchmark of best practice in supporting governments to deliver results for children?</li> <li>• To what extent does the UNICEF WASH Strategy contribute to strengthening the WASH enabling environment and inform the allocation and use of domestic resources in order to fulfil UNICEF’s mandate for children?</li> <li>• To what extent does the UNICEF WASH Strategy facilitate UNICEF’s work on promoting child rights and contribute to strengthening national WASH systems including national data and monitoring systems?</li> <li>• To what extent does the UNICEF WASH Strategy effectively prioritize the needs of the most vulnerable (e.g., disabled children, those in humanitarian contexts, the poorest) and the special needs of girls and women?</li> <li>• To what extent does the UNICEF WASH Strategy support the elimination of barriers to access (e.g., political, social, economic, legal, physical and attitudinal) to services, rights, information for vulnerable and marginalized populations (e.g., women, adolescents and youth, persons with disabilities, indigenous communities, sexual diversities and those furthest behind)?</li> <li>• To what extent does the UNICEF WASH Strategy support effective leadership in coordinating and responding to emergencies and does it strengthen the linkage between humanitarian and development programming?</li> <li>• Does the UNICEF WASH Strategy facilitate and to what extent has UNICEF effectively utilized evidence-based programming and results-based management (RBM) principles to guide the implementation of its WASH Strategy?</li> <li>• Is sufficient evidence on WASH Strategy implementation generated through monitoring and evaluation, and to what extent has UNICEF effectively used the available data and findings to guide the implementation of its WASH Strategy and enhance the effectiveness of WASH interventions?</li> <li>• To what extent is the UNICEF WASH Strategy effective at communicating the WASH programme’s vision, strategic objectives and implementation strategy both within UNICEF and externally?</li> <li>• To what extent has the UNICEF WASH Strategy facilitated the mobilization of resources and enabled new strategic partnerships with foundations and the private sector and access to innovative financing modalities for WASH?</li> <li>• To what extent have internal and external factors, both those within UNICEF’s control and those that are not, affected the UNICEF WASH Strategy implementation performance?</li> <li>• What changes, if any, are needed to the UNICEF WASH Strategy and/or its implementation to continue to ensure/enhance effectiveness?</li> </ul> |
| Efficiency    | <p><i>EQ 4: To what extent did the UNICEF WASH Strategy deliver, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent does the UNICEF WASH Strategy facilitate economic and timely planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and activities?</li> <li>• To what extent does the UNICEF WASH Strategy facilitate the allocation of resources to priority programmes and activities?</li> <li>• To what extent does the allocation of resources reflect the needs of vulnerable and marginalized groups, including persons with disabilities?</li> <li>• What are the costs associated with WASH activities implemented by UNICEF and how have they been evolving through time – both overall and by activity?</li> <li>• To what extent are value for money (VfM) principles employed to control costs and to maximize the outputs, outcomes and impact of WASH interventions?</li> <li>• To what extent does the WASH Strategy enable UNICEF to develop the capacities and capabilities of its staff and make best use of the available human resources at headquarters, regional and country levels?</li> <li>• What changes, if any, are needed to the UNICEF WASH Strategy and/or its implementation to continue to ensure/enhance efficiency?</li> </ul>   |

| Criteria       | Evaluation questions  |
|----------------|---|
| Impact         | <p><i>EQ 5: To what extent has UNICEF WASH Strategy implementation generated, or is expected to generate, significant higher-level effects?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent does the UNICEF WASH Strategy contribute to progress on SDG 6 including ending open defecation and universal, sustainable, affordable and equitable access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene?</li> <li>What are the WASH strategy's contributions to other SDGs including nutrition, health, education, poverty reduction and economic growth, urban services, gender equality, and climate resilience?</li> <li>What are the WASH Strategy's contributions to improved outcomes for women, adolescents and youth, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable and marginalized groups, and have there been any unintended impacts?</li> <li>To what extent do applied research, monitoring and evaluation activities contribute to the understanding of higher-level effects associated with WASH Strategy implementation and have the available data been used to adjust WASH interventions, where needed?</li> <li>What changes, if any, are needed to the UNICEF WASH Strategy and/or its implementation to continue to ensure/enhance impact?</li> </ul> |
| Sustainability | <p><i>EQ 6: To what extent do the net benefits of the UNICEF WASH Strategy continue, or are likely to continue?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent has WASH Strategy implementation contributed to the sustainability of WASH intervention outcomes and impact including by leveraging sustainable financial resources and building sustainable markets?</li> <li>To what extent has the WASH Strategy fostered collaboration and lasting partnerships with governments, the private sector and civil society, and new ways of working with sister UN agencies and international financial institutions?</li> <li>To what extent has the WASH Strategy accelerated regional and country level efforts to support national priorities and the achievement of SDG 6?</li> <li>What changes, if any, are needed to the UNICEF WASH Strategy and/or its implementation to continue to ensure/enhance sustainability?</li> </ul>  |

## Evaluation Methodology

The Mid-Term Evaluation of the UNICEF WASH Strategy will use a mixed-methods approach with elements of both summative and formative evaluation approaches. Summative aspects of the evaluation are centered on the assessment of performance against targets, including the assessment of cost-effectiveness, trend analysis, determinants analysis and contribution/impact analysis. The approach is theory-based as it will examine a Theory of Change (inferred from the available strategy documents), indicators and targets as reference to arrive at judgements about actions and results during the period. Formative aspects of the evaluation are centered on the evaluation's focus on current challenges and real-time learning to inform the second half of WASH Strategy implementation.

## Data Collection and Analysis Strategy

Using both qualitative and quantitative methods, the Mid-Term Evaluation of the UNICEF WASH Strategy will start with an initial document review and data analysis of the available results and financial data. This will be followed by PG-WASH and stakeholder surveys and selected key informant interviews. Several country case studies are also planned. In parallel, three embedded thematic case studies will be implemented, focusing on UNICEF WASH Strategy resources, impact, and emerging areas. The evaluation team will produce several deliverables, an inception report, workshops that review initial findings, conclusions and recommendations, and a final evaluation report, which will be accompanied by the country and thematic case study reports (see Figure 4).

Specific data collection and analysis methods are expected to include:

1. **Document review:** Review and analysis of key documents including PG-WASH annual reports at the global, regional and country levels, work plans and strategies, internal reviews, guidance documents, and other available programme documents, studies and assessments.
2. **Key informant interviews:** Interviews with a selected number of UNICEF and partner staff as key informants at the headquarters, regional and country levels to provide context, perceptions and background on the WASH Strategy and its implementation, facilitating factors and obstacles, and recommendations.
3. **Online surveys:** Online surveys to gather quantitative and qualitative data from a wide range of stakeholders, including UNICEF staff, implementing partners, donors, and other stakeholders. The online surveys will include a PG-WASH survey covering headquarters, regional and country offices. It will also include a partner perception survey to identify their perspectives on strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities, which will allow the organization to better serve its constituents.
4. **Trend analysis/determinants of success:** Multi-country analysis of available quantitative data including monitoring and expenditure data, JMP data, DHS/MICS data and other available data sources focusing on identifying trends and determinants of success.
5. **Contribution analysis/impact assessment:** Using a rigorous non-experimental approach designed to assess the UNICEF WASH Strategy's contribution to results in complex programmatic settings and examining theory of change (ToC) causal pathways including short-term, intermediary and longer term outcomes, these analyses aim to determine causal contributions of the UNICEF WASH programme and its components to WASH sector performance and impact in selected country settings, and identify programmatic and policy actions that lead to the desired transformative change (see Figure 5).
6. **Cost-effectiveness analysis:** Building on past WASH cost-effectiveness and value for money analyses, the analysis examines how effectiveness could be maximized.
7. **Thematic/country case studies:** A deep dive into selected programmatic issues or themes and/or country contexts, which uses both qualitative and quantitative methods to provide granular examination of context, actors, UNICEF actions and results to extract lessons to be applied more broadly. Focus group discussions, interviews or other forms of engagement with beneficiaries, including children and youths, should be included as appropriate.

Figure 4: Mid-Term Evaluation Data Collection and Analysis Strategy

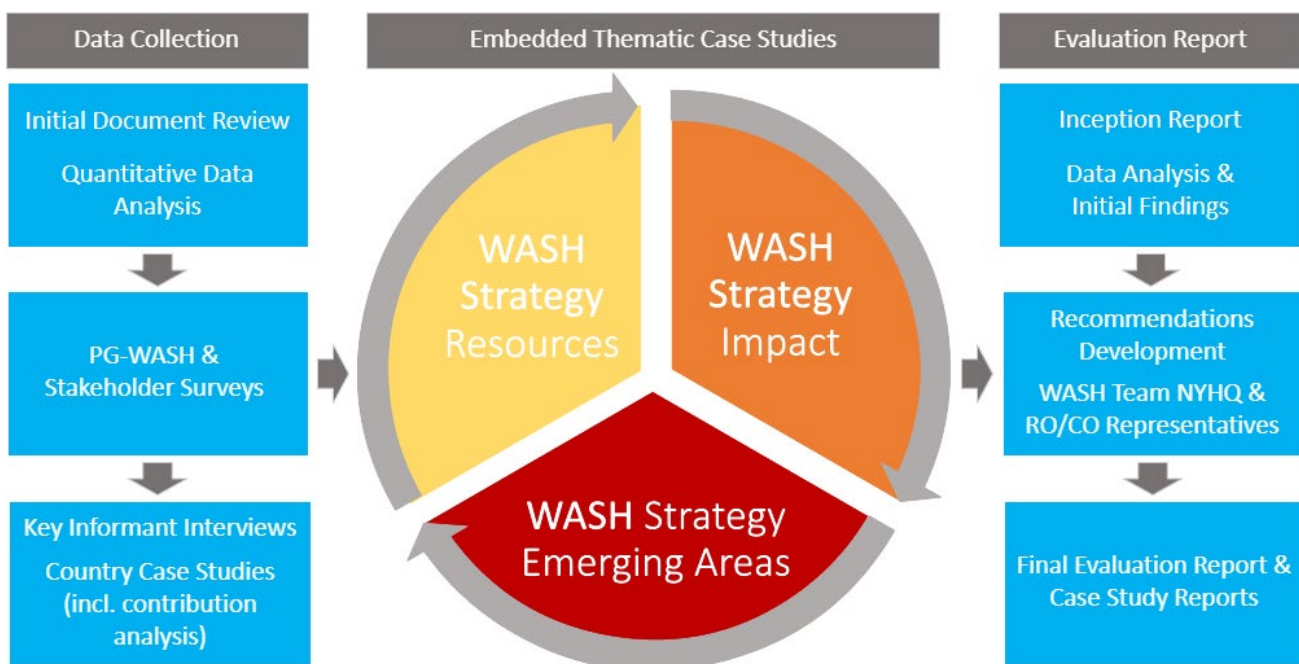
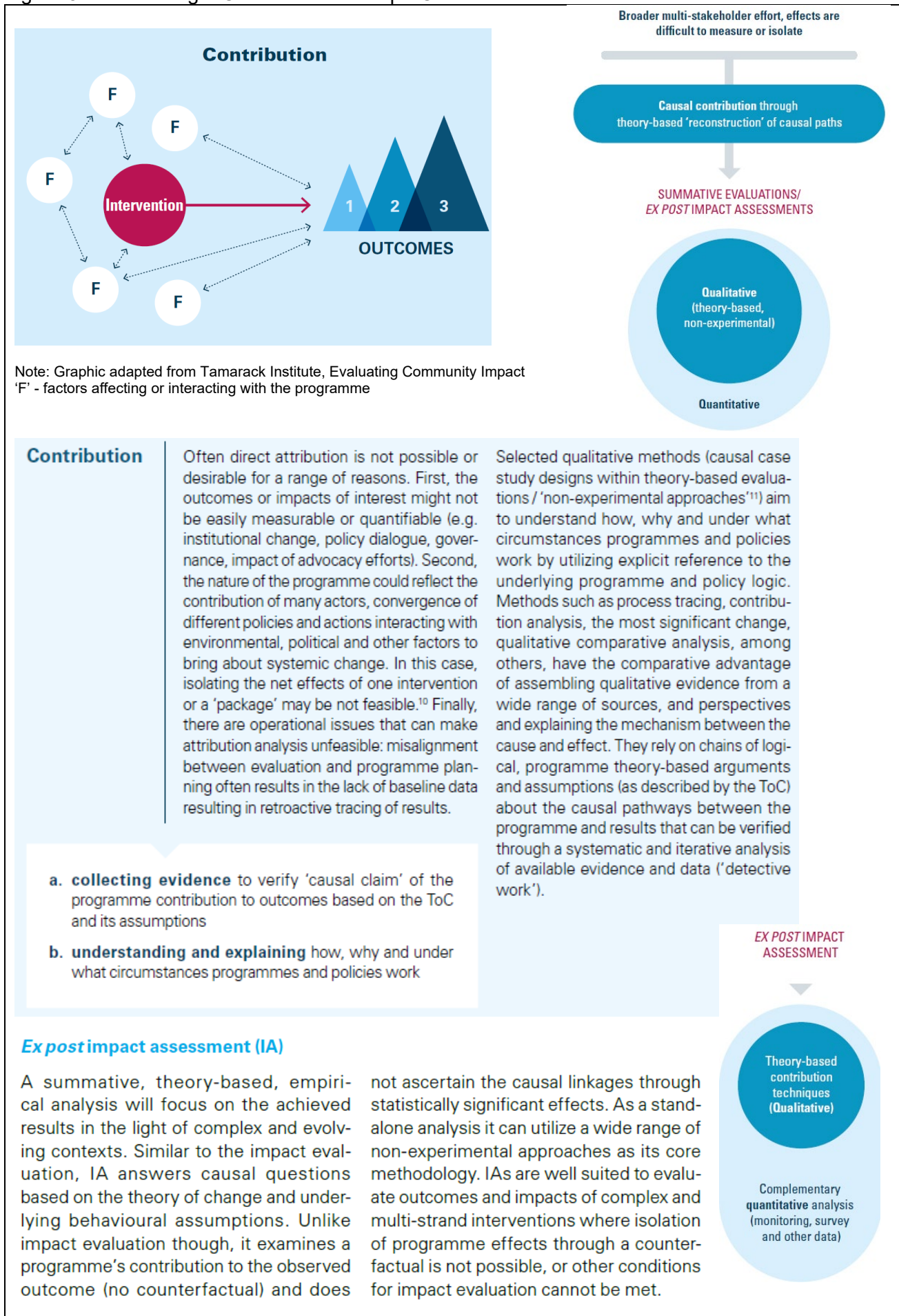


Figure 5: Establishing a Causal Relationship - Contribution<sup>9</sup>

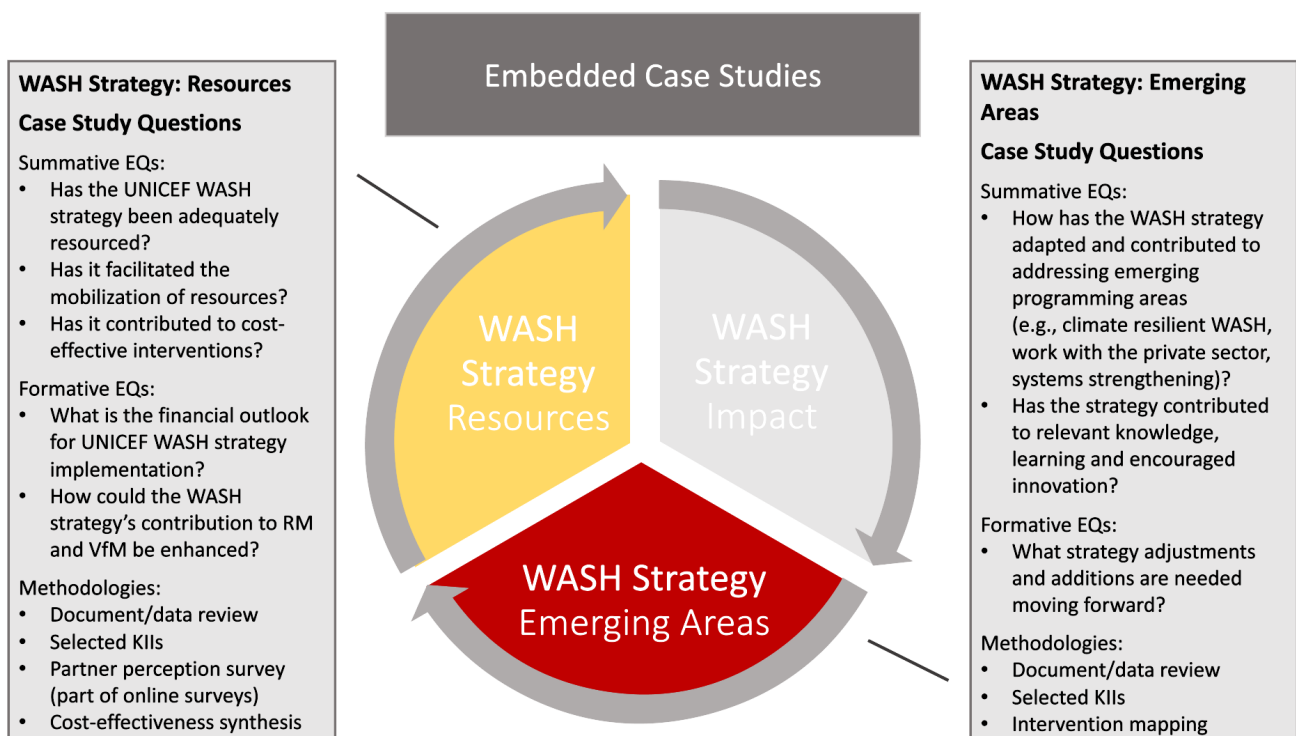


The information drawn from the different data sources and types of analysis will be consolidated through the use of evidence matrixes. The assessment will apply triangulation (i.e., drawing on different data sources and collection techniques, to produce evidence and test the consistency of information) across the different methodologies and sources with the aim to fully integrate these evidence streams. The evaluation’s inception report will further detail on the analysis plan for each method as well as the overall approach to triangulation and synthesis, and the development of evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations. Using summative, theory-based and empirical analysis as well as quantitative methods to assess impact, where feasible, the assessment will focus on achieved results in a complex and evolving context. The assessment will be utilization-focused to enable stakeholders to inform key decisions for UNICEF WASH Strategy revisions, if any, and facilitate organizational improvements with regard to Strategy implementation. Moreover, the assessment should be theory-guided and participatory (i.e., engaging key stakeholders closely in order to foster stronger and meaningful participation and ownership of the assessment process and outputs). The assessment is also expected to integrate gender, human rights, disability and equity considerations throughout the process, including but not limited to the planned key informant interviews, any focus group discussions, and the online surveys.

### Embedded Thematic and Country Case Studies

Three **Embedded Thematic Case Studies** are planned to illustrate key aspects of WASH Strategy implementation. Initial thematic case study outlines indicating expected key case study questions and data collection/analysis methodologies are included below (see Figure 6). The thematic case studies will provide the opportunity for deep dives into key evaluation themes/objectives including WASH financing and access to resources, programming considerations focusing on selected emerging areas (e.g., climate resilient WASH, work with the private sector, systems strengthening), and advanced analysis of WASH Strategy implementation impact. A thematic case study report will be prepared for each thematic case study including a summary of the case study background, objectives, methodology, findings, conclusions and recommendations. The thematic case study reports will inform the evaluation report, and they will be included as annexes to the final report.

Figure 6: Embedded Case Studies Outline



<sup>9</sup> UNICEF. UNICEF Evaluation of impact. Strategy and Action Framework 2022-2025, 2023.



This case study is EO led. The analysis is informed by the impact feasibility assessment focusing on UNICEF work on climate-resilient WASH, which will be implemented in early 2024.



**WASH Strategy: Impact Case Study Questions**

Summative EQs:

- What is the evidence of outcomes and impact of WASH strategy implementation on progress towards the SDGs?
- Were there differences between countries and for different populations?
- What is the evidence of sustainability of intervention outcomes and impact?

Formative EQs:

- How could the outcomes and impact of the WASH strategy and its contributions to equality and sustainability be enhanced?

Methodologies:

- Document review
- Trend analysis
- Determinants of success
- Impact analysis

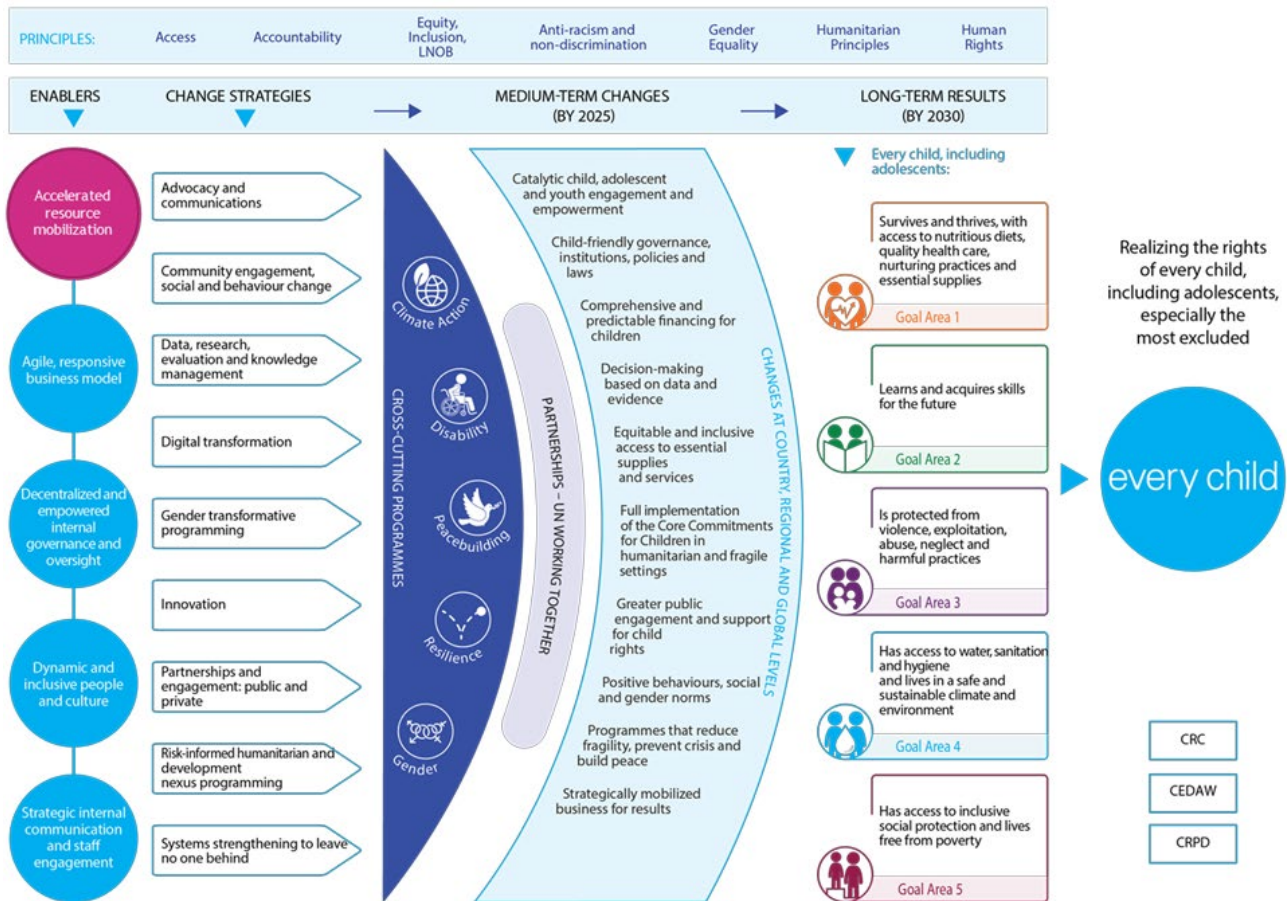
The **WASH Strategy Resources Case Study** will be carried out by a WASH finance specialist recruited by the service provider for this purpose. The **WASH Strategy Emerging Areas Case Study** will be led by a WASH programme specialist who is also recruited by the service provider specifically for this role. The **WASH Strategy Impact Case Study** will be Evaluation Office-led. This case study will conduct advanced analysis of the available primary and secondary data focusing on WASH Strategy implementation outcomes and impact. The evaluation manager, working with EO in-house experts, will lead the implementation of the Impact Case Study, and he/she will be embedded in the evaluation team for this task, which includes managing the case study data collection/analysis, the preparation of the case study report, and working with the team leader on preparing the relevant sections on WASH Strategy impact for the evaluation report.

Five **Country Case Studies** are also planned. The countries for the country case studies will be selected in consultation with UNICEF headquarters, regional and country offices, and the case studies will focus on WASH Strategy implementation in specific country contexts. They are intended to assess the UNICEF WASH Strategy’s contribution to results and examine ToC causal pathways as defined by the country-level ToCs using available and geo-localised programmatic information on UNICEF WASH interventions and sub-national-level WASH indicators. The country case studies will contribute to a better understanding of what works and how it works in different settings. The country case studies will involve missions to the selected countries and the evaluation team members conducting the country case studies will spend an estimated one week in-country for meetings and data collection. Country case study reports will be prepared for each case study including the country WASH programme context, objectives, methodology, findings, conclusions and recommendations. The country case study reports will inform the evaluation report, and they will be included as annexes to the final report. **The country case studies will be selected to represent a range of regions, types of WASH programmes and implementing environments. Final decisions on the countries for the country case studies will be made during the inception phase of the evaluation.**

## WASH Strategy Theory of Change

The UNICEF WASH Strategy 2016-2030 does not include an explicit theory of change (ToC). However, a ToC has been developed for UNICEF's current Strategic Plan 2022-2025 (see Figure 7), and a Goal Area 4-specific ToC<sup>10</sup> has also been developed. ToCs are also available for UNICEF WASH programmes at the country-office level.

Figure 7: Theory of Change of UNICEF's Strategic Plan (2022-2025)<sup>11</sup>



While neither of these graphics identifies causal pathways to long-term results/impacts, the Strategic Plan 2022-2025 specifies results areas with detailed output indicators and four-year targets as part of its results framework. Two of the current Strategic Plan's three results areas under Goal Area 4 are covering WASH (see Table 2). UNICEF's previous Strategic Plans similarly included results areas, indicators and targets. It is expected that the Evaluation of the UNICEF WASH Strategy will use an inferred ToC based on the results frameworks associated with the relevant Strategic Plans.

<sup>10</sup> UNICEF. WASH in the new UNICEF Strategic Plan 2022-2025, 2021.

<sup>11</sup> UNICEF. UNICEF Strategic Plan 2022-2025, 2021.

Table 2: UNICEF WASH Strategic Plan Output Indicators, Targets and Results (2022)<sup>12</sup>

| Outcomes | Results Area 1: Sustained access to and use of safe water, sanitation and hygiene practices for all children and adolescents, particularly the most disadvantaged and those living in humanitarian and fragile contexts |             |                              |
|----------|---|-------------|------------------------------|
|          | Output indicator  | 2022 Result | Four-year target (2022-2025) |
| Outputs  | 4.1.1. Number of people reached with at least basic sanitation services through UNICEF-supported programmes   | 26,035,782  | 50,000,000                   |
|          | 4.1.2. Number of people reached with at least basic water that is safe and available when needed, through UNICEF-supported programmes   | 30,633,449  | 50,000,000                   |
|          | 4.1.3. Number of people reached with at least basic hygiene services through UNICEF-supported programmes  | 23,628,850  | 50,000,000                   |
|          | 4.1.4. Number of schools reached with basic WASH services, through UNICEF-supported programmes  | 32,939      | 30,000                       |
|          | 4.1.5. Number of health-care facilities reached with basic WASH services, through UNICEF-supported programmes   | 10,827      | 15,000                       |
|          | 4.1.6. Number of women and adolescent girls reached whose menstrual health and hygiene needs are addressed through UNICEF-supported programmes  | 17,517,751  | 40,000,000                   |
|          | 4.1.7. Number of people in humanitarian contexts reached with appropriate drinking-water services, through UNICEF-supported programmes  | 39,404,612  | 35,000,000                   |
|          | 4.1.8. Number of people in humanitarian contexts reached with appropriate sanitation services, through UNICEF-supported programmes  | 9,247,390   | 15,000,000                   |
| Outcomes | Results Area 2: Strengthened and resourced water, sanitation and hygiene systems and empowered communities for gender-equal, inclusive, affordable and sustainable services   |             |                              |
|          | Output indicator  | 2022 Result | Four-year target (2022-2025) |
| Outputs  | 4.2.1. Number of countries that have prepared and implemented a costed and inclusive national WASH financing strategy, with UNICEF support  | 9           | 25                           |
|          | 4.2.2. Number of countries with increased annual sector expenditures from different funding and financing sources resulting from UNICEF support   | 15          | 60                           |
|          | 4.2.3. Number of countries with national monitoring systems incorporating sustainability in previous two years, with UNICEF support   | 4           | 20                           |
|          | 4.2.4. Number of countries that have developed a climate rationale for the impact of climate change and water scarcity on WASH services   | 13          | 50                           |
|          | 4.2.5. Number of countries integrating a humanitarian–development–peace nexus approach on WASH programming through the participation of affected populations  | 16          | 30                           |

## Ethical Considerations

The assessment is to be conducted in accordance with UNICEF and UNEG ethics guidelines. Bidding firms are expected to identify anticipated ethical issues throughout the evaluation project as well as the measures and methods adopted to mitigate them.

Relevant guidance from the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and UNICEF are available online: [UNEG Ethical guidelines for evaluations](#), [UNEG Code of conduct for Evaluation in the UN System](#), and the [UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research](#). Consultants will also be asked to sign a number of individual statements/commitments on ethical standards for evaluations and on protection and sexual exploitation and abuse.

<sup>12</sup> UNICEF. GOAL AREA 4: Global Annual Results Report 2022, 2023.

Consistent with these norms, standards and guidance, the evaluation will ensure:

- **Respect for rights of individuals and institutions:** The evaluation team will accord informants the opportunity to participate voluntarily while maintaining their anonymity, and to make an independent decision to participate without pressure or fear of penalty (informed consent/assent). Also, interviewers will assure respondents that information is confidential, and that reports are written such that responses/contributions cannot be traced back to them. Interview notes and any recordings will be accessible to the team members only.
- **Respect for cultural identities and sensitivities:** Variances in ethnicities, culture, religious beliefs, gender, disability, age will be respected. As a result, evaluation processes will be mindful of cultural settings, developmental status and evolving capacities/ages of children and other stakeholders, and the needs of the respondents and rights-holders that programmes are supposed to serve.
- **Professional responsibilities and obligations of evaluators:** The evaluation team will exercise independent judgement and operate in an impartial and unbiased manner. During data collection, any sensitive issues and concerns will be addressed through the appropriate mechanisms and referral pathways. A protection protocol will be in place for each setting where data collection involves children and community members.

Per Evaluation Office standard procedure, the evaluation design and tools will undergo ethical review during the inception phase. Ethical approval will be sought from the UNICEF Institutional Review Board prior to implementation. Any country-level required approval will also be obtained.

### Key Deliverables, Indicative Timeframe and Evaluation Schedule

The evaluation will be conducted over a 10-months period between February and December 2024 resulting in the following key deliverables:

1. **Inception report:** An inception report, containing the detailed approach, finalized evaluation questions, data collection tools as well as a detailed workplan.
2. **Preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations workshops:** Facilitated workshop sessions in which preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations are shared with key stakeholders for validation and feedback.
3. **Thematic case study reports:** Stand-alone reports providing a deep dive into selected themes with case study specific data, findings, conclusions and recommendations.
4. **Country case study reports:** Country case study reports providing access to country specific data, findings, conclusions and recommendations.
5. **Evaluation report:** An overall evaluation report addressing the evaluation questions with detailed findings and conclusions, and inclusive of the jointly developed recommendations.
6. **Evaluation matrix, data files and transcripts:** The completed evaluation matrix, survey results and other evaluation data files, and transcripts of all interviews.

An indicative timeline is provided in Table 3, the payment and delivery schedule in Table 4.

Table 3: Indicative Timeline

|  | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tender                                   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Inception, incl. workshops               |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Data collection                          |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Data analysis                            |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Report drafting                          |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Review and finalization, incl. workshops |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Dissemination/ management response       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

Table 4: Payment and Delivery Schedule

| Key Deliverables   | Expected Timeline  | Payment (%) |
|--|--------------------|-------------|
| First draft of inception report (UNICEF internal review)   | 31 May 2024        | -           |
| Inception workshops  | 31 May 2024        | -           |
| Second draft of inception report (version shared with ERG)   | 15 June 2024       | -           |
| Final inception report   | 30 June 2024       | 25          |
| First draft of thematic case study reports (UNICEF internal review)  | 31 July 2024       | -           |
| First draft of country case study reports (UNICEF internal review)   | 15 August 2024     | -           |
| First draft of evaluation report (UNICEF internal review)  | 31 August 2024     | -           |
| Second draft of thematic (version shared with ERG)   | 15 September 2024  | 25          |
| Second draft of country case study reports and second draft of evaluation report (version shared with ERG) | 30 September 2023  | 25          |
| Findings, conclusions and recommendations workshops  | Early October 2024 | -           |
| Final versions of all deliverables   | 30 November 2024   | 25          |

All reports will be submitted in Microsoft Office Word format, while all presentations will be in Microsoft Office PowerPoint. No PDF or hard copy will be submitted by the evaluation team. The use of reader-friendly techniques such as bullet points, tables, graphs, photos, videos embedded in presentations and reports, and other visualization methods is expected. All data collected, documentation gathered, and photos/videos taken and analyses produced for the purpose of the evaluation are to be made available to UNICEF in the appropriate format. Graphs and maps must be in editable format for layout purposes. The use of annexes is required for the evaluation tools, for all secondary information that is not directly related to the evaluation findings, as well as for any long technical documentation intended to a specific audience. PowerPoint presentations must include notes below each slide to make them easy to understand for people who could not attend the meeting.

All documentation must be in professional level standard English and in compliance with UNICEF Style Book 2015 and UNICEF Brand Toolkit 2012. All key deliverables (including draft versions submitted to UNICEF) must be language-edited by a native speaker and good writer.

All key deliverables will be made available on the UNICEF website and widely disseminated to all target audiences. UNICEF branding will be used for the final deliverables. The final evaluation report will be copy-edited by a professional service provider contracted by the Evaluation Office.

### Contract Arrangement and Composition of the Evaluation Team

This opportunity is available to selected service providers holding a long-term agreement (LTA) with UNICEF. For this evaluation, UNICEF requires an evaluation team with a strong background in WASH and a good understanding of the UNICEF WASH programme in humanitarian and development settings including expertise in WASH strategic planning, programmes and data. The team leader should have extensive experience in leading and conducting complex global evaluations, excellent strategic and management skills, and a track record with evaluations on WASH and/or closely related subjects. The team leader is expected to be fully engaged and available throughout the evaluation process. It is estimated that a core team of four individuals is needed to complete the evaluation within the expected time frame. In addition to the team leader, the following core team members are required for this evaluation: WASH finance specialist, WASH programme specialist, and WASH data analyst. Additional mid-level WASH evaluation specialists are needed for the country case studies.

The **Evaluation Team Leader** will lead the preparation of the inception report and the draft and final evaluation reports and coordinate the work of the team. He/she will work closely with the UNICEF evaluation manager on all tasks. He/she will also facilitate the workshops and play a key role in presenting the team's progress to stakeholders including the Evaluation Reference Group. The required qualifications and expertise for the evaluation team leader are:

- Graduate degree in a social science or other relevant discipline (economics, sociology, evaluation, public policy, or a related field). A doctoral degree is an asset.
- At least five years of work experience with complex multi-country or global evaluations including thematic and/or strategy evaluations.
- Good understanding of both qualitative and quantitative approaches to evaluate outcome-level change, e.g. theory-based approaches.
- Expertise in advanced qualitative and quantitative analysis of primary/secondary data.
- Experience with WASH and/or climate resilient programming.
- UNICEF evaluation experience is a strong advantage.

The **WASH Finance Specialist** will lead the preparation of the UNICEF Strategy Resources Case Study. He/she will also support the preparation of the inception report and the draft and final evaluation reports as well as the workshops and presentations. The required qualifications and expertise for the WASH finance specialist are:

- Graduate degree in development economics/finance or a closely related field.
- At least five years of experience working on WASH finance including experience with resource mobilization and a good understanding of global trends in WASH sector finance.
- A very good understanding of both qualitative and quantitative approaches to assessing WASH expenditures and value for money.
- UNICEF WASH programme and/or finance experience is a strong advantage.

The **WASH Programme Specialist** will lead the preparation of the UNICEF Strategy Emerging Areas Case Study. He/she will also support the preparation of the inception report and the draft and final evaluation reports as well as the workshops and presentations. The required qualifications and expertise for the WASH programme specialist are:

- Graduate degree in a social science or other relevant discipline (economics, sociology, evaluation, public policy, or a related field).
- At least five years of work experience on WASH strategic planning and/or WASH programming including infrastructure, services and behaviour change interventions in diverse development contexts.
- Experience with research and/or evaluations for international development organizations with in-depth knowledge of methodology including mixed-method approaches.
- UNICEF WASH programme experience is a strong advantage.

The **WASH Data Analyst** will support the preparation of the inception report and the draft and final evaluation reports as well as the workshops and presentations focusing on data and analytical tasks. He will also provide support to the preparation of the embedded case studies, as needed. The required qualifications and expertise for the WASH data analyst are:

- Graduate degree in a quantitative social science or a closely related field.
- Formal training and at least three years of work experience applying advanced quantitative methods (e.g., trend/determinants/impact analysis, multiple regression).
- Good understanding of both qualitative and quantitative approaches to assess impact and evaluate outcome-level change, e.g. theory-based approaches.
- Expertise in advanced quantitative analysis of primary and secondary data.
- WASH programme and/or WASH data experience is a strong advantage.

The evaluation team will collectively bring the below expertise and experience:

- Extensive experience in conducting complex evaluations for international development organizations with a specific focus on WASH.
- Experience conducting global strategy evaluations as evidenced by previous assignments.
- In-depth knowledge of evaluation methodologies and mixed-method approaches.
- Experience with country case studies and with collecting data remotely.
- In-depth knowledge of and thematic expertise in UNICEF WASH programming.

- Familiarity with UNICEF’s programmatic mandate in WASH.
- Strong ability to interact with a wide range of stakeholders, including on issues that are sensitive, and experience collecting data from vulnerable groups including children.
- Experience with the ethics of evidence generation and familiarity with ethical safeguards.
- Applied knowledge and application of UNEG norms and standards.
- Delivering evaluations and/or research projects on tight timelines, within complex contexts and involving multi-stakeholder consultative processes.
- Excellent abilities in presenting technical information to a non-technical audience.
- Excellent English language skills, fluent French for field work in francophone countries.
- Full availability for the duration of the assignment.

The table below provides a recommended distribution of days across the evaluation phases.

Table 5: Recommended Allocation of Level of Effort Across Evaluation Phases

|  | Inception | Data collection | Analysis  | Report/ Finalize | Total      |
|--|-----------|-----------------|-----------|------------------|------------|
| <b>Mid-Term Evaluation – Main Report</b>   |           |                 |           |                  |            |
| Evaluation Team Leader   | 10        | 15              | 15        | 20               | 60         |
| Senior Evaluation Expert, WASH finance expertise (“WASH Finance Specialist”)         | 2         | 5               | 5         | 4                | 16         |
| Mid-Level Evaluation expert, WASH programme expertise (“WASH Programme Specialist”)  | 2         | 5               | 5         | 4                | 16         |
| Junior Evaluation Expert, quantitative analysis/data expertise (“WASH Data Analyst”) | 2         | 5               | 5         | 4                | 16         |
| <b>Mid-Term Evaluation – WASH Finance Case Study</b>                                 |           |                 |           |                  |            |
| Senior Evaluation Expert, WASH finance expertise (“WASH Finance Specialist”)         | 6         | 10              | 10        | 10               | 36         |
| <b>Mid-Term Evaluation – WASH Emerging Areas Case Study</b>                          |           |                 |           |                  |            |
| Mid-Level Evaluation expert, WASH programme expertise (“WASH Programme Specialist”)  | 6         | 10              | 10        | 10               | 36         |
| <b>Mid-Term Evaluation – Five Country Case Studies</b>                               |           |                 |           |                  |            |
| Mid-Level WASH Evaluation Experts  | 5         | 6               | 5         | 8                | 24         |
|  | 5         | 6               | 5         | 8                | 24         |
|  | 5         | 6               | 5         | 8                | 24         |
|  | 5         | 6               | 5         | 8                | 24         |
|  | 5         | 6               | 5         | 8                | 24         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>53</b> | <b>80</b>       | <b>75</b> | <b>92</b>        | <b>300</b> |

Bidders may propose a combination of experts to carry out the work that differs from the team above, however, **the positions above are considered essential by UNICEF** and any alternative team composition, additional team members and/or changes to their role on the project or level of effort need to be justified. For each expert, bidders are requested to provide their daily rate and number of days. Note that the team members’ daily rates cannot exceed the rates agreed in the UNICEF LTA.

The evaluation team members conducting the country case studies need to be able to travel as an estimated one week of in-country presence by a core team member for meetings and data collection is expected in each of the case study countries. **Bidders should budget for travel of one team member to five countries for five days each to conduct the country case studies. The budgeted travel costs are indicative and will be adjusted based on the final country selection, if needed.** Additional case studies may be added and in this case the contract will be amended to cover the additional case studies. Final decisions on the countries for the country case studies will be made during the inception phase of the evaluation.

## Evaluation Management and Coordination

The evaluation will be led by the UNICEF Evaluation Office, under the management of the Evaluation Specialist/WASH (“evaluation manager”) and the supervision of the Senior Evaluation Specialist/Goal Areas 1, 3 & 4. The EO will be responsible for the day-to-day oversight and management of the evaluation. It will assure the quality and independence of the evaluation and its alignment with UNEG Norms and Standards and Ethical Guidelines, provide quality assurance checking that the findings and conclusions are relevant and recommendations are implementable, contribute to the dissemination of findings, and oversee the management response implementation.

The evaluation manager is the primary interface between the EO and the service provider. The manager role involves day-to-day support to all aspects of the evaluation process, including facilitating access to data, communications and meetings, providing input to key methodological and strategic choices and decisions, and managing all contractual aspects including the evaluation budget. He/she may also participate in interviews and other data collection/analysis activities during implementation.

For this evaluation, the evaluation manager, working with other EO in-house experts, will oversee the Impact Case Study, and he/she will be embedded in the evaluation team for this task, which includes managing the case study data collection/analysis and the preparation of the case study report.

Staff of the UNICEF EO are independent from UNICEF management and operations. As part of their guidance and quality assurance role, the EO will provide quality assurance on all deliverables based on the UNEG’s and UNICEF’s norms, standards, ethical guidelines, processes and tools, including assessment of the gender, equity and human rights responsiveness of the evaluation. The evaluation manager will provide a quality review of all deliverables presented by the evaluation team before materials are shared with the Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) or other stakeholders. The evaluation manager may also contribute to the final report version before copy-editing and layout and (co-)lead the authorship of the final deliverables if necessary. The Senior Evaluation Specialist will review and the UNICEF Director of Evaluation will approve the final Evaluation Report.

An Evaluation Reference Group will be created to serve as an advisory committee for the evaluation. The ERG brings together UNICEF managers, advisors and external experts from among the key stakeholders. Members will provide substantive technical inputs, facilitate access to documents and informants, and ensure the high technical quality of the evaluation products as well as organizational learning and ownership of the evaluation exercise. The ERG also plays a key role in the dissemination and use of evaluation findings and the implementation of management response actions.

## Quality Assurance Standards and Processes

The selected service provider will conduct a quality control of all outputs (including drafts) prior to submission to the evaluation manager. Quality assurance based on UNEG and UNICEF norms, standards, processes and tools is expected.

Levels of quality assurance:

1. The first level of quality assurance of all evaluation deliverables (including drafts) will be conducted by the service provider prior to submitting the deliverables to UNICEF.
2. The second level of quality assurance of the evaluation deliverables will be conducted by the UNICEF Evaluation Office.
3. The third level of quality assurance of the evaluation report will be conducted by the ERG.

Once approved, the final evaluation report and the final thematic and country case study reports will be submitted to UNICEF’s global evaluation reports oversight system for an independent quality review. The report and the quality review will be made publicly available.