

INCEPTION REPORT

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Evaluation of UNICEF contribution to the reduction of out-of-school children and improving access to multiple and flexible pathways to learning

■ Inception Report ■■

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Contents

Acronyms.....	4
1. Introduction.....	5
1.1. Objectives of the evaluation	5
1.2. Scope of the evaluation	5
1.3. Purpose and structure of the inception Report.....	6
2. Global context and UNICEF approaches to reduce OoSCA and improve access to MFP	6
2.1. Global context	6
2.2. Promising practices to improve completion of education cycles	7
2.3. The UNICEF response.....	8
3. Key evaluation questions and sub-questions	10
3.2. Emerging evaluation themes.....	15
4. Evaluation approach.....	16
4.1. Analytical framework	16
4.2. Context and issues-driven application of evaluation methods.....	17
4.3. Selection process and criteria to identify participating countries	20
4.4. Selecting a sub-set of countries for deeper enquiry.....	23
4.5. Levels of enquiry and envisioned instruments.....	24
5. Evaluation Matrix.....	28
6. Data Collection.....	35
6.1. Document Review	35
6.2. Quantitative data base reviews.....	36
6.3. Structured key informant interviews.....	37
6.4. Online surveys.....	37
6.5. Missions to selected countries	38
6.6. Triangulation of evidence.....	39
6.7. Analysis plan	40
6.8. Limitations.....	40
6.9. Ethical Considerations	42
7. Schedule and workplan	42
7.1. Schedule	42
7.2. Roles and Responsibilities.....	44

8. Quality Assurance.....	46
9. References	47
Annex 1: Terms of Reference	48
Annex 2: Selected Documents Reviewed	49
Annex 3: Interviews completed during the inception phase	50
Annex 4: Documentation Analyses Instrument	51
Annex 5 Interview Guide for UNICEF HQ and regional office Staff and ERG members	62
Annex 6: Key Informant Interview and Survey Tools (version 1): Country Level	64

List of Tables

Table 1: Original and Revised Evaluation Questions	11
Table 2: Emerging Evaluation Themes for Exploration	15
Table 3: Applying Contribution Analysis Step-by-Step.....	18
Table 4: Analytical Methods Applied to Key Evaluation Questions	20
Table 5: Focus Country Sample	22
Table 6: Mission Countries and Alternates.....	24
Table 7: Categorization of participating countries	25
Table 8: Key Informant Interviews and Related Instruments	26
Table 9: Summary of Country Selection Process and Analysis Planning.....	27
Table 10: Evaluation Matrix	28
Table 11: Limitations	41
Table 12: Workplan	43
Table 13: Evaluation Team Roles and Responsibilities	44

Acronyms

7ED	Seven dimensions of exclusion
AWP	Annual Work Plan
CO	country office
COAR	Country office Annual Reports
CPD	Country Programme Document
CSI	Country Strategic Indicators
ECA	Europe and Central Asia
EO	Evaluation Office
GEEAP	Global Education Evidence Advisory Panel (GEEAP)
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
ILO	International Labour Organization
ISCA	In-School Children and Adolescents
KEQ	Key Evaluation Questions
KII	Key Informant Interview
LIC	Low Income Countries
LMIC	Low-Middle Income Countries
MFP	Multiple and Flexible Pathways
MICS-EAGLE	Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey Education Analysis for Global Learning and Equity
MoE	Ministry of Education
NEETs	Not in Education, Employment, or Training
OoSCA	Out-of-School Children and Adolescent
OOSCI	Global Out of School Children Initiative
RAM	Results Assessment Module
DAPM	Division of Data, Analytics, Planning and Monitoring
RO	regional office
SDG4	Sustainable Development Goal 4
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
TVET	Technical and vocational education and training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

1. Introduction

As noted in the UNICEF quadrennial Plan for Global Evaluation, the UNICEF Evaluation Office (EO) has committed to conducting the Evaluation of UNICEF contributions to the reduction of out-of-school children and access to multiple and flexible pathways to learning (UNICEF, 2023). In September 2023, UNICEF commissioned a team of external consultants to conduct the evaluation under the management of the EO. This report presents the results of the inception phase of the evaluation.

1.1. Objectives of the evaluation

The objective of the evaluation is to assess UNICEF work in support of addressing the issues as they relate to In-School Children and Adolescents (ISCA) at risk of dropping out of school and meeting the needs of Out-of-School Children and Adolescents (OoSCA). The study aims to evaluate the extent to which UNICEF efforts have contributed to: a) supporting school retention and the transition to higher education levels for ISCA at risk of dropping out; b) facilitating the return to education of OoSCA; and c) increasing access to Multiple and Flexible Pathways (MFP) to learning and skills development for both those at risk of dropping out and those who are out of school.

The evaluation has three specific objectives:

- **Objective 1.** Assess UNICEF work reducing school dropout and improving school retention of ISCA at risk of dropping out.
- **Objective 2:** Evaluate UNICEF capacity to adapt, accelerate, and scale up efforts to increase access to MFPs to learning and skills development, meeting the specific needs of different profiles of OoSCA.
- **Objective 3:** Investigate UNICEF work to support policy reforms, public budgeting, and financing strategies to expand access to equitable and inclusive MFPs to learning and skills development.

1.2. Scope of the evaluation

In addressing the above objectives, the evaluation will consider the groups of children and adolescents described under the seven dimensions of exclusion (7ED) in the revised Global Out of School Children Initiative (OOSCI) Operational Manual (UNICEF, UNESCO and ILO, 2023).

- **Dimension 1:** Children aged one year below the official primary school entrance age who are not enrolled in pre-primary or primary school.
- **Dimensions 2, 3 and 6:** Primary, lower secondary and upper secondary aged children, adolescents and youth who are not enrolled in any level because (a) attended but dropped out (b) may not enter later or (c) will never enter.

- **Dimensions 4, 5 and 7:** Primary, lower secondary and upper secondary aged children, adolescents and youth at risk of dropout either (a) during their current level of schooling or (b) at the point of transition to the following level).

The temporal scope of the evaluation focuses on the period between 2019 and 2022. This presents an important challenge to the evaluation as it crosses the period of two UNICEF Strategic Plans (2018-2021 and 2022-2025). It also requires the evaluation to account for the disruptions and set-backs faced by education systems across the globe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a corporate UNICEF evaluation, the geographic scope is global but recognizes the decentralized organizational structure and culture of UNICEF. It will rely on information gathered across a diverse range of countries (see Section 4.3 including those facing humanitarian contexts and across all UNICEF regions of work. The evaluation will make use of a country sampling process which is directly related to its thematic scope, and which emphasizes coverage of countries where there is evident need for action to address retention and dropout rates and hence, relevance to the issues to be assessed.

1.3. Purpose and structure of the inception Report

The purpose of the Inception Report is to provide a detailed overview of the methods and approaches to be used and to elaborate a robust operational plan for the evaluation. The report presents:

- An overview of the current global context for ISCA at risk and OoSCA along with UNICEF's evolving approach to responding.
- A description of the evaluation approach and methodology, including selection of countries for in-depth data gathering and analysis.
- The evaluation matrix.
- A description of the data collection methods and data sources accessed during the inception phase and planned during the data collection and reporting phases.
- An evaluation workplan.

2. Global context and UNICEF approaches to reduce OoSCA and improve access to MFP

2.1. Global context

The [SDG4 mid-term progress review](#) of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4), which aims for universal, high-quality education, has highlighted a distressingly slow rate of progress (UNESCO, 2023). Despite efforts to increase access to education and promote the completion of educational cycles, the results have been underwhelming since around 250 million children are estimated to be out of school worldwide. This underscores a

persistent stagnation in global education progress, posing significant challenges to achieving SDG4.

Globally, 16% of children and youth (encompassing primary to upper secondary levels) are not attending school, with 1 out of 10 children not accessing primary education. Of the total out-of-school population, 122 million, 48%, are girls and young women.

Regional disparities are clear, and they persist over time. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the population of OOSC increased by 12 million since 2021. The region accounts for nearly 30% of all out-of-school children globally: about 1 out of 5 African children (19.7%) is not accessing education and only half of the school-aged population attends upper secondary education.

In addition, the emergence and global spread of COVID-19 resulted in extensive school shutdowns worldwide in 2020/21. When schools eventually reopened, dropout rates varied widely, [ranging from less than 1% to over 35%](#). Notably, older students had a much higher dropout rate, suggesting that the pandemic-induced school closures, along with other related impacts of the pandemic, may have prematurely ended the education journeys of many adolescents, especially [adolescent girls](#) in Sub-Saharan Africa.

2.2. Promising practices to improve completion of education cycles

The [latest report from the Global Education Evidence Advisory Panel \(GEEAP\)](#), recognized as the preeminent independent interdisciplinary group of global experts in educational research, presents an extensive review of policies and programs aiming to enhance education outcomes (GEEAP, 2023). The interventions recommended by GEEAP concern both interventions aiming to improve learning (these are not covered in the rest of this section since they are not directly relevant to the evaluation questions) as well as interventions aimed at improving enrollment, attendance, and reduction in dropout rates. With reference to the latter, several categories of interventions are identified as “smart buys”:

- Providing information on the benefits, costs, and quality of education: This initiative facilitates informed decision-making for families regarding their children's education, potentially leading to increased enrollment and attendance.
- Reducing travel times to schools: Making schools more accessible can amplify enrollment, attendance, and decrease dropout rates.
- Providing merit-based scholarships for disadvantaged children and youth: This creates a direct incentive for enrollment and attendance, making education more affordable for disadvantaged families, thereby reducing dropout rates.
- Delivering school-based mass health interventions such as deworming in areas with high worm infestation: By enhancing children's health, these interventions can elevate attendance and potentially decrease dropout rates.

The recommendations of the panel also touch on cash transfers and school feeding, two programmatic modalities often used by UNICEF to reduce dropout. The GEEAP recognizes their effectiveness, yet it also raises questions on their cost-effectiveness and scalability in resource-poor contexts, despite the positive effects on school participation recorded in several contexts. For example, the implementation of school feeding, although successful in certain contexts, presents challenges in logistics and cost, particularly in the poorest areas. Yet, in resource-deprived contexts with low attendance and high malnutrition, school feeding has had a substantial impact.

The GEEAP also cautions against ineffective interventions, referred to as "bad buys," including investing solely in hardware like laptops or tablets, providing standalone inputs such as textbooks, additional teachers to reduce class size, constructing school buildings without additional complementary interventions, offering grants or spot salary increases in teachers' salary alone. These approaches have shown limited success since they do not encompass the comprehensive approach needed to effectively address challenges in equitable participation in education.

2.3. The UNICEF response

In February 2018, the Evaluation Office of UNICEF published an evaluation of the Out of School Children Initiative (OOSCI) providing an important baseline to UNICEF work in the period under review (UNICEF Evaluation Office, 2018). The evaluation found that OOSCI had contributed to meaningful results, including:

- A positive attitudinal change to government partners toward the subject of out-of-school children.
- Increasing the visibility of OoSCA and the plight of children excluded from school.
- Supporting studies which were successful in identifying robust data and, where possible, estimates of the number of children out of school (however these were often contested with some countries reluctant to release their studies).
- Developing partnership arrangements that core partners considered cohesive, productive, and increasing the efficiency of most implementers.

However, the evaluation also pointed to important challenges that needed to be addressed if OOSCI was to achieve more meaningful results.

- The five dimensions of exclusion articulated by OOSCI at that time were inadequate to describe all profiles of OoSCA and the upper-secondary school population needed to be included in the OOSCI operational framework.
- Solutions for eliminating barriers that keep children away from school were not a key component of the priorities setting agenda in most OOSCI partner countries.

- Regarding strengthening education systems and capacities, the evaluation found that the overall sustainability of OOSCI objectives and government investments were “shaky at best”.

UNICEF and its partners have responded to these findings (and other developments in the education space) with several initiatives including, but not limited to:

- The development of a corporate education strategy for the period 2013 to 2030 with an emphasis on providing Multiple and Flexible Pathways, particularly for adolescents and youth (UNICEF, 2019).
- The development of guidance on the use of MFP in secondary education (UNICEF, 2020).

Development of a systems approach to the use of MPFs to enable out-of-school adolescents to develop skills for school, life and work (UNICEF, 2023).

- Development (in partnership with UNESCO and ILO) of a revised and updated Operational Manual for OOSCI, encompassing a more complete typology of children, adolescents and youth at risk of dropping out or out-of-school including the 7ED noted in Section 1.2 (UNICEF, UNESCO and ILO, 2023).

The UNICEF Multiple and Flexible Pathways (MFP) Initiative (2020) is described in the MFP Secondary Education Guidance document (UNICEF, 2020). While the document remains the formal, corporate level, UNICEF guidance document on MFP, interviews during the inception phase indicate that there is an intent to build on, refine and modify the approach to MFP moving forward.

Nonetheless, UNICEF intends to support countries in scaling up initiatives in MFP as a means to help OoSCA to access learning opportunities. These opportunities can be part of or outside the formal education systems; those outside of the system are commonly referred to as ‘non-formal education’ and ‘alternative education’. As its name suggests, MFPs can be of various modalities, as they are usually developed based on operational contexts and aim to respond to the diverse needs of their target populations.

The 2020 MFP Initiative Guidance document provided the following examples of MFPs: (a) accelerated education programs that target OoSCA and over-aged adolescents and youth who did not complete their education or are lagging several years behind their peers; (b) short-term alternative education programs and second chance education targeting those who never attended schools; and (c) alternative modalities of education delivery such as those for hard-to-reach rural communities with no access to schools. The first two examples (a and b) are considered non-formal education while the third (c) is considered part of the formal education.

In addition, the MFP Initiative Guidance also mentions programs that aim to provide adolescents and Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) youth with necessary

knowledge and skills for life and decent work. These programs include technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and apprenticeship. While these programs are equally important, this evaluation places an emphasis on those that guide learners back to the formal education rather than those that point directly to the labour market.

Furthermore, programs that are of very short durations (for example, those that can be completed in weeks) are not the primary focus of this evaluation. However, they will be considered when prominent at the country level. Programs that do not lead to certification but aim to re-enroll learners in formal education systems are considered but given less emphasis in this evaluation.

While the only corporate level guidance on MFPs developed by UNICEF is on secondary education, this evaluation covers both UNICEF's efforts and programs for young children (5 to 10 years old in primary education) as well as those for children and adolescents of secondary school age.

The programmatic responses relevant to MFPs include (but are not limited to):

- Technical support including development of guidance materials and notes mapping and systematically summarizing the evidence around the different options of MFPs;
- Advocacy for policy shifts to increase access to formal and non-formal education opportunities, including those on advocacy for formally recognizing certifications; and
- Financial support for service provision and convening work in support to children in emergency setting.

3. Key evaluation questions and sub-questions

The original evaluation questions and sub-questions have been refined based on findings from the documents reviewed during the testing of the pilot documentation analyses tool (Annex 2) and key informant interviews (KIIs) (Annex 3) carried out during the inception phase. The resulting questions and sub-questions are presented in table 1, along with an explanation of any refinements and alterations.

Table 1: Original and Revised Evaluation Questions

Original Evaluation Questions as Per Terms of Reference	Revised Wording of Evaluation Questions and Sub-Questions	Explanation
<p>Q1. Has UNICEF work reduced school dropout and increased retention of ISCA at risk of dropping out?</p>	<p>Key Evaluation Question 1: Has UNICEF work contributed to reductions in school dropout and increased retention of ISCA at risk of dropping out, including by addressing inequities/disparities?</p>	<p>Wording altered to focus on UNICEF contribution since changes in retention rates and reductions in dropout cannot be attributed solely to UNICEF activities given the roles of other actors and the limited scale of UNICEF inputs in certain settings.</p>
<p>Q1.1 In what ways and to what extent has UNICEF work contributed to the reduction of school dropout of ISCA at risk of dropping out, particularly the most marginalized children and adolescents, including girls, children with disabilities, linguistic minorities, and other types of social exclusion?</p>	<p>Sub-Question 1.1: In what ways and to what extent has UNICEF work contributed to the reduction of school dropout among ISCA at risk, (particularly the most marginalized children and adolescents, including girls, children with disabilities, linguistic minorities, and other types of social exclusion)? What are the critical factors that enabled a positive UNICEF contribution – including internal and external cross-sectoral collaboration?</p>	<p>Altered to add consideration of critical factors, particularly, to inform development of policy brief and good practice note</p>
<p>Q1.2 Have UNICEF resources been efficiently allocated to adjust or scale-up programmatic approaches that improved school retention of ISCA at risk of dropping out?</p>	<p>Sub-Question 1.2: Have UNICEF resources been strategically allocated to allow for the adaptation of programmatic approaches to support scaling up of initiatives proven to improve school retention of ISCA at risk of dropping out?</p>	<p>The focus of this sub-question is on the strategic positioning of UNICEF resources so that the supported actions can be taken to scale. The intent is to identify those situations where UNICEF has or has not allocated resources to actions that have generated sufficient evidence to be scaled by national authorities based on data on both costs and effectiveness and with a “line of sight” from UNICEF support to national action at scale.</p>
<p>Q 1.3: To what extent have UNICEF efforts at the country level been coherently aligned with national priorities or to fit the needs of ISCA at risk of dropping out, particularly the most marginalized and those living in humanitarian contexts?</p>	<p>Sub-Question 1.3: To what extent have UNICEF efforts at the country level been coherently aligned with national priorities and efforts to meet the needs of ISCA at risk of dropping out, particularly the most marginalized and those living in humanitarian contexts?</p>	<p>No significant change.</p>
<p>Q1.4 In what ways have UNICEF efforts been coherently aligned with other UN agencies’ or development institutions’</p>	<p>Sub-Question 1.4: In what ways have UNICEF efforts been coherently aligned with other UN agencies’ or development institutions’ to successfully adapt in</p>	<p>No significant change</p>

Original Evaluation Questions as Per Terms of Reference	Revised Wording of Evaluation Questions and Sub-Questions	Explanation
to successfully adapt or scale-up interventions to reduce school dropout and to increase retention of ISCA, particularly the most marginalized?	support of scaling-up interventions proven to reduce school dropout and to increase retention of ISCA, particularly the most marginalized?	
Q 1.5: To what extent and in what ways have UNICEF cross-sectoral collaborations, both internal and with external partners, scaled-up or accelerated efforts to reduce school dropout of the most marginalized children and adolescents?	As in Sub-Question 1.1 under critical factors	Now covered in Sub-Question 1.1 under critical factors
Q2. Does UNICEF have the capacity to adjust, accelerate, and scale-up its efforts to increase access to MFPs to learning and skills development, meeting the specific needs of the different profiles of OoSCA?	Key Evaluation Question 2: Is UNICEF adequately equipped to adjust or to accelerate its efforts to support national programmes to expand access to or to scale up proven MFPs to learning and skills development, that meet the specific needs of the different profiles of OoSCA, and to reduce inequities in access?	No significant change in wording. The primary focus will be to evaluate UNICEF’s support to those MFPs that support reintegration into formal systems or are capable of being certified and recognized by national education systems. Where this is not the case, the scope would include MFPs which aim to provide foundational reading and numeracy skills in emergency settings as well as skills to bridge access to other existing forms of structured learning – for example by providing skills necessary to enter apprenticeships or TVET.
Q2.1 Does UNICEF have the necessary strategic and guidance tools (from HQ and ROs) to adjust, accelerate, and scale-up its efforts to increase access to MFPs to learning and skills development for OoSCA? What other strategic and guidance resources are needed?	Sub-Question 2.1 Do UNICEF country offices have the necessary strategic and guidance tools (from HQ and ROs) to adjust or accelerate efforts to support national programs to expand access to or to scale up implementation of proven MFPs to learning and skills development for OoSCA? What other strategic and guidance tools are needed?	No significant change

Original Evaluation Questions as Per Terms of Reference	Revised Wording of Evaluation Questions and Sub-Questions	Explanation
<p>Q2.2 Are UNICEF financial, human, and key partnership resources well positioned to adjust, accelerate, and scale-up the organization's efforts to increase access to MFPs to learning and skills development for OoSCA? Which are the areas for improvement?</p>	<p>Sub-Question 2.2: Are UNICEF financial, human, and key partnership resources well positioned to adjust or accelerate the organization's efforts to support national programmes to expand access to or to scale up implementation of proven MFPs to learning and skills development for OoSCA? Which areas require improvement?</p>	<p>No significant change</p>
<p>Q2.3 To what extent and in what ways are UNICEF efforts to improve the access to MFPs to learning and skills development, meeting the specific needs of the different profiles of OoSCA?</p> <p>Evaluation criteria: Relevance</p>	<p>Sub-Question 2.3: To what extent and in what ways are UNICEF efforts to efforts to support national programmes to expand access to or to scale up implementation of proven MFPs to learning and skills development meeting the specific needs of different profiles of OoSCA? What adjustments are needed to improve UNICEF efforts to expand the access in these areas for these OoSCA?</p>	<p>Combined 2.3 and 2.4 to include an assessment of what has been done to date and what areas can be improved. Also note that this will include UNICEF efforts to address non-financial policy related issues such as, for example, national policies on requirements for OoSCA returning to formal education.</p>
<p>Q2.4 What other adjustments are needed to improve UNICEF efforts to expand the access to MFPs to learning and skills development, meeting the specific needs of the different profiles of OoSCA?</p>	<p>Sub-Question 2.4: Incorporated into 2.3 above.</p>	
<p>Q3. To what extent and in what ways is UNICEF work supporting policy reforms, public budgeting, and financing strategies to expand the access to equitable and inclusive MFPs to learning?</p>	<p>Key Evaluation Question 3: To what extent and in what ways is UNICEF work supporting financial and budgetary policy reforms, public budgeting, and financing strategies to expand access to equitable and inclusive MFPs to learning?</p>	<p>As per the terms of reference, Evaluation Question 3 concentrates on policy changes and reforms related to budgeting and financial strategies for the expansion of access to Multiple and Flexible Pathways (MFPs). Policy changes that are not directly related to financial or budgetary matters will be addressed separately under sub-question 2.3.</p> <p>Sub-question 2.3 encompasses a broader examination of UNICEF's endeavors to promote access to MFPs, which includes an assessment of</p>

Original Evaluation Questions as Per Terms of Reference	Revised Wording of Evaluation Questions and Sub-Questions	Explanation
		policy changes that are not directly tied to budgeting and financing.
<p>Q3.1 To what extent and in what ways are UNICEF advocacy and communications as well as evidence-generation efforts supporting policy reforms, public budgeting, and financing strategies to expand the access to MFPs to learning and skills development for OoSCA? Evaluation criteria: Effectiveness</p>	<p>Sub-Question 3.1: To what extent and in what ways are UNICEF advocacy and communications as well as evidence-generation efforts supporting policy reforms, public budgeting, and financing strategies to expand the access to MFPs to learning and skills development for OoSCA, particularly the most marginalized?</p>	No significant change
<p>Q3.2 To what extent and in what ways do country programme planning documents reflect UNICEF efforts to support policy reforms, public budgeting, and financing strategies to expand access to MFP to learning and skills development, particularly for the most marginalized?</p>	<p>Sub-Question 3.2: To what extent and in what ways do country programme planning documents reflect UNICEF efforts to support policy reforms, public budgeting, and financing strategies to expand the access to MFP to learning and skills development being, particularly for the most marginalized?</p>	No Significant change

3.2. Emerging evaluation themes

In addition to the three higher-level KEQ and associated sub-questions, the evaluation needs to address key themes which have emerged during the inception phase and will continue to be developed during data collection and analysis. The themes are not intended or expected to widen the scope of the evaluation. Rather they serve to further focus data collection and analysis structured in response to the evaluation questions. Identifying and further refining themes helps to delimit the evaluation scope in a manner appropriate to the country context, rather than expanding its scope. Themes in table 2 are not presented in order of priority.

Table 2: Emerging Evaluation Themes for Exploration

A: Reducing dropout and increasing retention and effective programming for MFPs at the humanitarian/development nexus.

B: Ensuring effective cross-sectoral collaboration within UNICEF and with UN partners for support to national efforts to increase retention and reduce dropout and to increase access to MFPs that meet the needs of OoSCA

C: Ensuring quality, relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of MFPs¹.

The document reviews and, particularly, KIs carried out during the inception phase have highlighted several thematic issues or concerns. These themes are not definitive. They will be refined, explored and augmented during the remaining phases of the evaluation. In particular, the in-depth thematic focus of the evaluation will be further developed in consultation with the EO and the Evaluation Reference Group (ERG).

It is also important to note that the question of how UNICEF supports national efforts to address inequities in access to learning relating to poverty, gender and disability is an overarching concern of the evaluation. This is consistent with the analytical framework for the evaluation (Figure 1) with its emphasis on children's rights and equity and inclusion as key programming principles.

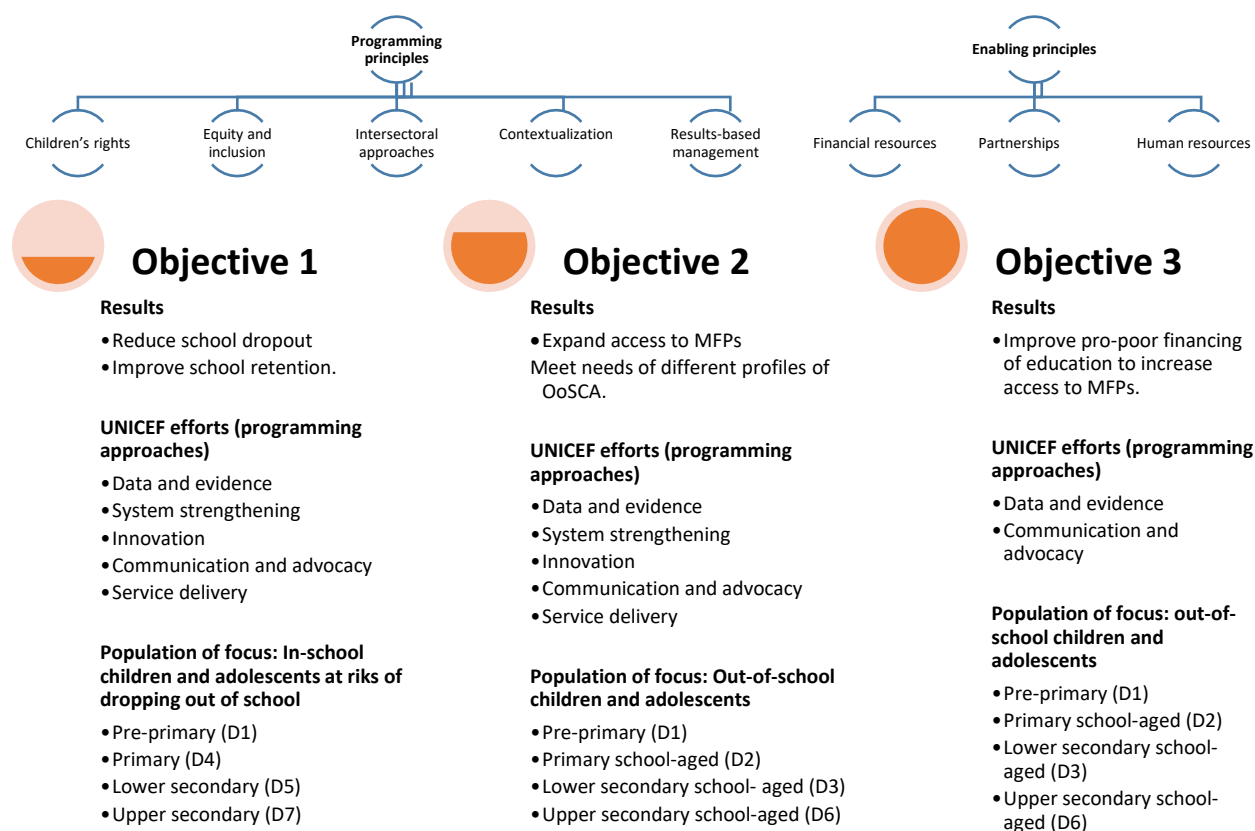
¹ Inception phase interviews have highlighted the need to ensure that MFPs lead to meaningful results for learners by maintaining/improving quality and a clear line of sight from MFPs to valued learning and earning opportunities.

4. Evaluation approach

4.1. Analytical framework

The evaluation will be grounded in the evaluation analytical framework developed by the UNICEF Evaluation Office in consultation with key UNICEF headquarters and regional stakeholders. As presented in the ToR, the analytical framework links UNICEF programmatic approaches in education to three main objectives relating to prevention of dropout, increased retention and meeting the needs of OoSCA. It also illustrates the programmatic and enabling principles that underlay work in these areas. The UNICEF programming approaches identified in the model are those highlighted in the Education Strategy 2019-2030.

Figure 1: Evaluation Analytical Framework



A key aspect of the analytical framework presented in figure 1 is its flexibility in application to the quite different national contexts faced by children and adolescents at risk of dropping out or already out of school. While covering the main UNICEF programming approaches applicable at country level, it does not specify the different programming instruments that national authorities may apply to the challenges faced by children and adolescents. This suggests that no single, detailed, Theory of Change (ToC)

can be applied across the different contexts of the UNICEF response. Accordingly, the evaluation will take a mixed methods approach.

4.2. Context and issues-driven application of evaluation methods

The education space and context faced by children and adolescents at risk of dropping out or already out of school vary dramatically from country to country. These differences depend on the level of national income, presence or absence of humanitarian situations, degree of national commitment, engagement by other UNICEF partnerships, and the form and level of UNICEF engagement. As a result, the evaluation will rely on a mix of methodological approaches: **contribution analysis and process tracing**, depending on the country context and data availability.

The choice of the lead methodological approach will also be contingent on the specific characteristics of the UNICEF program in the country of reference. However, while the analytical approach may vary by KEQ and sub-questions, all supporting data collection methods and instruments will be applied consistently across all focus countries.

Contribution analysis. The essential value of contribution analysis is that it offers an approach designed to reduce uncertainty about the contribution the intervention is making to the observed results through an increased understanding of why the observed results have occurred and the roles played by the intervention and other internal and external factors.

Contribution analysis is particularly useful in situations where the program is not experimental and where the program has been funded based on a relatively clear [ToC](#) and where there is little or no scope for varying how the program is implemented. The findings of a contribution analysis are not definitive proof, but rather provide evidence and a line of reasoning from which we can draw a plausible conclusion that, within some level of confidence, the program has made an important contribution to the documented results.

The key advantages and disadvantages of contribution analysis (Mayne, A brief on contribution analysis: Principles and concepts, 2020, p. 10) can be described as:

“Its advantages are that (1) it can be used to make **causal inferences when experimental and quasi-experimental designs are not possible**, (2) it explores just **why and how an intervention has influenced change**, (3) it allows for making causal inferences about the intervention without necessarily examining external causal factors, and (4) it **addresses cases where there are numerous causal factors** at work by assessing contributory causes leading to credible contribution claims.

On the downside, (1) it often does require a substantial amount of data, along with rigorous thinking, (2) it requires reasonably robust theories of change, and (3) it

cannot determine **how much of an outcome result** can be attributed to an intervention.”

The findings of a contribution analysis are not definitive proof, but rather provide evidence and a line of reasoning from which we can draw a plausible conclusion that, within some level of confidence, the program has made an important contribution to the documented results. The process of contribution analysis involves six main steps (UNEG, 2020, p.14). Table 3 sets out the different steps in CA and how they have been or will be applied to this evaluation.

Table 3: Applying Contribution Analysis Step-by-Step

Steps in Contribution Analysis	Status and Application to this Evaluation
1. Set out the Contribution Problem (questions to be addressed)	Complete: Evaluation questions identify expected UNICEF contribution
2. Develop Theory of Change (results chain with causal links and assumptions)	Elements of a global ToC in the Analytical Framework (figure 1), OoSCI Manual and UNICEF guidance documents. ToCs for Education programs are available in documents provided by most COs.
3. Gather Evidence (pre-existing and available)	Document and data base reviews as identified in the evaluation matrix below: MICS-EAGLE data, UIS data, UNICEF RAM/CSI data, CO level programme and planning reports, among others
4. Assemble and Assess (lay out and assess the credibility of the story of UNICEF contribution)	The analysis plan (Section 6.7) details the process for collating, assessing, and triangulating qualitative and quantitative evidence
5. Seek Out More Evidence (gather more primary and secondary data to augment evidence as needed)	In practice steps 4 and 5 can be done iteratively without a clear break. While evidence to be compiled is specified in advance, it will be augmented as other sources are identified during data collection. See the information presented in the evaluation matrix below.
6. Revise the Story (identify reasonable causal claims wherever supported by evidence)	UNICEF contribution to reported results can be assessed at country level based on data collection and analysis as per the evaluation matrix.

In applying step 6 to identify which claims of UNICEF contribution are credible and plausible the evaluation will apply three criteria (UNEG 2023, p.14)

1. The contribution finding is consistent with pathways in a reasoned country ToC.
2. Activities have been implemented in a manner consistent with the ToC.
3. The claimed contribution is supported by evidence on both achieved results and underlying assumptions.

Where the UNICEF country office (CO) has developed a robust ToC for interventions in the educational space, the evaluation will select from and adjust elements of the ToC that are pertinent to Objective 1 (increased retention and dropout reduction).

Document reviews completed to date strongly indicate that the essential elements of a ToC can be identified in most of the focus countries. In those countries without an explicit UNICEF ToC in the thematic area of focus of this evaluation, the team will develop and test hypotheses on the contribution made by UNICEF. The essential requirement is an ex- ante theory of how an intervention is intended to lead to different results which will allow for an ex-post assessment (Mayne, Useful Theory of Change Models, 2015, p. 128):

“The intervention itself is one among several causal factors in the causal package necessary to bring about change. In that sense, all are equal. Yet our interest is on the intervention as an instrument of change—activities deliberately done to get or continue change happening where adequate change was not happening before. We can ask ex post what role the intervention played in bringing about the changes.”

In the few countries where UNICEF is engaged in support of specific, programmatic actions addressing dropout reduction and increased equitable access to MFPs, but there is no readily available or adaptable ToC (and no clear evidence of how UNICEF support was expected to contribute to changes at different levels of causality), the evaluation will rely more fully on process tracing.

Process tracing is a methodology in qualitative analysis that incorporates three essential tasks: *Causal Process Observation*, careful *Process Description* and attention to *Sequence* (Collier, 2011). As such, process tracing is most often used within a case-study framework to identify and explore causal factors contributing to an observed (often quantitative) outcome, especially where an explicit, stable, program ToC is not available to researchers.

These methods will be applied at the country level in the sample of countries described in Section 4.3. It is possible at this point to identify the most likely lead method to be used in relation to each high-level evaluation question.

Table 4 provides an overview of the analytical approach to be applied to each of the KEQ, along with the data sources that will be used to support the lead approach. These are taken from the evaluation matrix presented in Section 5.

Table 4: Analytical Methods Applied to Key Evaluation Questions

Evaluation Questions	Lead Analytical Approach	Data Sources
<p>Evaluation Q1: Has UNICEF work contributed to reductions in school dropout and increased retention of ISCA at risk of dropping out, including by addressing inequities/disparities?</p>	<p>Contribution analysis With a direct focus on the UNICEF contribution this question is directly suited to application of CA. This will be done in countries where UNICEF support in education is based on an existing ToC and/or UNICEF interventions to address retention and support MFP are can be clearly delineated in a theoretical causal pathway for verification and testing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UIS data on retention • UNICEF RAM/CSI data on retention/dropout • AWP data on UNICEF expenditures and targets • CO level situation analysis documents • Country level national budget data • Results of KIIs with UNICEF, MoEs, IP, CSOs • Survey results (IP and UNICEF CO, Educ chief)
<p>Evaluation Q2: Is UNICEF adequately equipped to adjust or to accelerate its efforts to support national programmes to expand access to or to scale up proven MFPs to learning and skills development, that meet the specific needs of the different profiles of OoSCA, and to reduce inequities in access?</p>	<p>Contribution analysis This question focuses on UNICEF capacities and capabilities and requires an assessment of how UNICEF applies human, financial and analytical resources to support scale up of MFPs by national stakeholders. Process tracing will allow the evaluation to understand the relative strengths of UNICEF and the roles it plays in this space.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UIS and UNICEF RAM/CSI data on OoSCA over time • RAM/CSI data on return of OoSCA to formal system • AWP data on UNICEF expenditures and targets in MFP • CO level situation analysis documents • IP Reports on reach • UNICEF expenditure data • Country level national budget data on MFPs • Results of KIIs with UNICEF, MoEs, IP, CSO • Survey results (IP and UNICEF CO, Educ chief)
<p>Evaluation Q3: To what extent and in what ways is UNICEF work supporting financial and budgetary policy reforms, public budgeting, and financing strategies to expand access to equitable and inclusive MFPs to learning?</p>	<p>Process tracing This question focuses on how UNICEF is working to support policy reforms and public budgeting to expand access to MFPs. Process tracing will examine key steps by UNICEF and its partners along with the factors facilitating reforms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National policy document on budgeting for MFPs within social and education spending • Data on public budgets and expenditures on MFP (where available) • Global, regional and country level KII – including with other donors to MFPs

4.3. Selection process and criteria to identify participating countries

As required in Section 4.4, para 27 of the ToR, it is proposed to delimit the geographic scope of the evaluation by focusing data collection and analysis efforts on a selected

group of countries. The envisioned selection provides a balanced representation by region, encompasses various income groups² and comprises a range of humanitarian scenarios, such as sudden-onset crises, protracted crises, refugee crises, as well as conflict-affected countries.

To select the COs participating in the evaluation, a step-by-step process of progressive elimination of countries is followed. The process began with a review of key UNICEF and external data bases to establish the overall pattern of need expressed in terms of lower completion rates and high numbers of OoSCA. The specific data bases reviewed and analyzed include:

- Data on completion rates and numbers of OoSCA by country as reported by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics.³
- Data mined from UNICEF Country Programme Documents (CPDs) and country office Annual Reports (COARs) to provide an overview of the level of engagement in support to increased retention and MFPs at country level.

The approach used to select an illustrative sample of countries which matches the extent of needs with a diversity of UNICEF support across varying regions and contexts proceeded as follows.

- 1) First, the selection excludes countries where the primary completion rates⁴ were above 95% in 2020⁵. The rationale is that countries with high completion rates do not require extensive technical assistance in dropout prevention (they are managing very high completion rates already). This step eliminates 36 countries: Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Bulgaria, Belarus, Bolivia, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Cuba, Algeria, Ecuador, Georgia, Greece, Guyana, Suriname, Croatia, Indonesia, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Mexico, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Mongolia, Peru, Romania, Serbia, Thailand, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Tunisia, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, and South Africa.
- 2) Second, countries affected by acute crises that currently would be unable to participate in the evaluation are excluded. This eliminates the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Ukraine, and Afghanistan.
- 3) Third, to finalize the proposed list, COs were randomly selected by UNICEF region, keeping 3 countries for each UNICEF region covering less than 20 countries, and 4

² The categorization by income groups follows the 2022 update of the World Bank.

³ The evaluation recognizes the limitation in UIS data including time lags and comparability across countries. Evaluation questions will be assessed using multiple data sources on results as per the evaluation matrix.

⁴ Using lower secondary completion rates from the UIS databases produces almost identical results. For countries with available completion rates in 2020, the correlation between the primary completion rate and the lower secondary completion rate is as high as 0.918.

⁵ Completion rates are sourced from the UNESCO [VIEW database](#), retrieved in October 2023.

countries for each UNICEF region covering more than 20 countries. The purposive element to the selection process requires the application of criteria to ensure illustrative representation that allows the evaluation to address the KEQs. These are:

- At least one humanitarian setting per region: “humanitarian settings” are defined as countries with protracted crises that reached a maximum value of the [INFORM Severity Index](#) larger than 3.5.
- Two country countries categorized as low-income or lower-middle-income per region (one in Europe and Central Asia (ECA) since there are no LMICs in the region).
- At least one CO covering multiple small island states.

Finally, we validated that in the chosen countries UNICEF maintains programmatic engagement in dropout prevention and/or a critical mass of programming in MFPs, via a text analysis of the country office Annual Reports (COARs) provided by the Evaluation Office. The application of this process resulted in the following sample of focus countries presented in table 5:

Table 5: Focus Country Sample

RO	Focus Countries (ISO3)				Key
ESA	UGA	ZWE	TZA	BWA	LICs / LMICs
WAC	BFA	NGA	TGO	GHA	Humanitarian
LAC	COL	East. Caribbean	GTM	BRA	MICs / UMICs
MENA	IRQ	EGY	JOR		
SA	PAK	BGD	NPL		
EAP	MMR	PNG or CAM	PHI		
ECA	TUR	TJK ⁶	BIH		

It is important to note that each of these countries face important challenges in retention and dropout, as evidenced by their estimated completion rates for primary and secondary school. They also encounter difficulties in addressing the needs of OoSCA and in advancing the use of MFPs. As such, all can be expected to provide insights into the thematic areas identified in Section 3.2.

The rationale for covering a relatively large number of LICs and LMICs is to encompass diverse scenarios that exemplify internal disparities and inequalities. This approach offers two key advantages. Firstly, it provides an elegant solution for dealing with missing data,

⁶ Tajikistan is proposed despite having high completion rates in order to maintain representation of MICs in the Europe and Central Asia region.

a problem that disproportionately affects Least Developed Countries. Secondly, the randomization involved in the final step of the selection process makes it less subject to arbitrary decisions.

As far as the **formative component of the evaluation** is concerned, evaluation evidence gathered in the review of sample countries will contribute to identification of good practices and provide useful evidence for the policy brief and good practice note. In addition to the evidence gathered in the focus countries, the evaluation will maintain the flexibility to investigate countries noted by the regional offices, using a positive deviance approach.

Positive deviance is a methodology used to understand what makes certain COs perform better than others even though they operate under similar contexts and with similar resources, by analyzing programming practices. Following this approach, each regional office has identified specific instances where outstanding results were achieved, along with an initial explanation for the positive outcomes.

In addition, regional offices have provided input on instances where challenges or setbacks occurred, providing insights into the reasons behind these outcomes. This engagement will continue during data collection and analysis. It has been planned that country level evaluation missions will be complemented by in-person or remote interviews with staff of corresponding UNICEF regional offices.

Finally, the evaluation design allows for the real possibility that UNICEF COs in some of the selected countries may not be able to provide the needed data or there may be limited activity in increasing retention or meeting the needs of OoSCA through MFPs. This may result in some drop in the total number of countries submitted to a full analysis. This is acceptable given the wide-ranging nature of the sample and the care taken in choosing countries. There is a high level of confidence that the data collection process will result in more than 20 data points per variable in our analysis.

4.4. Selecting a sub-set of countries for deeper enquiry

The focus countries proposed in Section 4.3 will be addressed through a combination of document reviews, data analysis and KIIs (for details see Section 6). This process will allow the evaluation to identify patterns across a wide variety of national and regional contexts and UNICEF programmatic responses.

In addition, the evaluation proposes to undertake a “deep dive” in four to five countries to examine, in a formative, and forward-looking manner, those themes which are already emerging from document reviews and KIIs carried out during the inception phase.

The inception phase has identified a list of countries which have the required critical mass of UNICEF programmatic support to dropout prevention and support to MFPs. In addition,

the emerging themes (and any foreseeable refinement or replacements) could be explored through examining UNICEF programming in each of these countries. The following table provides an overview of countries chosen from the proposed sample.

Table 6 presents a list of five countries proposed for missions to both validate evaluation findings from the document review, remote interviews and surveys and to explore key themes. Alternate countries are proposed in the even that logistical or other considerations rule out the first choice. Engaging in this deeper dive approach will strengthen the findings from the other 19 focus countries and provide important formative lessons to enrich the planned Policy Brief and Good Practice Note.

Table 6: Mission Countries and Alternates

Country	Theme A: Addressing the Humanitarian Development Nexus	Theme B: Effective Cross Sectoral Collaboration	Theme C: Ensuring Quality and Relevance of MFPs	Alternate Country
Colombia	Yes	Yes		Guatemala
Egypt		Yes	Yes	Jordan
Guatemala		Yes	Yes	Colombia
Philippines		Yes	Yes	Cambodia
Uganda	Yes	Yes	Yes	Tanzania

It is important to note that the themes to be explored in each of the country missions will be refined and focused over time. For example, the document review for Uganda shows evidence that the country provides a clear illustration of the challenge for national stakeholders and for UNICEF in ensuring that MFPs provided to refugee children and adolescents who are out of school also benefits host communities. Similarly, the Philippines can provide an example of UNICEF support to large scale roll out of MFPs on a national basis.

The five suggested countries are proposed as the subjects for more detailed review and analysis, including country visits of one working week to allow for a wider set of KIs and a limited number of site visits. There is no intention that the site visits will involve direct interaction with children as the focus will be on gaining knowledge from service providers and managers.

4.5. Levels of enquiry and envisioned instruments

Data availability, responsiveness of the UNICEF CO, and availability of key informants will define different levels of enquiry, in different countries, according to the following tables. Refer to Annex 6 for the draft instruments to be used at country level. The design calls for three different levels of enquiry at country level with countries classified as: a) Group of

focus countries (the sample), b) mission or deep dive countries which may be among those selected for an in-person evaluation mission, and c) volunteer countries, which are UNICEF program countries outside the group of in the sample. In those countries, UNICEF CO Education teams will be invited to voluntarily complete a brief on-line survey (Section 6.4, and Annex 6).

Table 7: Categorization of participating countries

Category	Description
Focus Countries	Countries considered 'reasonably representative' for each region. These countries are expected to provide evidence to answer the KEQs to different extents. Some countries within this group may have limited information available on specific KEQs, such as those on MFPs.
Mission countries	Countries where evaluators conduct in-person interviews and site visits. These countries will serve as 'positive deviant' examples, and missions will be primarily focused on achieving the formative goal of the evaluation, which is to document and showcase good practices.
Volunteer countries	Countries outside the group of 24 in which the education section decides to participate in the evaluation voluntarily, via an online survey. The objective is to encourage broad participation, ensuring every country can contribute if they wish. The online survey will complement and enrich the data collected from the in-depth studies of specific countries. This survey data will be highly structured, enabling quick and easy analysis. Some KEQs will be excluded from the online survey, also to keep its administration manageable in about 15-20 mins (see Annex 6 for more details).

Table 8: Key Informant Interviews and Related Instruments

Country Category	UNICEF CO, chief of Education section	UNICEF CO specialists outside of education (Health, WASH, Child protection and Social Policy heads of sections)	UNICEF CO Dep. Rep. and Chief of M&E	MoE technical counterpart	Implementing partners ^[1]
Group of 24	Remote, questionnaire 1 (two KIIs)	Via call, semi-structured KIIs (if necessary) ^[2]	Via call, semi-structured KIIs (if necessary) ^[3]	Via call (strongly preferred) or online, questionnaire 2	Online, questionnaire 3
Mission countries	In person, semi-structured KIIs (as many as needed)	In person, one semi-structured KII. May also include KII with selected relevant UN partners	In person, one semi-structured KII	In person, semi-structured KIIs (as many as needed)	In person, semi-structured KIIs (one or two KIIs)
Volunteer countries	Online, questionnaire 1	Not envisioned	Not envisioned	Not envisioned	Not envisioned

^[1] Preference will be given to local IPs over international NGOs, if possible.

^[2] For example, in case there is a significant instance of multi-sectorial programming in the country of reference.

^[3] For example, in case triangulation of information is necessary, or in case further technical input from the Chief of M&E becomes necessary.

Table 9: Summary of Country Selection Process and Analysis Planning

Region	Focus Country	Mission Country	Themes Covered	Alternate Mission	Analysis Level
ESA	UGA	Primary	A, B and C	TZA	Thematic
	ZWE				Focus
	TZA	Alternate			Focus
	BWA				Focus
WAC	BFA				Focus
	NGA				Focus
	TGO				Focus
	GHA				Focus
LAC	COL	Primary	A, B and C	GTM	Thematic
	East. Caribbean				Focus
	GTM	Primary	B and C	COL	Thematic
	BRA				Focus
MENA	IRQ				Focus
	EGY	Primary	B and C	JOR	Thematic
	JOR	Alternate			Focus
SA	PAK				Focus
	BGD				Focus
	NPL				Focus
EAP	MMR				Focus
	PNG or CAM	Alternate			Focus
	PHL	Primary	B and C	CAM	Thematic
ECA	TUR				Focus
	TJK				Focus
	BIH				Focus
Other UNICEF COs					Volunteer

Key LIC/MC Humanitarian MIC/UMIC

Mission Countries Evaluation conducts in-person interviews and site visits. Countries serve as positive examples with missions focused on summative evaluation goals and to showcase good policies and practices

Focus Countries Document and data review and remote interviews and IP survey focus on answering all EQs while recognizing data levels vary across the sample

Volunteer Countries Education Advisers in all UNICEF COs to receive a link to brief online survey to allow for participation across all COs but especially by those not in the focus country sample

5. Evaluation Matrix

The evaluation objectives and associated KEQ and sub-questions have been developed during the preparation and inception phases in consideration of the current OECD/DAC evaluation criteria (OECD/DAC, 2020). Coverage of relevant criteria is indicated in parenthesis and italics for each evaluation KEQ.

Table 10: Evaluation Matrix, Evaluation of UNICEF Support to Children and Adolescents at Risk of Dropout and Out of School

Objective: 1 Reduce School Dropout and Increase Retention			
Key Evaluation Question 1: Has UNICEF work contributed to reductions in school dropout and increased retention of ISCA at risk of dropping out, including by addressing inequities/disparities? (Effectiveness)			
Sub-Question	Assessment Criteria	Data Sources	Instruments
<p>Sub-Question 1.1: In what ways and to what extent has UNICEF work contributed to the reduction of school dropout among ISCA at risk, (particularly the most marginalized children and adolescents, including girls, children with disabilities, linguistic minorities, and other types of social exclusion)? What are the critical factors that enabled a positive UNICEF contribution (including cross-sectoral collaboration)? <i>(Effectiveness)</i></p>	<p>Qualitative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence and types of UNICEF program design elements directly addressing retention/dropout • Extent and frequency barriers to retention identified in project/program doc. • Presence in program/project designs of elements directly focused on marginalized groups • Key Informants’ assessments of the extent of UNICEF contribution to improved retention <p>Quantitative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of results achieved, as reported in RAM and progress reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global, regional, country level KII (Listed in Section 6) • UIS data on retention and dropout • Relevant results at country level (RAM/ CSI) • MICS EAGLE data • Profile of UNICEF expenditures by program component at country level • Global indicators to monitor UNICEF’s strategic plan • Documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ COAR ○ CPD ○ AWP ○ Others (Listed in Section 6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured Interview Guide (Annex 6) • Online Survey Questionnaire • Document Review Guide • Semi-Structured Interview Guide for deep dive country interviews • Site Visits Observation Guide (No direct data collection from children)

<p>Sub-Question 1.2: Have UNICEF resources been strategically allocated to allow for the adaptation of programmatic approaches to support scaling up initiatives proven to improve school retention of ISCA at risk of dropping out? <i>(Relevance, Effectiveness)</i></p>	<p>Qualitative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence and types of UNICEF program strategic design elements (see Annex 6) • Presence of an enabling environment for designing interventions at scale • Presence in program/project designs of elements directly focused on marginalized groups • Strategic positioning of UNICEF within the education ecosystem <p>Quantitative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trends in UNICEF program budgets and expenditures for education over time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global, regional, country level KII (Listed in Section 6) • Relevant results at country level interventions with proven potential for scale up or replication (RAM/CSI) • Budgets and cost-effectiveness analyses • Profile of UNICEF expenditures by program component at country level • Documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ COAR ○ CPD ○ AWP <p>Others (Listed in Section 6.1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured Interview Guide (Annex 6) • Online Survey Questionnaire • Document Review Guide • Semi-Structured Interview Guide for deep dive country interviews • Site Visits Observation Guide
<p>Sub-Question 1.3: To what extent have UNICEF efforts at the country level been coherently aligned with national priorities and to fit the needs of ISCA at risk of dropping out, particularly the most marginalized and those living in humanitarian contexts? <i>(Coherence, Relevance)</i></p>	<p>Qualitative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence and types of UNICEF program strategic design elements (see Annex 4) • Presence of an enabling environment for designing interventions at scale • Presence in program/project designs of elements directly focused on marginalized groups • Strategic positioning of UNICEF within national systems, both at central and at decentralised level. • Strategic positioning of UNICEF within the education ecosystem, including in humanitarian settings • Key Informant ratings of alignment between UNICEF programming and national strategies and plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global, regional, country level KII (Listed in Section 6) • National education plans and strategies, and related progress reports • Humanitarian response plans or emergency response plans • Local plans and strategies (subnational level) • Relevant results on system strengthening at country level (RAM/CSI) • Profile of UNICEF expenditures by program component at country level • Documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ COAR ○ CPD ○ AWP ○ Others (Listed in Section 6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured Interview Guide (Annex 6) • Online Survey Questionnaire • Document Review Guide • Semi-Structured Interview Guide for deep dive country interviews • Site visits observations guide
<p>Sub-Question 1.4: In what ways have UNICEF efforts been coherently aligned with other UN agencies or</p>	<p>Qualitative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence and types of UNICEF program strategic design elements (see Annex 4) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global, regional, country level KII (Listed in Section 6) • National education plans and strategies, and related progress reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured Interview Guide (Annex 6)

<p>development institutions to successfully adapt in support of scaling-up interventions proven to reduce school dropout and to increase retention of ISCA, particularly the most marginalized? <i>(Coherence, Relevance)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of an enabling environment for coordination and joint planning • Presence of an enabling environment at the cluster level for coordination and joint planning (if a cluster is activated) • Attitudes of UNICEF and partners towards coordination, joint planning and design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humanitarian response plans or emergency response plans • Local plans and strategies (subnational level) • Relevant results on partnerships and coordination at country level (RAM/CSI) • Documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ COAR ○ CPD/UNDAF – UNSDCF ○ AWP <p>Others (Listed in Section 6)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Survey Questionnaire • Document Review Guide • Semi-structured interview Guide for deep dive country interviews
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Objective 2: Expand Access to MFPs and Meet the Needs of Different Profiles of OoSCA

Key Evaluation Question 2: Is UNICEF adequately equipped to adjust or to accelerate its efforts to support national programmes to expand access to or to scale up proven MFPs to learning and skills development, that meet the specific needs of the different profiles of OoSCA, and to reduce inequities in access?
(Effectiveness, Efficiency)

Sub-Question	Assessment Criteria	Data Source	Instruments
<p>Sub-Question 2.1: Do UNICEF country offices have the necessary strategic and guidance tools (from HQ and ROs) to adjust or accelerate efforts to support national programmes to expand access to or to scale up implementation of proven MFPs to learning and skills development for OoSCA? What other strategic and guidance tools are needed? <i>(Relevance, Efficiency)</i></p>	<p>Qualitative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence and type of MFPs that aim to return OoSCA to formal education systems and/or obtaining a certification of completion, with the direct support of UNICEF. • CO quality of technical capacity to adjust, accelerate, and scale up its efforts to increase access to MFPs. • Key Informant views on quality and relevance of HQ and RO support to dissemination and use of strategic and guidance tools. Use of such tools as they are recorded in key documents. • Barriers to implementation and expanding of MFPs, and key solutions proffered by ROS and HQ to address such barriers. • Direct Focus of MFP programs on marginalized groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global, regional, country level KII (Listed in Section 6). • RAM data on returning OoSCA into formal education systems, skills development for OoSCA, establishing and maintaining partnerships, and providing government partners with strategic support • Profile of UNICEF expenditures by program component at country level. • Documents recording partnerships in this regard with governments, inter-institutional organizations, international groups and others. • Relevant UNICEF documents on the CO level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ COARs ○ CPDs ○ AWP ○ Program documents ○ Others (listed in Section 6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured Interview Guide (Annex 6) • Online Survey Questionnaire • Document Review Guide • Semi-Structured Interview Guide for deep dive country interviews • Site Visits Observation Guide

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Informant and written assessments of UNICEF capacity to expand, adjust, accelerate, and scale up to improve access by programmatic approaches. <p>Quantitative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of children and adolescents enrolled in MFP programs. • Completion rate of MFP programs. • Number of children and adolescents who returned to the formal education system after participating in MFPs. • Amount of financial investment into developing and running MFP programs. 		
<p>Sub-Question 2.2: Are UNICEF financial, human, and key partnership resources well positioned to adjust or accelerate the organization’s efforts to support national programmes to expand access to or to scale up implementation of proven MFPs to learning and skills development for OoSCA? Which areas require improvement? <i>(Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability)</i></p>	<p>Qualitative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trend over time at CO level of UNICEF financial and personnel resources allocated to direct support of MFP programming • Availability of key guidance and tools for CO use in supporting national efforts to secure financing and human resources for MFPs. • Alignment between UNICEF conceptual frameworks, guidance and modalities of MFPs and national priorities and goals. • Access to networks of partners (local-public and private sectors), inter-institutional organizations, international groups required to adjust, accelerate, and scale up its efforts to increase access to MFPs. Alliances with key stakeholders to advocate for the inclusion of marginalized groups. • Written and KI assessments of UNICEF positioning of financial, human, and key partnership resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global, regional, country level KII (Listed in Section 6). • RAM data on returning OoSCA into formal education systems, skills development for OoSCA, establishing and maintaining partnerships, and providing government partners with strategic support. • MICS EAGLE data. • Profile of UNICEF expenditures by program component at country level – where available. • Documents recording partnerships in this regard with governments, inter-institutional organizations, international groups, and others. • Relevant UNICEF documents on the CO level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ COARs ○ CPDs ○ AWPAs ○ Program documents ○ Others (listed in Section 6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured Interview Guide (Annex 6) • Online Survey Questionnaire • Document Review Guide • Semi-Structured Interview Guide for deep dive country interviews • Site Visits Observation Guide

	<p>Quantitative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reported and estimated number of children and adolescents enrolled in MFP programs. • Completion rate of MFP programs. • Number of children and adolescents who returned to the formal education system after participating in MFPs (if available). • Amount of UNICEF supported financial investment in developing and running MFP programs. 		
<p>Sub-Question 2.3: To what extent and in what ways are UNICEF efforts to support national programmes to expand access to or to scale up implementation of proven MFPs to learning and skills development meeting the specific needs of different profiles of OoSCA? What adjustments are needed to improve UNICEF efforts to expand the access in these areas for these OoSCA? <i>(Relevance, Impact)</i></p>	<p>Qualitative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of thorough assessments of needs of different profiles of OoSCA in various contexts. • Extent to which UNICEF efforts meet the specific needs of different profiles of OoSCA. • Ways in which UNICEF efforts meet the specific needs of different profiles of OoSCA. • Barriers to meeting the needs, and solutions to eliminate the barriers. • Assessments of the extent to and ways in which UNICEF efforts meet the specific needs of different profiles of OoSCA. • Informed suggestions on adjustments needed to improve the efforts. <p>Quantitative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimated number of children and adolescents enrolled in MFP programs. • Completion rate of MFP programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global, regional, country level KII (Listed in Section 6). • RAM data on returning OoSCA into formal education systems and on skills development for OoSCA. • MICS-Eagle analyses • Needs assessments / situation analyses / scoping reviews conducted by UNICEF and partners. • Profile of UNICEF expenditures by program component at country level • Relevant UNICEF documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ COARs ○ CPDs ○ AWPAs ○ Program documents ○ Others (Listed in Section 6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured Interview Guide (Annex 6) • Online Survey Questionnaire (Annex 6) • Document Review Guide (Annex 4)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of children and adolescents who returned to the formal education system after participating in MFPs. • Amount of financial investment into developing and running MFP programs. 		
Objective 3: Improve pro-poor financing of education to increase access to MFPs			
Key Evaluation Question 3: To what extent and in what ways is UNICEF work supporting financial and budgetary policy reforms, public budgeting, and financing strategies to expand the access to equitable and inclusive MFPs to learning? (Effectiveness, Sustainability)			
Sub-Question	Assessment Criteria	Data Sources	Instruments
<p>Sub-Question 3.1: To what extent and in what ways are UNICEF advocacy and communications as well as evidence-generation efforts supporting policy reforms, public budgeting, and financing strategies to expand the access to MFPs to learning and skills development for OoSCA, particularly the most marginalized? <i>(Effectiveness, Sustainability)</i></p>	<p>Qualitative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency and extent UNICEF advocacy documents directly addressing budget requirements for MFP at both primary and secondary education levels (since advocacy work is not always document this will be supplemented by KII responses) • Extent of UNICEF engagement in key partnerships to identify resources and to expand resource base for MFP for primary and secondary education. • Extent advocacy tools include data and analysis supporting pro-poor, equitable and inclusive-guided financing • Key stakeholder ratings of the importance of UNICEF technical support and advocacy in securing transparent public investment in MFP and secondary education. <p>Quantitative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Claimed/realized increases in national investment in MFP and secondary education over time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global, regional, country level KII (Listed in Section 6.3) • Data on public budgets and education expenditure on MFPs (where available). • Relevant UNICEF Documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ COARS ○ CPDs ○ AWP ○ Program documents • Others as identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document Review Template • HQ and regional office Interview Template • Country level interview templates

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country level allocations to specific MFP budget lines • Increased investment in MFPs financed by external agencies other than UNICEF 		
<p>Sub-Question 3.2: To what extent and in what ways do country programme planning documents reflect UNICEF efforts to support policy reforms, public budgeting, and financing strategies to expand access to MFP to learning and skills development being, particularly the most marginalized? <i>(Relevance, Sustainability)</i></p>	<p>Qualitative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency and extent project and programme design documents include budget and financing requirements. • Frequency and extent UNICEF program design documents provide necessary evidence to support reforms in public investments for MFP- including unit cost data where possible. • Frequency and extent UNICEF advocacy tools and design documents advance evidence-based arguments for the efficiency of public investment in MFPs and pro-poor budgeting which addresses inequalities in education access <p>Quantitative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Claimed/realized increases in national investment in MFP and secondary education over time • Country level allocations to specific MFP budget lines • Increased investment in MFPs financed by external agencies other than UNICEF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global, regional, country level KII (Listed in Section 6.3) • Relevant UNICEF Documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ COARS ○ CPDs ○ AWPAs ○ Education project/program documents ○ Others as identified • National education budgets and expenditure reports • External agency program documents on investments in MFP • Annual country program reports by IPs and external agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document Review Template • HQ and regional office Interview Template • Country level interview templates

6. Data Collection

In some evaluations there is a distinct dividing line between the inception and data collection phases of the study. However, for this evaluation to achieve its objectives within the time-period and resource envelope available, it has been necessary to begin data collection during the inception phase. As a result, some of the data collection methods described here have already begun. However, they will be refined and fine-tuned based on pilot testing of instruments during the inception phase as well as feedback from the Evaluation Reference Group.

6.1. Document Review

The evaluation will rely on an extensive and structured review of documents at a global regional and country level:

Global/Regional: Throughout the inception phase the evaluation team has reviewed a wide range of UNICEF and external documents (Annex 2). This process will continue during the data collection phase. Reviewed documents will include:

- UNICEF Headquarters and RO led formative and summative evaluations of retention efforts and OOSC programming.
- UNICEF global and regional strategies in education
- UNICEF and partner operational manuals and guidelines for MFP and OOSC.
- UNICEF corporate and RO annual results reports for Goal Area 2 (narrative).
- UNICEF Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey Education Analysis for Global Learning and Equity (MIC-EAGLE) Regional Reports.

Country: The evaluation team has begun the process of country level document reviews while pilot testing the document review template (Annex 4) and format across five countries (Colombia, Guatemala, Iraq, the Philippines and Uganda). Not all the required documents have yet been made available, but the process of review is underway. The documents to be reviewed for each of the 24 countries in the sample include (depending on availability):

- COAR for each year 2019 to 2022.
- CPDs in effect during the same period.
- Annual work plans (AWPs) (2019 to 2023).
- UNICEF MICS-EAGLE Country Reports and Country Fact Sheets (where available).
- Evaluation report(s) of Country Programme(s) which cover(s) any of the period 2019-2023 (if any).
- Education sector plan(s) that cover(s) the period 2019-2023.
- Educational programme documents for programmes implemented any of the period 2019-2023.

- Situation Analysis/es and/or scoping review(s) for key educational programmes implemented any of the period 2019-2023 (if any).
- Evaluation report(s) of educational programme(s) that was/were implemented any of the period 2019-2023 (if any).
- Management responses to the evaluations above (if any).
- Others as identified during data collection.

A systematic review of these documents across the sample of focus countries will allow the evaluation to identify the extent and types of UNICEF support to retention and dropout reduction as well as its use of different programmatic approaches (systems strengthening; data and evidence; innovation; communications and advocacy; community engagement and service delivery) across regions, humanitarian/development nexus and different levels of national wealth and development. The document review will also provide the evaluation with a profile of the extent and type of UNICEF support to OoSCA through MFPs – including the needs of children and youth in all 7ED groups (see figure 1).

The structured document review will also enable the evaluation to identify and document UNICEF’s claimed contributions to results and, to the extent possible, test those claims against secondary evidence such as evaluation reports and management responses. These will further inform the KIIs at country level.

6.2. Quantitative data base reviews

During the inception phase the evaluation has undertaken a data mining exercise to review UIS data on completion rates and dropout. These analyses were used to provide context to the content analyses of the COARs and CPDs, these being the base to develop the criteria to select the sample of countries for further review (Section 4.3). During the data collection phase this review will be augmented further by:

- Quantitative analysis of COARs and CPD citations across the 24 sample countries.
- Quantitative profiling of selected standard UNICEF Results Assessment Module indicators and CSIs relevant to retention and prevention of dropout and to MFPs in comparison to targets available across the period 2019 to 2022.

The evaluation team has reviewed available indicators for selected countries and held discussions with the UNICEF HQ staff engaged in quality checks and analysis of data. It is clear from that review that use of these indicators will require triangulation through document reviews and KIIs to allow for careful calibration of results. It will be necessary to challenge/validate claims made regarding attribution of some results (for example data on reductions in the number of out of school children) linked to UNICEF support by:

- Profiling of MICS-EAGLE data in countries where available.

- Profiling of UNICEF budgets and expenditures in support of MFPS at country level (24 countries).

The evaluation will also profile UNICEF expenditures at global, regional and country level in direct support of programming for OoSCA in particular. At country level, planned expenditures can be collected from AWP or their equivalent (in the focus countries) while actual expenditures will be tracked through UNICEF financial and management reporting systems to the extent those systems provide data at the appropriate level of disaggregation.

6.3. Structured key informant interviews

In each of the 24 selected countries the evaluation team will carry out a limited number of remote interviews/meetings using the instruments described in Annex 6. The interviews will serve to validate and/or challenge and help to calibrate the evaluation evidence gathered through the document and data reviews. Because interview results will be entered in real time in an electronic format, the team will be readily able to collate and analyze results for across the focus countries by respondent group and KEQ and sub-question. Interviews will be to a maximum of 55 minutes to an hour. In each of the 24 countries the following interviews will be conducted:

- A group interview with the UNICEF CO staff engaged in supporting programming for retention, reduction of dropout and reaching OoSCA through MFPS. This will normally include: the CO chief of education, M&E focal point for the UNICEF education section, UNICEF education manager / specialist in charge of the access / dropout prevention / MPF output. Only UNICEF staff will be on the call. This interview may need to be carried out in two parts depending on the duration of the first meeting and the availability of staff.
- A group interview with key partners in the Ministry of Education (MoE) or equivalent. The makeup of this group will vary by country depending on UNICEF programming and the availability of MoE staff. It may include some or all of the following: MoE focal point(s) who has/have been interfacing with UNICEF during 2019-2022, any MoE specialist in charge of dropout prevention / MFP expansion, potentially any M&E / data experts / information management officers from MoE and planning specialist(s) from the MoE.

6.4. Online surveys

The evaluation proposes two distinctly different online surveys. For the first survey, relying on the advice of the CO chiefs of Education from the 24-country sample, three implementing partners will be identified and invited to respond to a brief on-line survey addressing as sub-set of the evaluation questions as identified in Annex 6.

The second online survey will provide an opportunity for UNICEF COs in countries outside the 24-country sample to contribute to the evaluation evidence base. For that reason, the evaluation team proposes to invite UNICEF CO chiefs of Education from programme countries not included in the focus sample, to complete a fully voluntary on-line survey. This survey will give COs outside the sample a “voice” in the evaluation process, allowing for them to provide inputs which can confirm or challenge findings from the countries in the sample.

The survey questionnaire will be kept very brief and will require little time investment on the part of busy COs. Further, it will be made clear in communications with the CO staff that participation is entirely voluntary and intended to give them a window into the evaluation. Participation is in no sense obligatory, and the evaluation team will not engage in rounds of follow up to remind invitees to participate.

The CO online survey form will be based on selected questions from the KII guides (see annex 6), reducing the additional costs of developing and proofing a separate questionnaire. The online survey is also intended to be short in length, reducing CO respondents’ time cost. Any results will be treated as supplementary to other data collection efforts. Although, there is no target participation rate, this information is crucial to broad the evaluation evidence base and beneficial to the overall results.

6.5. Missions to selected countries

The evaluation selected five countries from the sample to conduct brief (one working week) missions to undertake in-person interviews and, where appropriate, visits to selected sites providing MFPs to OoSCA. The purpose of these missions will be to provide a more informed examination of key drivers of positive change with a view to informing the policy brief and good practice notes specified in the evaluation ToR.

The selection of mission countries will be adjusted as required by logistical considerations, available resources, and the situation in the UNICEF CO. The set of countries for in-person missions is provisional. For risk management purposes the evaluation allows for substitutions to be made from the countries noted in table 5 to respond to unforeseen circumstances. The current mission country selection includes:

- Colombia
- Egypt
- Guatemala
- The Philippines
- Uganda

In addition, the evaluation plan incorporates in-person or remote interviews with staff in the relevant UNICEF RO for each mission country. The country missions will build on the document and data review carried out as per the country sample but will include a wider set of semi-structured interviews encompassing to the extent possible, the following country-relevant stakeholders:

- The UNICEF CO education team.
- UNICEF sector-focused staff of the CO outside the education unit including, for example child protection, early childhood development, health.
- Key national partner agencies including but not limited to the MoE.
- Bilateral development agencies supporting education with a focus on retention and MFPs.
- International foundations and agencies supporting education in collaboration with UNICEF (Eg. Educate a Child, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation).
- Multilateral agencies funding investments in education (e.g. World Bank, European Union).
- Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) representing marginalized children, adolescents and youth and focused on education (whether or not supported by UNICEF).
- National non-governmental implementing partners.

Visits to selected sites (such as centres for accelerated education programs) will allow the evaluation to observe and assess innovative and scale-able approaches to providing MFPs for continued learning. However, these site visits will not involve collecting evaluative information from children.

6.6. Triangulation of evidence

The data collection, analysis and reporting plan for the evaluation is constructed to facilitate triangulation both within and across data sources. For example, the document review template (Annex 4) is structured to allow easy compilation of evidence across KEQ and Sub-Question by each different type and source of document.

Similarly, the KII tools (Annex 6) will be electronically completed in real time with content that can be sorted across questions and sub-questions by categories of respondent. A close examination of the interview guides illustrates how evidence and patterns emerging through the document and data base reviews will be triangulated across distinct categories of interviewees and survey respondents.

Effective triangulation requires comparing evaluation evidence both within and across data sources. For example, there may be diverse opinions on the UNICEF contribution to national action on MFPs when comparing the results of KIIs of UNICEF staff with responses from the staff of partner Ministries of Education or implementing partners. In

addition, the evaluation must consider differences between, for example, results reported in COARS and in the RAM and the findings of evaluation reports at regional and country level. While there is no expectation that the evaluation evidence gathered within and across data sources will always align, findings will be more robust where they are supported by consistent evidence from a variety of sources.

6.7. Analysis plan

The proposed analysis plan for the evaluation is consistent with both the KEQs and the analytical model presented in the evaluation ToR. The data collection instruments (Annexes 4, 5, 6) are designed to facilitate compiling evaluation evidence across the focus country sample on a question by question and issue by issue basis. This horizontal analysis process will enable the identification of barriers to and drivers of results in improving retention and addressing the needs of OoSCA as required by the evaluation objectives.

The analysis is not structured around country case studies but rather a comparative analysis of UNICEF contributions across the different contexts in the country sample as triangulated within and across data sources (documents, data bases, KII results, survey results).

The evaluation schedule (Section 7) is broken down into three phases as per the ToRs: inception, data collection and analysis and reporting. In truth, the proposed evaluation design is grounded in an iterative process of analysis with each subsequent stage in data collection yielding to increasingly rich levels of analysis. For example, the inception phase required analysis of the fit between overall need for programming for OoSCA and types of UNICEF engagement at country level. Similarly, analysis of the results of the country level document reviews will occur in parallel with the KIIs and the online survey.

A proposed near final step in the analysis plan for the evaluation is a two-day team workshop to compile and validate data across data sources and issues and to develop a set of preliminary evaluation findings which can be shared with the ERG prior to drafting the Final Report and preparing the draft Policy Brief and Good Practice Note.

6.8. Limitations

Table 11 provides an overview of the most important limitations of the proposed approach and the mitigation strategies incorporated into the evaluation design.

Table 11: Limitations

Limitations	Mitigation strategies
Identifying UNICEF contribution in a complex network of external and national actors supporting education does not allow for attribution of outcomes directly to UNICEF action.	Careful application of contribution analysis and identification of the UNICEF position in the architecture for support to improved retention, reduced dropout and access to MFPs will allow for a triangulated assessment of how and to what extent UNICEF contributes to results.
The wide variety of national contexts makes it difficult to articulate generally findings and identify positive drivers of change in retention and in increased access to MFPs.	Application of a semi-randomized sampling approach ensures that the evaluation evidence will be illustrative of support to national action in this space across regional and national contexts.
Data availability and reliability varies across country contexts and by data source making comparative cross-country analysis more difficult.	Use of a mixed methods approach to data gathering and the application of different analytical approaches depending on data availability will allow for findings that depend on and are applicable across different countries.
The global scope of the evaluation presents challenges to sampling strategies and does not allow for statistically valid random sampling of UNICEF interventions. There are also important limitations in terms of time and resources available to the evaluation which must be completed within a very short time span.	The proposed evaluation approach and design makes as much use as possible of low-cost data collection methods which can be developed and implemented in the time available (remote interviews, data mining, use of secondary evaluation evidence, and online survey). The evaluation design responds to the strong formative element of the evaluation by focusing on isolating and documenting drivers of success across diverse national contexts and different UNICEF programmatic approaches in education.
Selecting countries for in-person interviews during an evaluation mission presents a challenge given evaluation resources and the need for identifying countries very early in the data collection process	The evaluation design incorporates a selection process based on objective criteria to be applied by the evaluation team. However, this will be done flexibly to accommodate unforeseen issues and circumstances.

In summary, within the resource and time limitations faced by the evaluation, the proposed design and operational plan will allow the achievement of the stated objectives to the required level of confidence within United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) standards.

6.9. Ethical Considerations

The evaluation will be carried out in accordance with UNICEF ethical standards in research, evaluation, data collection and analysis (UNICEF, 2021). As per these standards (p.2) all team members have completed UNICEF ethics training prior to commencing work and reflections on ethics are embedded in the Quality Assurance process. The evaluation plan has been assessed against Instruction 3 of the UNICEF ethical standards (p.12 and 13) and does not require review by and external ethical review board or panel. Specifically:

- Evidence generation does not involve cohorts whose agency is limited (including children)
- There is no potential for direct data collection to result in harm to participants
- The privacy of interviewees and respondents will be protected
- Evidence generation does not have the potential to compromise the safety and well being of individuals
- There is no non-universal distribution of resources to participants and:
- There is no use of novel technologies and innovations for data collection and processing as the methods proposed are well tested and accepted practices.

7. Schedule and workplan

7.1. Schedule

The time available for completion of the evaluation is limited. For that reason, the evaluation schedule presented here is time-limited and compressed. It will be important for the evaluation team to be in close and regular contact with the Evaluation Manager to ensure progress on the critical task path as required. Achieving these milestones will also be contingent on timely responses and collaboration from stakeholders within UNICEF.

Table 12: Workplan

Evaluation Phase	Task	Estimated Completion
Inception Phase	Complete Inception Phase Interviews	Complete
	Present Overview to ERG	November 6 2023
	Zero Draft Inception Report to Evaluation Manager	November 17 2023
	Circulation of Draft IR to the ERG	November 22, 2023
	Comments on the Draft IR Received from the ERG	December 8, 2023
	Revision as Required	December 8, 2023
	Complete Pilot Testing of Interview Guides and Survey Instruments	December 8 2023
Data Collection Phase	Document Review and Quantitative Profiling of UNICEF Support and Results in 24 Selected Countries	December 14, 2023 to February 2, 2024
	Identification/confirmation of countries for Deep Dive and Missions	December 8, 2023
	Key Informant Interviews (Remote) in 24 Selected Countries	December 15 2023 to January 20 2024
	Supplemental Interviews and Country Visits (4)	February, 2024
	Evaluation Team Workshop to Develop Draft Findings and Conclusions	February 2024
	Presentation of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions to the ERG	Mid-February 2024
	Analysis and Reporting Phase	Draft Evaluation Report to the Evaluation Manager
Evaluation Manager Submission of Draft ER to the ERG		Late February 2024
ERG Comments on Draft Final Report		Mid-March 2024
Recommendations Workshop		Late March 2024
Final Report		Early April 2024
Policy Brief and Good Practice Note	Review evaluation evidence on effective programming from sample and deep dive countries	April 2024
	Draft Policy Brief and Good Practice Note	April 2024
	Review and Finalize PB and GPN	April 2024

7.2. Roles and Responsibilities

Table 13: Evaluation Team Roles and Responsibilities

Team Member	Primary Role	Tasks	Deliverables	Dates
Ted Freeman	Team Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall team direction • Liaison with EM • Lead author of Inception Report and Evaluation Report (Drafts and Final) • Quality Assurance of all deliverables (see Section 8) • Lead Field Missions (1-2) • Conduct document reviews (5 countries) • Conduct KII: 5 countries, regional and global • Joint analysis of all collected data (Doc review, KIIs, surveys) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft and Final IR • Completed Doc review templates • Completed interview templates • Preliminary Findings presentation • Draft and Final Ev. Report • Draft and Final Policy Brief and GPN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final IR: December 11, 2023 • Data collection and completed data templates: early February 2024 • Preliminary Findings: Mid February, 2024 • Draft Eval Report: Late February, 2024 • Final Ev. Report: Early April 2024 • Policy Brief and GPN: April, 2024
Claudia Galindo	Education Specialist (Inclusion and Equity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide expertise in inclusive education and equity • Review and contribute to Draft IR and data collection instruments • Conduct document review (5 countries) • Conduct KIIs: 5 countries, regional and global • Lead Field Missions (1-2) • Joint analysis of all collected data (Doc review, KIIs, surveys) • Contributing author to draft and final IR and Final Report • Lead author for policy brief and good practice note 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft and Final IR • Completed Doc review templates • Completed interview templates • Preliminary Findings presentation • Draft and Final Ev. Report • Draft and Final Policy Brief and Good Practice Note 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above
Alvin Leung	Education Specialist (MFP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide expertise in MFP for OoSCA • Lead developer document review protocol • Review and contribute to draft and final IR and Evaluation Report • Conduct document review for 5 countries • KIIs at country and regional level (1) • Take part in 1 country field mission • Joint analysis of all collected data (Doc review, KIIs, surveys) • Contributing author to draft and final IR and Final Evaluation Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft and Final IR • Completed Doc review templates • Completed interview templates • Preliminary Findings presentation • Draft and Final Ev. Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above

Team Member	Primary Role	Tasks	Deliverables	Dates
Matteo Valenza	Education Specialist Education in Emergencies Methodologist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and contribute to policy brief and good practice note • Provide expertise in retention and dropout prevention and in EIE • Lead developer of interview and survey data collection instruments • Conduct document review for 4 countries • Conduct KIs for 4 countries • Take part in 1 field mission • Joint analysis of all collected data (Doc review, KIs, surveys) • Contributing author to draft and final IR and Final Evaluation Report • Review and contribute to policy brief and good practice note 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft and Final IR • Completed Doc review templates • Completed interview templates • Preliminary Findings presentation • Draft and Final Ev. Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above
Paola Vela	Researcher Evaluator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development support to drafting of instruments • Work with team leader and specialists to support all data collection efforts • Support to team leader in drafting and finalizing all deliverables • Document review for 6 countries • KIs for 6 countries • Participate in field missions (1-2) • Joint analysis of all collected data (Doc review, KIs, surveys) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft and Final IR • Completed Doc review templates • Completed interview templates • Preliminary Findings presentation • Draft and Final Ev. Report • Draft and Final Policy Brief and Good Practice Note 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above

8. Quality Assurance

The evaluation will continue to implement a utilization focused, ethical and participatory approach as a key element in quality assurance. This is highlighted by:

- Frequent contact and consultations within the evaluation team on technical issues (weekly meetings of the evaluation team at a minimum).
- Frequent contact and consultations with the EO Evaluation Manager.
- Regular meetings with the Evaluation Reference Group to discuss progress and approaches and to receive guidance across all three phases of the evaluation.
- Ongoing meetings with UNICEF headquarters, RO and CO staff during the inception phase.
- Internal QA by the evaluation team leader through review of products and deliverables prior to transmission to the EO Evaluation Manager. QA by the Evaluation Manager and others in the UNICEF EO as required.

In addition, the evaluation team will present preliminary evaluation findings to the ERG as a test of relevance at the end of the data collection phase and prior to development of the Draft Final Report. Similarly, recommendations will be reviewed and validated with the ERG before finalization.

9. References

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Annex 1: Terms of Reference

See [Terms of Reference in Final Version](#) (internal link)

Annex 2: Selected Documents Reviewed

The list of documents reviewed by the evaluation team grows each day – especially as documents are reviewed at the country level such as COARs, CPDs, and AWP. This list covers only the documents reviewed up to November 6, 2023.

UNICEF: Formative Evaluation of the Out-of-School Children Initiative (2018)

UNICEF: Every Child Learns: UNICEF Education Strategy 2019 to 2030 (2018)

UNICEF: A Systems Approach to Multiple Flexible Pathways: UNICEF action to enable out-of-school adolescents to develop skills for school, live and work. (2020)

UNICEF: Secondary Education Guidance: Multiple Flexible Pathways (2020)

UNICEF: GOAL AREA 2: Annual Results Report 2022: Every child, including adolescents, learns and acquires skills for the future (2022)

UNICEF: Goal AREA 2: Annual Results Report 2021

UNICEF: Goal Area 2: Theory of Change 2021 – Narrative April 2021

UNESCO and UNICEF: Fixing the Broken Promise of Education for All: Findings from the Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children (2015)

UNESCO and UNICEF: Operational Manual: Global Out-of-School Children Initiative (2023)

UNICEF MICS-EAGLE: In Pursuit of Education for All in West and Central Africa: What do the data tell us about children with disabilities (2022)

UNICEF MICS – EAGLE: Country Fact Sheet Bangladesh and Country Fact Sheet Uganda

COARS for 2019 to 2022 for **34 countries completed** with reviews of five countries underway as a test of the document review instrument: Colombia, Guatemala, Iraq, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Uganda. For these countries the evaluation team has already reviewed available documentation including for example CPDs and AWP. This review is in process at this time.

Annex 3: Interviews completed during the inception phase

Name	Organization	Office	Position
Avenesayan, Karen	UNICEF	HQ	Statistics and Monitoring Specialist
Brizuela, Cynthia	UNICEF	LACRO	Regional education specialist: Disability Inclusion
Chowdhury, Samanjar	UNICEF	ROSA	Education Specialist
Dutra, Italo	UNICEF	LACRO	Regional Education Advisor
Gonzalez Veiga, Tania	UNICEF	LACRO	Regional education specialist
de la Varga González , Agustín	UNICEF	LACRO	Regional Education Manager
Gonzalez, Walter	UNICEF	HQ	Planning Specialist – SP and Corporate Analysis
Taulo, Wongani Grace	UNICEF	ESARO	Regional Education Advisor
Haiplik, Brenda	UNICEF	MENARO	Regional Education Advisor
Hossain, Iqbal	UNICEF	Bangladesh CO	Education Specialist (Bangladesh)
Iwata, Chizuru	UNICEF	ROSA	Regional Education Advisor
Pigozzi, Dr. Mary Joy	Educate a Child	HQ	Executive Director
Davis, Kimberly Joanna	UNICEF	ESARO	Specialist, Adolescent Skills and Employability
Mandry, Antonia	UNICEF	EAPRO	Education Specialist
Ouedraogo, Alassane	UNICEF	MENARO	Education Specialist
Rooke, Barnaby	UNICEF	WCARO	Regional Education Advisor
Sanchez Tapia, Ingrid	UNICEF	HQ	Senior Education Adviser
Shimizu, Ikuko	UNICEF	WCARO	Education Specialist
Uemura, Mitsue	UNICEF	EAPRO	Regional Education Advisor
Van Cappelle, Frank	UNICEF	HQ	Senior Education Adviser, Digital Learning
Otieno, Wycliffe	UNICEF	HQ	Senior Education Adviser, Gender, Equity and Inclusion (GEI)
Yassin, Said	Educate a Child	HQ	Technical Team Director
Zakria, Talha	UNICEF	ECARO	Education Specialist

Annex 4: Documentation Analyses Instrument

Country:

Region:

Team member responsible:

What documents were analyzed?

CPD/UNDAF/CF	COAR	AWP	RAM	HRP or similar
Education sector plan	Education program docs.	Situation Analysis	Scoping study or similar	Humanitarian response plan
Eval. reports (country-level)	Management responses to eval.	Relevant UNICEF research	Relevant non-UNICEF research	Government policy docs.

Were any other documents analyzed?

Are there any outstanding documents that should be requested?

[Part 1: Reduction in school dropout and increased retention of ISCA at risk of dropping out](#)

Contextual information as it is related to the object of evaluation (optional):

What were the programmatic **responses** (e.g., programs, interventions, activities) that sought to contribute to reducing school dropout among and increasing retention of ISCA at risk? What were the **intended results**? What is the **status** of achieving these results as of 2023?

If appropriate, please indicate the scale and/or 'level' of the responses (i.e., programs, stand-alone interventions) as well as the corresponding CPD outputs. If applicable, please specify

whether the responses target primary and/or secondary education. Use of bullet points is encouraged.

--

Was there a clear **theory of change** for any of the programmatic responses above? If yes, please place it in part 5 of this sheet or link it.

Yes	No	Unclear

Comments on the use of the following programming **principles**: intersectoral approach and contextualization.

Please do not include comments on the principle of equity and inclusion, which is addressed later in the sheet.

--

Which of the following programming **approaches** were adopted, based on the available evidence?

Data and evidence	System strengthening	Innovation	Communication and advocacy	Service delivery

Additional comments on programming approaches, especially on:

- (1) whether the **alignment** with national systems and priorities are mentioned and acted upon;
- (2) whether UNICEF has **partnered** with other institutions or organizations to scale up programming;
- (3) how UNICEF **resources** have been strategically **allocated** to allow for the adaptation and scaling up of programmatic responses.

--

Which of the following **educational contexts** were involved?

Formal	Informal	Non-formal

Which of the following **categories** of programmatic **responses** were included? *You may want to look at the allocation of financial resource to see 'to which responses the money went'.*

Learning support	Teacher capacity development	Curriculum improvement	Early warning system	Health, WASH, COVID-related
Government capacity ⁷	Education policy	Funding and budget allocat'n	Cash transfer	School feeding or food program

Are there any **categories** of programmatic **responses** other than those above worth adding?

--

Which of the following **populations of focus** (all are in-school children and adolescents at risk of dropping out of school) were targeted by the programmatic responses mentioned?

Primary (D4)	Lower secondary (D5)	Upper secondary (D7)

What **needs** of the **population of focus** did the programmatic responses sought to address? How were the needs assessed? Provide reference used if possible.

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⁷This includes the provision of support to the national and/or regional governments on education planning. This excludes curricular development/improvement. This would also exclude any actual policy changes. For example, the corresponding category in the WCARO framework includes the following: MoE roles and decentralisation.'

Which of the following **equity themes** were addressed by the planned programmatic responses?

Gender	Linguistic minorities	Ethnic or religious minorities	Disabilities	Refugees	IDPs	Conflict-affected	Other (please specify)

Additional comments on **equity themes** addressed. *You may want to analyze where the financial resources are allocated. For instance, you may want to state that refugee education in country X received USD n millions.*

Were these programmatic responses **implemented**? What were the **results achieved**?

If possible, specify the outcomes and outputs as well as the year(s) of achievement. If needed, use the [UNICEF dashboard](#) to identify outputs and outcomes achieved. Identify key outcomes that could be then reverse engineered via outcome harvesting.

For example, a key outcome UNICEF indicated is the waiving of school fees for lower secondary education. The contribution of UNICEF could be then tested working backwards to see if the claims of contribution hold. For example, if all UNICEF did was a workshop on the theme, we can rule out contribution.

Were there any **challenges and barriers** faced and identified by the country office? If yes, what were they?

Were any of these programmatic responses independently assessed or **evaluated**?

Yes	No	Unclear

If any programmatic responses was/were the subject of an evaluation, what were the **key findings**?

How were they received, and has there been a management response?

Initial scoring on 4 attributes (on a scale of 1 to 4) of programmatic responses to reduce school dropout:

These scores are to be updated after having interviews with representatives of Country Offices. The rubrics can be found at the end of this document.

Attributes	Initial (pre-interview) score	Final (post-interview) score
Cost-effectiveness		
Co-designed for scale with local actors in alignment with national priorities		
Equity focus (applied to gender CwD and other dimensions)		
Resigned based on solid evidence on reasons of dropouts and needs of ISCA at risk		

Part 2: Expanded access to multiple and flexible pathways (MFPs)

Contextual information as it is related to the object of evaluation (optional):

What were the programmatic **responses** (e.g., programs, interventions, activities) that sought to improve access to MFPs? What were the **intended results**? What is the **status** of achieving these results as of 2023?

If appropriate, please indicate the scale and/or 'level' of the responses (i.e., programs, stand-alone interventions) as well as the corresponding CPD outputs. If applicable, please specify whether the responses target primary and/or secondary education. Use of bullet points is encouraged.

Was there a clear **theory of change** for any of the programmatic responses above? If yes, please place it in part 5 of this sheet.

Yes	No	Unclear

Comments on the use of the following programming **principles**: intersectoral approach and contextualization.

Please do not include comments on the principle of equity and inclusion which is addressed later in the sheet.

Which of the following programming **approaches** were used in planning?

Data and evidence	System strengthening	Innovation	Communication and advocacy	Service delivery

Additional comments on the use of the programming **approaches**, especially on:

(1) whether the **alignment** with national systems and priorities are mentioned and acted upon;

(2) whether UNICEF has **partnered** with other institutions or organizations to scale up programming;

(3) how UNICEF **resources** have been strategically **allocated** to allow for the adaptation and scaling up of programmatic responses.

Which of the following **educational contexts** were involved?

Formal	Informal	Non-formal

Which of the following **categories** of programmatic **responses** were included? *You may want to look at the allocation of financial resource to see 'to which responses the money went'.*

Modalities:

Accelerated learning program	Bridging program	Catch-up program	TVET	Apprenticeship program
Digital learning solutions	Remote learning (exc. digital)	Alternative education	Inclusive education	/

Others:

Teacher capacity	Curriculum improvement	EMIS to monitor OoSCA	School fees removal	Health, WASH, COVID-related
Government capacity	Education policy	Funding and budget allocat'n	Cash transfer	Food program

Are there any **categories** of programmatic **responses** other than those above worth adding?

Which of the following **populations of focus** (all are out of school children and adolescents) were targeted by the programmatic responses mentioned?

Pre-primary (D1)	Primary school-aged (D2)	Lower secondary school-aged (D3)	Upper secondary school-aged (D6)

What **needs** of the **population of focus** did the programmatic responses sought to address?

Which of the following **equity themes** were addressed by the programmatic responses?
You may want to analyze where the financial resources are allocated. For instance, you may want to state that refugee education in country X received USD n millions.

Gender	Linguistic minorities	Ethnic or religious minorities	Disabilities	Refugees and/or migrants	Conflict-affected	Other (please specify)

Additional comments on **equity themes** addressed.

Were these programmatic responses **implemented**? What were the **results achieved**?

If possible, specify the outcomes and outputs as well as the year(s) of achievement. If needed, use the [UNICEF dashboard](#) to identify outputs and outcomes achieved. Identify key outcomes that could be then reverse engineered via outcome harvesting.

E.g., a key outcome UNICEF indicated is the waiving of school fees for lower secondary education. The contribution of UNICEF could be then tested working backwards to see if the claims of contribution hold. E.g., if all UNICEF did was a workshop on the theme, we can rule out contribution.

Were there any **challenges and barriers** faced and identified by the country office? If yes, what were they?

Were any of these programmatic responses independently assessed or **evaluated**?

Yes	No	Partially?

If any programmatic responses was/were the subject of an evaluation, what were the **key findings**? How were they received, and has there been a management response?

Part 3: Improved pro-poor financing of education to increase access to MFPs

Contextual information as it is related to the object of evaluation (optional):

•

How did the country office support financial and budgetary reforms, public budgeting and financing strategies to expand the access to equitable and inclusive MFPs to learning?

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To what extent and in what ways do country program planning documents reflect UNICEF efforts to support policy reforms, public budgeting, and financing strategies to expand access to MFP to learning and skills development being, particularly the most marginalized?

--

Which of the following programming **approaches** were used ?

Data and evidence	Communication and advocacy

Additional comments on the use of the programming **approaches**.

--

Which of the following **populations of focus** (all are out of school) were targeted by the financing reforms and/or strategies mentioned?

Pre-primary (D1)	Primary school-aged (D2)	Lower secondary school-aged (D3)	Upper secondary school-aged (D6)

Which of the following **equity themes** were addressed by the financing reforms and/or strategies?

Gender	Linguistic minorities	Ethnic or religious minorities	Disabilities	Refugees and/or migrants	Conflict-affected	Other (please specify)

Additional comments on **equity themes** addressed.

What were the key **results achieved, especially at outcome level?**

Part 4: Observations and reflection

Do you have any observations and reflections after analyzing the documents?

What preliminary findings are worth following up on by key informant interviews? Any specific hypotheses that the evaluation may want to test?

In your opinion, to what extent should this country be included in the next stage of data collection and analysis (i.e., deep dives)?

Large extent	Some extent	Small extent	Not at all

Part 5: Theories of change

Please provide a link to any theories of change (including assumptions, comments and references therein) mentioned in part 1 and part 2. You may also paste them below.

Table A4.1: Rubrics for 4 attributes of programmatic responses to reduce dropouts

Interventions' attributes	Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4
Cost-effective / best possible use of resources	Outcome indicators (e.g. reduced dropout rate, increased completion, and so on) are not measured, unavailable or invalid (i.e., indicator is not measuring outcomes)	Some outcome indicators available, but no information or minimal information on cost-effectiveness	Some outcome indicators available + some indications of cost-effectiveness, such as average costs per capita, without a fully-fledged cost-effectiveness analysis; evidence of consideration of alternative programmatic approaches (e.g. "smart buys vs "good buys")	Most outcome indicators available + solid evidence of cost effectiveness at scale from a fully-fledged cost-effectiveness analysis; evidence of consideration of alternative programmatic approaches (e.g. "smart buys vs "good buys")
Co-designed for scale with local actors in alignment with national priorities	Supply-driven pilot project(s); scattered interventions delinked from national systems and not aligned to national priorities	Some evidence of alignment to national strategies but not designed to scale up; limited co-operation with local actors during design and implementation	Evidence of co-design with local actors coupled with some evidence of replication at the local level, but no "graduation" to district-level or national-level scale up.	Designed "from within" according to national priorities and systems; showing strong evidence of scale up either at district, regional or national level.
Equity focus (applied to gender, CwD and other dimensions mentioned in the KEQs)	Intervention is gender-blind, without considerations for disadvantaged groups in key activities or indicators	Presence of some actions targeting disadvantaged groups, with some level of disaggregation in indicators and targets; yet no actions targeting root causes of inequities	Decreasing inequities is a significant objective of the envisioned interventions, while not the main objective. Targets and indicators are duly disaggregated; relevant intersectionalities are considered and a high-quality gender analysis is available	Narrowing inequalities, transforming prejudicial norms, or empowering vulnerable groups is the main reason the intervention is undertaken. A high-quality gender analysis is available. Monitoring data on outcome indicators are duly disaggregated.
Designed based on solid evidence on reasons of dropouts and needs of ISCA at risk	No assessment of causes of dropout used; supply-driven design	Some reference to small-scale needs assessment studies; such studies were neither peer reviewed nor run on representative samples	Designed based on at least one recent study collecting primary data on dropout causes with representative samples	Designed based on multiple, peer-reviewed, triangulated studies indicating needs of ISCA and dropout causes with representative samples as well as reflecting findings from previous impact evaluations, or structured feedback from beneficiary communities.

Annex 5 Interview Guide for UNICEF HQ and regional office Staff and ERG members

Protocol:

- Remind of the time-period of the evaluation (2019 to 2022)
- Record the interview (ask for permission)
- Reassure respondents on the confidentiality of information

The KIs should be semi-structured to allow the respondents to digress as needed.

HQ = Headquarters staff

RO = regional office education advisors and specialists

CO = Country office staff

Topics	Questions
Expectations	<p>[HQ and RO] Imagine it's April 2024, and you're reviewing the final report of this evaluation. In relation to objectives 1, 2, and 3, [display the precise wording of the objectives], could you provide us with a few specific examples of findings from this evaluation that you would consider particularly valuable?</p> <p>[HQ and RO] Looking at the work of UNICEF in the education sector specifically, would you be able to identify any past evaluations that you feel have led to positive change? Why do you think those evaluations were so useful?</p>
Interventions to curb dropout	<p>[CO] In your country, what are the main strategies (not the activities) that you have used to decrease dropout specifically? Note that we are not primarily interested in activities to e.g., improve the quality of education – rather in strategies to decrease dropout that have delivered measured results. It would be great if you could differentiate between COVID-specific strategies and other strategies and approaches that were adopted irrespective of the pandemic.</p> <p>>>> [if relevant – as a follow up question] could you share any documents such as program reports or theories of change to help us understand in detail how your country managed to reduce dropout?</p> <p>[RO] Can you single out up to three countries in your region that have provided evidence of dropout reduction</p> <p>>>> Probe= especially regarding equity and inclusion?</p> <p>[RO] Can you single out up to three countries in your region that are encountering particular challenges to provide evidence of dropout reduction?</p> <p>>>> Probe = especially with regard to equity and inclusion?</p> <p>>>> Probe = especially with regard to humanitarian settings?</p> <p>>>> Probe = can you expand on the nature of these challenges? Are they the consequence of internal capacity constraints, or are they related eg to a de-prioritisation of dropout prevention on behalf of the MoE?</p>

Topics	Questions
MFP to primary and secondary education	<p>[CO] What are the key challenges that your country office has experienced vs MFP programming? >>> [if relevant – as a follow up question] could you share any documents such as program reports or theories of change?</p> <p>[RO] Can you single out up to three countries in your region that have provided evidence of completion of MFPs? >>> Probe = especially with regard to equity and inclusion?</p> <p>[RO] Can you single out up to three countries in your region that are encountering particular challenges in implementing and scaling up programs that introduce MFPs? >>> Probe = especially in humanitarian settings? >>> Probe = can you expand on the nature of these challenges? Are they the consequence of internal capacity constraints, or are they related eg to a de-prioritisation on behalf of the MoE?</p>
Country selection	<p>[RO] We have put together a draft list of countries for deep dives in your region (share screen with provisional table) – which countries would you advise we analyze in more depth? Would you recommend any changes to this list?</p>
Closing	<p>[ALL] Do you have any final recommendations or any final thoughts that could help us shape this evaluation at this stage?</p>

Annex 6: Key Informant Interview and Survey Tools (version 1): Country Level

Questionnaire 1 – KII UNICEF Education Section, country office

- This questionnaire will be administered via Teams call.
- The evaluation team member acts as interviewer and collects information based on a structured form to be filled in real time as the interview progresses. The interviewee should be prompted to digress as needed if s/he is providing relevant evidence. The interviewer can decide to share screens to improve clarity of communication.
- The questionnaire should be run in two sessions of about 55 mins each, recorded for the purpose of note taking, or in a single two-hour session with a 5-minute break at the hour.
- Only UNICEF staff will be on the call. Personnel required on the call includes the Chief of education, the M&E focal point for the education section, the education manager / specialist in charge of the access / dropout prevention / MPF output.
- Questions are coded as follows: **Questionnaire number. Question Number - KEQ** – e.g. “Q1.1-KEQ1.1”
- Minor modifications to improve the formulation and flow of some questions will be made at later stages.

Protocol:

The interviewer should:

- ➔ Have shared the evaluation concept note and the questionnaires (just the questions in bold, without the interviewer’s notes) before the call to speed up the process and avoid catching the audience unprepared.
- ➔ Confirm to have the Chief of education, the MnE focal point for the education section, and the education manager/specialist in charge of the access / dropout prevention / MFPs output on the call (sometimes this may mean only two people in practice, depending on the office size).
- ➔ Emphasize that transparency in providing input and feedback is fundamental and in the best interest of the child. This includes the willingness to share negative feedback if necessary.
- ➔ Check that those on the call received the KEQs prior to the call and remind them of the expected duration of the call. Remind them that interviewers are already familiar with the content of the AWP, RAMs, and similar docs, so the time in the call should be used strategically for in-depth discussions, without repeating information already available in documentary sources.
- ➔ Read out to respondents the text of the questions formatted in bold.

Q1.1-KEQ1.1 What MoE policies / interventions are underway to reduce dropout of ISCA, in particular for marginalized children and those living in humanitarian contexts? The evaluation team has identified a few already and would like to validate them with you given your knowledge of the local context.

- ➔ Start describing MoE policies on dropout identified during the documents' analysis, if any, and ask for validation / comments. Mention policy shifts such as school fee removal or similar if any took place.
- ➔ At this point, the discussion does not yet center on UNICEF's work; instead, the focus is specifically on national policies.

Q1.2-KEQ1.1. Let's now move on to discuss the technical assistance provided by UNICEF at the systemic level since 2019, excluding the COVID response. How did UNICEF contribute to reducing dropout for children at risk attending school? How did you monitor any decrease in dropout? (e.g., from EMIS or MICS, or other) Let's use the table below to validate the coverage of UNICEF programming.

Children and adolescents at risk of dropping out	Gender	Linguistic minorities	Ethnic or religious minorities	CwD	Refugees	IDPs	Conflict-affected not forcibly displaced	Other (please specify)
Pre-primary (D1)								
Primary (D4)	Program 1	Program 1		Program 1				
Lower Secondary (D5)			Intervention					
Upper Secondary (D7)								
MFP for OOSC	Gender	Linguistic minorities	Ethnic or religious minorities	CwD	Refugees	IDPs	Conflict-affected not forcibly displaced	Other (please specify)
Pre-primary (D1)	Program 3		Program 3					
Primary (D2)				Program 4				
Lower Secondary (D5)								
Upper Secondary (D7)								

- ➔ The goal of this question is to gain an understanding of UNICEF interventions aimed at curbing dropout since the school year 2018-19.
- ➔ It can be useful to focus on how UNICEF contributed to addressing the drivers of dropout (as measured by studies investigating the causes of dropout).
- ➔ This is an open question, make sure everybody on the call has a chance to speak. In some contexts, with certain gender rules, women may be hesitant to speak. Make sure they have a chance to do so. This holds for all open questions in the questionnaire.
- ➔ It is important to gather elements on how dropout has been monitored by the CO.

Q1.3-KEQ1.1. Emphasizing an equity lens, how did UNICEF contribute to reducing dropout for at-risk children, particularly girls, those with disabilities, linguistic minorities, crisis-affected children and others facing social exclusion? (Excluding for now the response to the COVID-19 Pandemic).

- ➔ The goal of this question is to zoom in on themes of equity and inclusion, without focusing on the COVID response: e.g. show trends in SDG indicator 4.1.2 disaggregated by sex, areas and wealth quintile (see UIS or MICS-EAGLE factsheets) and compare to regional averages (UIS).
- ➔ Prompt based on RAM analysis other sources of disaggregated data.

Q1.4-KEQ1.1. Now let's focus on the UNICEF's response to the COVID pandemic. How did UNICEF contribute to reducing dropout of children at risk in the aftermath of the pandemic, particularly girls, those with disabilities, minorities, crisis-affected children and others facing social exclusion?

- ➔ The goal of this question is to zoom in on equity and inclusion within the COVID response.
- ➔ Prompt based on RAM analysis.

Q1.5-KEQ1.1. [ask only if there is any evidence of a positive contribution by UNICEF] What do you think were the critical success factors that enabled a positive UNICEF contribution on dropout reduction?

- ➔ Offer examples as needed, such as having a field office, possessing flexible funding, or having a particular expert within the team, or a particular partnership brokered by UNICEF.

Q1.6-KEQ1.1. On a scale of 1 to 4, with 4 being highly effective and 1 being not effective, how would you assess the extent to which the education section collaborated effectively with other UNICEF sections in programming for dropout reduction? Could you provide details on the rating you provided?

	Rating	Rationale for rating
1: not effective (e.g. conflicting priorities between sections)		
2: somewhat ineffective		
3: somewhat effective		
4: highly effective (e.g. proven synergies leveraged)		
99: not applicable, there was no need for collaboration with other sections in any programme tackling dropout		

Q1.7 to 1.10-KEQ1.2 and 1.3 [do not read out – reminder for the interviewer] With reference to the KEQs 1.2 and 1.3, we define “strategic allocation” via a composite score of four attributes:

Intervention’s attributes	Question
Cost-effective / best possible use of resources	1.7-KEQ1.2
Co-designed for scale	1.8-KEQ1.2
Equitable	1.9-KEQ1.2
Designed based on needs of ISCA at risk	1.10-KEQ1.3

Each component is rated with a score from 1 (least desirable) to 4 (most desirable), according to the following rubric:

Interventions' attributes	Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4
Cost-effective / best possible use of resources	Outcome indicators (e.g. reduced dropout rate, increased completion, and so on) are not measured, unavailable or invalid (i.e., indicator is not measuring outcomes)	Some outcome indicators available, but no information on costing	Some outcome indicators available + some indications of cost-effectiveness, without a fully-fledged cost-effectiveness analysis; evidence of consideration of alternative programmatic approaches (e.g. "smart buys vs "good buys")	Most outcome indicators available + solid evidence of cost effectiveness at scale from a fully-fledged cost-effectiveness analysis; evidence of consideration of alternative programmatic approaches (e.g. "smart buys vs "good buys")
Co-designed for scale with local actors in alignment with national priorities	Supply-driven pilot project(s); scattered interventions delinked from national systems and not aligned to national priorities	Some evidence of alignment to national strategies but not designed to scale up; limited co-operation with local actors during design and implementation	Evidence of co-design with local actors coupled with some evidence of replication at the local level, but no "graduation" to district-level or national-level scale up.	Designed "from within" according to national priorities and systems; showing strong evidence of scale up either at district, regional or national level.
Equity focus (applied to gender, CwD and other dimensions mentioned in the KEQs)	Intervention is gender-blind, without considerations for disadvantaged groups in key activities or indicators	Presence of some actions targeting disadvantaged groups, with some level of disaggregation in indicators and targets; yet no actions targeting root causes of inequities	Decreasing inequities is a significant objective of the envisioned interventions, while not the main objective. Targets and indicators are duly disaggregated; relevant inter-sectionalities are considered and a high-quality gender analysis is available	Narrowing inequalities, transforming prejudicial norms, or empowering vulnerable groups is the main reason the intervention is undertaken. A high-quality gender analysis is available. Monitoring data on indicators are duly disaggregated.

Interventions' attributes	Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4
Designed based on solid evidence on reasons of dropouts and needs of ISCA at risk	No assessment of causes of dropout used; supply-driven design	Some reference to small-scale needs assessment studies; such studies were neither peer reviewed nor run on representative samples	Designed based on at least one recent study collecting primary data on dropout causes with representative samples	Designed based on multiple, peer-reviewed, triangulated studies indicating needs of ISCA and dropout causes with representative samples as well as reflecting findings from previous impact evaluations, or structured feedback from beneficiary communities.

Q1.7-KEQ1.2. Would you be able to share any evidence on the cost-effectiveness of UNICEF's interventions targeting dropout reductions?

- ➔ Rate according to the rubric. For the purposes of this evaluation, we will adopt an operational definition of cost-effectiveness defined as the ratio between the reduction in dropout (or similar outcome indicator) and the costs that triggered that change. Alternative or more specific definitions of cost-effectiveness can be considered if they are deemed robust by the evaluators.

Q1.8-KEQ1.2. Can you describe the extent to which your interventions to reduce dropout were co-designed for scale with local actors, in alignment with national priorities?

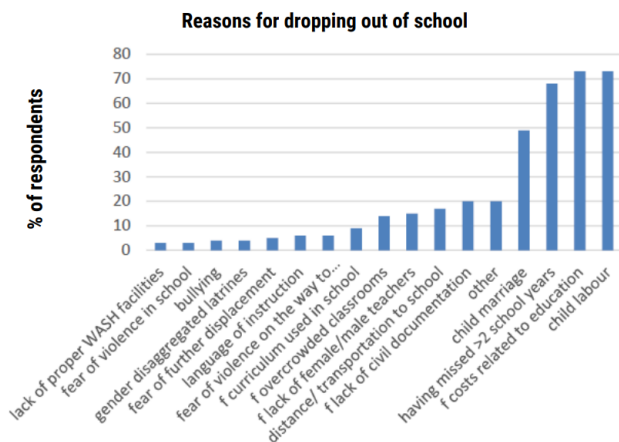
- ➔ Rate according to the rubric.

Q1.9-KEQ1.2. Can you describe the extent to which UNICEF programmatic approaches used to support governments in reducing dropout helped them to integrate gender equity and inclusion (gender equity, children with disabilities, linguistic minorities) into their efforts?

- ➔ Rate according to the rubric.
- ➔ Prompt: are there sufficient sex- and age-disaggregated data (SADD) to a) design and b) monitor for equity?

Q1.10-KEQ1.3. Can you describe the extent to which your interventions to reduce dropout were informed by needs assessment as well as evidence of "what worked" to improve retention of ISCA in your context?

- ➔ Rate according to the rubric.
- ➔ Prompt: Do you have evidence on the reasons of dropout [show example from Iraq/ACAPS below] and the needs of ISCA at risk of dropout?



Q1.11-KEQ1.4 On a scale of 1 to 4, with 4 being highly aligned and 1 being not aligned, how would you assess the extent to which UNICEF efforts have been coherently aligned with other UN agencies' or development institutions' to successfully adapt or scale up interventions to reduce dropout? Please provide reasons for your rating.

Rating	Reasons for rating
1: not aligned with other UN agencies / other development institutions	
2: only marginally aligned with other UN agencies / other development institutions	
3: somewhat aligned with other UN agencies / other development institutions	
4: highly aligned with other UN agencies / other development institutions	
99: not applicable, there was no collaboration with other institutions in programming to reduce dropout	

Q1.12-KEQ1.4 Has UNICEF brokered partnerships with other entities such as donors, regional organisations, NGOs, global funds and similar actors that enabled the MoE to prevent dropout?

→ Prompt on what exactly was UNICEF's role in the partnership, if any.

Q1.13-KEQ2.1 Let's now focus on the Multiple and Flexible Pathways (MFP) initiatives, that is, initiatives that support out-of-school children and adolescents (from pre-primary to upper secondary) to access learning opportunities. These can be part of the formal education system or outside the formal education system (i.e., as informal and/or non-formal education). Could you provide details on whether your country office has any MFP programs/interventions/activities? If yes, what are they?

→ Spell out what key programmatic responses were already identified in the documents' analysis.

- Programmatic responses can include advocacy as well as technical support on policy making, education reform, curriculum design among others. In interviews, encourage interviewees to go beyond talking about stand-alone programs.

Q1.14-KEQ2.1 Of all the MFP programmatic responses implemented by UNICEF since 2019, which ones are the most successful in your opinion? What are the critical success factors?

- This question is designed to pinpoint the most successful MFP responses to inform the formative aspect of the evaluation.

Q1.15-KEQ2.1 Of all the MFP programmatic responses, which ones faced the most challenges? What are the major barriers?

- This question aims to identify barriers to inform provision of strategic support in the future, alongside reasons for suboptimal results from previous programmes.

Q1.16-KEQ2.1 While developing, implementing, adjusting, accelerating and scaling up MFP programmatic responses, did you use any tools, guidance, strategies and support by the regional office and/or Headquarters? How did these help?

- If there are multiple programmatic responses, consider asking this question by programmatic responses.
- If needed, please be specific on what kinds of support for what processes (i.e., development, implementation, adjustment, acceleration and scale up).
- Use the responses to the previous question to elicit response – see how the support address challenges.

Q1.17-KEQ2.1 What tools, guidance, strategies, or other forms of support that are not currently available could the regional office and Headquarters provide to help with developing, implementing and/or scaling up access to MFPs in your country?

- If there are multiple programmatic responses, consider asking this question by programmatic responses.
- If needed, please be specific on what kinds of support for what processes (i.e., development, implementation, adjustment, acceleration and scale up).
- Use the responses to the question on barriers to elicit response – see how the support could potentially address challenges.

Q1.18-KEQ2.2 What human resources are available within the UNICEF CO to support the implementation of MFPs? Are these sufficient? What requires improvement?

- Financial resources are not included in the questions related to KEQ 2.2 because KEQ 2.3 will look at them more closely.

Q1.19-KEQ2.2 Who are the major partners in implementing the MFP programmatic responses? How do these partnerships contribute to achieving results and to developing, implementing, adjusting, accelerating and scaling up the responses?

- ➔ Important to ask about government partners.
- ➔ Prompt to understand the value added of all partnerships, and what is UNICEF role in such partnerships.

Q1.20-KEQ2.3 How do the existing UNICEF interventions on MFPs respond to the needs of different profiles of OoSCA?

- ➔ If there are multiple programmatic responses, consider asking this question by responses. For example, ask about the use of how accelerated education programs meet the needs of OoSCA, followed by, say the equivalency tests for education for indigenous communities.

Q1.21-KEQ2.3 Are certain needs of the OoSCA not currently addressed by the ongoing MFP programmatic responses? What are they? Also, are any groups of OoSCA not currently reached? Who are they?

- ➔ It may help to have a list of vulnerable groups from the latest SitAn, the latest ACAPS study, the latest JENA, or similar

Q1.22-KEQ 2.3 What are the major obstacles to meeting the needs and/or reaching the OoSCA currently not reached? What support would your CO need to be more effective?

- ➔ For example, from RO or HQ

Q1.23-KEQ3.1. Now we will move on to the topic of financing of MFPs. Since 2019, what were the main changes in the national education ecosystem in public budgeting, and financing to expand access to MFPs for OOSC?

- ➔ These could include, for example: policy changes to prioritize MFP investments; adaptation of specific budget lines for investments in MFPs; partnerships for accessing external (non-UNICEF) sources of financing.

Policy reforms	Public budgeting	Financing strategies

Q1.24-KEQ3.1. [if any listed in the question above] **To what extent and in what ways are UNICEF advocacy and communications as well as evidence-generation efforts supported such changes for the most marginalised children?**

→ Could be filled based on a table like this, asking to describe the contribution by UNICEF

Key changes to which UNICEF contributed	Contribution by advocacy and comms	Contribution via evidence generation

Q1.25-All KEQs. **Kindly provide the email addresses of your technical counterparts at MoE (ideally between two and four); as well as the email addresses (a maximum of three) of the most prominent IPs that UNICEF contracted between 2019 and 2022 to implement interventions targeting reductions in dropout or strengthening MFPs to learning.**

IMPORTANT: before closing the KII, it is important to request to share all relevant docs that may be missing, such as program docs, progress reports, ToCs, and any other important document mentioned during the KII and not previously analysed by the education team.

Questionnaire 2 – KII Ministry of Education (MoE)

- This questionnaire will be administered via Teams call.
- The evaluation team member acts as interviewer and collects information based on a structured form to be filled in real time as the interview progresses. The interviewee should be prompted to digress as needed if s/he is providing relevant evidence. The interviewer can decide to share screens to improve clarity of communication.
- The questionnaire should be run in one session of about 55 mins.
- Personnel required on the call includes: MoE focal point(s) who has/have been interfacing with UNICEF during 2019-2022, any MoE specialist in charge of dropout prevention / MPF expansion, potentially any M&E / data experts / information management officers from MoE, as well as planning specialist(s) from the MoE for KEQ 3
- In case of large federal states (eg Nigeria) multiple calls may be necessary with regional education authorities.
- Questions are coded as follows: **Questionnaire number. Question Number-Relevant KEQ** – e.g. “Q2.1-KEQ1.1”
- Minor modifications to improve the formulation and flow of selected questions may be made at later stages to improve data quality.
- The CO should have identified the emails of max three counterparts in questionnaire 1.

Protocol:

The interviewer should:

- ➔ Have shared the evaluation concept note and the questionnaires (just the questions in bold, without the interviewer’s notes) before the call to speed up the process and avoid catching the audience unprepared.
- ➔ Confirm to have the right audience on the call at the beginning of the interview.
- ➔ Emphasize that transparency in providing input and feedback is fundamental and in the best interest of the child. This includes the willingness to share negative feedback if necessary.
- ➔ Check that those on the call received the KEQs prior to the call and remind them of the expected duration of the call.
- ➔ Read out to respondents the text of the questions formatted in bold.

[INTRO]

Thank you very much for making time for this meeting. We are having this call as part of an evaluation of UNICEF initiatives aimed at a) reducing school dropout and b) support the re-entry of students into the formal education system and the prevention of dropout (e.g., accelerated education, bridging programs, second chance education). We will refer to these as “Multiple and Flexible Pathways to learning”, abbreviated as MFPs. This evaluation will provide invaluable feedback to UNICEF and we look forward to receiving your feedback.

Q2.1-KEQ1.1 Let’s start from an overview: could you please outline the current policies and interventions to reduce dropout of children and adolescents, including marginalized children and those living in humanitarian contexts?

- ➔ Prompt based on documentary analysis – interviewers should ask the question from a pre-existing list: “can you confirm that these are the main interventions...”
- ➔ Triangulate with the same question asked in questionnaire 1

Q2.2-KEQ1.1 and 2.3 What policies / interventions are underway to increase access to MFPs for OOSC, in particular for marginalized children and those living in humanitarian contexts?

- ➔ Prompt based on documentary analysis – interviewers should ask the question from a pre-existing list: “can you confirm that these are the main interventions...”
- ➔ Triangulate with findings from questionnaire 1

Q2.3-KEQ1.1 and 2.1 Now I am going to list different types of support provided by UNICEF since 2019 (excluding anything related to the COVID-19 response) to support prevention of school dropout and expand programming for MFP to learning. Can you please confirm and let me know if I am missing anything?

- ➔ Have the following table pre-filled for validation and ask MoE to complement the info from the documentary analysis

Type of support provided by UNICEF	Dropout prevention	MFPs programming

Q2.3-KEQ1.2, 2.3 To what extent was the technical assistance provided by UNICEF focused on designing interventions that can be scaled up effectively, rather than having small-scale projects that may not be scalable?

Degree	Dropout prevention	MFPs programming
1: Supply-driven pilot project(s); scattered interventions delinked from national systems		
2: Generic alignment to national strategies but not truly designed to scale up		
3: Some evidence of replication at the local level, but no “graduation” to district-level or national-level scale up.		
4: Strong evidence of scale up either at district, regional or national level.		

Q2.3-KEQ1.3, I will now turn to the degree to which UNICEF support was aligned to national priorities and systems. On a scale of 1 to 4, with 4 being highly aligned and 1 being not aligned, how would you assess the extent to which UNICEF’s support to dropout programs since 2019 was aligned to national priorities and systems? Please provide reasons for the rating, and please do not hold back from providing negative feedback if necessary.

Degree	Non-humanitarian contexts	Humanitarian contexts (if applicable)
1: not at all		
2: only marginally		
3: somewhat aligned		
4: very well aligned		

Q2.4-KEQ1.2 and 2.2 On a scale of 1 to 4, how would you assess your levels of satisfaction with respect to the support received from UNICEF since 2019 in terms of quality, relevance, effectiveness and value for money?

Please provide a rating from 1 to 4 on a) technical assistance on dropout prevention and b) technical assistance on MFP programming. Kindly add a short explanation for your rating.

Degree
1: not satisfied
2: only marginally satisfied
3: somewhat satisfied
4: very satisfied
99: Not applicable

	Dropout prevention	MFPs programming
Quality		
Relevance to needs of ISCA at risk		
Value for money		
Effectiveness in reducing inequities (girls, CwD, COTM, others at risk of exclusion)		

Q2.5-KEQ1.2 and 2.2 Has UNICEF brokered partnerships with other entities such as donors, regional organisations, NGOs, global funds and similar that supported the MoE to prevent dropout or to improve access to MFPs for OOSC?

➔ If needed, remind the interviewee that we are analyzing the period between 2019 and 2022.

Q2.6-KEQ1.4 On a scale of 1 to 4, with 4 being highly aligned and 1 being not aligned, how would you assess the extent to which UNICEF efforts have been coherently aligned with other UN agencies' or development institutions' to successfully adapt or scale up interventions to reduce dropout? Please provide reasons for your rating.

1: not aligned with other UN agencies / other development institutions	Rating	Reasons
2: only marginally aligned with other UN agencies / other development institutions		
3: somewhat aligned with other UN agencies / other development institutions		
4: highly aligned with other UN agencies / other development institutions		
99: not applicable, there was no collaboration with other institutions in programming to reduce dropout		

Q2.7-KEQ1.2 and 2.2 What should UNICEF improve to better assist the MoE in reducing school dropout and improving access to MPF for OOSC?

→ Open question. May prompt: for example, guidance tools, study tours, evidence reviews... would your Ministry need anything in specific to support the prevention of dropout and the implementation and expansion of MFPs?

Q2.8-KEQ3.1. Last, I would like to learn about any potential impacts at systemic level in relation to MFPs. Since 2019, were there any changes in terms of policy reform around MFPs for OoSCA, or any increase in spending around MFPs for OoSCA? To what extent would you say that UNICEF supported any such changes?

→ Fill in the following table, making additional comments as needed.

	No evidence of UNICEF support / UNICEF did not support	Evidence of UNICEF support, with minimal or weak evidence of any positive change	Supported, with some evidence of positive change	Supported, with strong evidence of positive change at systemic level
Policy reforms for MFPs		Eg UNICEF ran some workshops on the topic of MFP but no results came out		Eg New policy on inclusive MFPs
Public budgeting to boost MFPs		Eg minimal (and hard to measure) increase in public spending on MFP following UNICEF advocacy		Eg New financial provisions to implement the New policy
New financing to MFPs			Eg new large GPE program on MFP	
None of the above				

Questionnaire 3 – Online survey for Implementing Partner(s)

- This questionnaire will be administered online only.
- To qualify for an interview, the IP must have had a PCA covering dropout prevention or MFPs programming between 2019 and 2022.
- The CO should have identified the emails of max three different focal points for IPs per country in questionnaire 1.
- Required to answer the questionnaire: IP focal point(s) who has/have been interfacing with UNICEF during 2019-2022, any specialist in charge of dropout prevention / MFP expansion, potentially any M&E / data experts / information management officers from the IP.
- The questionnaire may be refined based on pre-testing and feedback. The updated version can be seen at: <https://ee.kobotoolbox.org/x/Mqam8Gh2>

[intro] **This survey is intended to gather insights for a global evaluation of UNICEF initiatives addressing a) the reduction of school dropout and b) the support for students re-entering the formal education system, as well as interventions such as accelerated education, bridging programs, and second chance education. These initiatives are collectively referred to as 'Multiple and Flexible Pathways to learning' (MFPs). We appreciate your feedback. The survey is estimated to take about 20 minutes to complete. All responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will remain anonymous. The survey should be completed without any assistance from the UNICEF country office.**

Q3.1-KEQ1.1, 1.2 and 2.2 What technical support has UNICEF provided since 2019 (excluding anything related to the COVID-19 response) to support your organisation to a) prevent school dropout and b) implement and expand MFP programs? Please check all fields that apply.

Type of support (select all that apply)	Dropout prevention	MFPs programming
Shared guidelines or similar technical resources		
Generated data eg via MICS or similar survey		
Advocacy with MoE		
Facilitation of technical collaborations via partnerships with specialised service providers		
Study tours		
Facilitated evidence-driven responses via EMIS strengthening or strengthening of other national systems		
Provision of technical support to design interventions (eg how to design a cash transfer program, how to design an AEP)		
Generated studies such as evaluations, meta-analyses, other research		
Other [specify]		

Q3.2 On a scale of 1 to 4, how satisfied are you with the technical assistance (TA) provided by UNICEF since 2019? Please provide a synthetic rating on a) TA on dropout prevention and b) TA on MFP programming based on the table below

Degree
1: not satisfied
2: only marginally satisfied
3: somewhat satisfied
4: very satisfied
99: Not applicable

	Dropout prevention	MFPs programming
Quality of technical guidance and support		
Relevance of the technical support to the needs of children and adolescents at risk		
Effectiveness of UNICEF support in reducing inequities (girls, CwD, COTM, others at risk of exclusion)		

Q3.3 What do you like about the guidance and/or support received from UNICEF?

→ Open question, not compulsory

Q3.4 What should UNICEF improve to better assist your organisation?

→ Open question, not compulsory

Q3.5-KEQ1.3 On a scale of 1 to 4, with 4 being highly aligned and 1 being not aligned, how would you assess the extent to which UNICEF efforts have been coherently aligned with national priorities and systems to successfully adapt or scale up interventions to reduce dropout? Please provide reasons for your rating in a few bullet points.

	Rating	Reason
1: not aligned with national priorities and systems		
2: only marginally aligned with national priorities and systems		
3: somewhat aligned with national priorities and systems		
4: highly aligned with national priorities and systems		
99: I do not have enough evidence to answer		

Q3.6-KEQ1.4 On a scale of 1 to 4, with 4 being highly aligned and 1 being not aligned, how would you assess the extent to which UNICEF efforts have been coherently aligned with other UN agencies' or development institutions' to successfully adapt or scale up interventions to reduce dropout? Please provide reasons for your rating in a few bullet points.

1: not aligned with other UN agencies / other development institutions	Rating	Reason
2: only marginally aligned with other UN agencies / other development institutions		
3: somewhat aligned with other UN agencies / other development institutions		
4: highly aligned with other UN agencies / other development institutions		
99: I do not have enough evidence to answer		

Q3.7-KEQ1.2 in your opinion, what should UNICEF improve to better assist the MoE in reducing school dropout?

→ Open question, not compulsory

Q3.8-KEQ 2.2 in your opinion, what should UNICEF improve to better assist the MoE in improving access to MPF for OOSC?

→ Open question, not compulsory

Thank you for your feedback!

Questionnaire 4 online version – KII UNICEF Education Section, country office

- This questionnaire will be administered online only. It is the “online adapted version” of questionnaire 1 and is to be administered to “volunteer” UNICEF CO – outside of the group of 24 countries – who decide to voluntarily opt in the evaluation.
- Minor modifications to improve the formulation and flow of some questions may be made after testing. The updated questionnaire can be found at:
<https://ee.kobotoolbox.org/x/fYMmsdau>

[intro] **This survey is intended to gather insights for a global evaluation of UNICEF initiatives addressing a) the reduction of school dropout and b) the support for students re-entering the formal education system, as well as the prevention of dropout through means such as accelerated education, bridging programs, and second chance education. These initiatives are collectively referred to as 'Multiple and Flexible Pathways to learning' (MFPs). We appreciate your feedback. The survey is estimated to take about 20 minutes to complete. All responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will remain anonymous.**

Q4.1-KEQ1.2. Which of the following categories best describes the extent to which your interventions to reduce dropout were co-designed for scale with local actors, in alignment with national priorities? Please select one

Interventions were pilot projects only marginally linked to national systems	
Interventions are aligned to national systems and priorities, but not designed to scale up	
Interventions are aligned to national systems and priorities and have been replicated at the local level, without scaling to district level or national level.	
Interventions are aligned to national systems and priorities and have been scaled up at the district, regional (whenever regions are administrative entities within the country) or national level.	

Q4.2-KEQ1.2. Which of the following categories best describes the extent to which your interventions to reduce dropout were designed and executed with equity as a guiding principle?

Please select one

Interventions feature minimal provisions for disadvantaged groups in key activities or indicators	
Interventions feature some actions targeting disadvantaged groups, with some level of disaggregation in indicators and targets; yet the focus is not on targeting the root causes of inequities	
Decreasing inequities is a significant objective of the envisioned interventions, while not the main objective. Targets and indicators are duly disaggregated; relevant inter-sectionalities are considered and a high-quality gender analysis is available.	
Narrowing inequalities, transforming prejudicial norms, or empowering vulnerable groups is the main reason the intervention is undertaken. A high-quality gender analysis is available. Monitoring data on indicators are available and duly disaggregated.	

Q4.3-KEQ1.2. Which of the following best describes how your interventions to reduce dropout were informed by evidence of what caused school dropout? Please select one

Data on causes of school dropout is not available	
Data on causes of school dropout comes from FGDs, or small-scale needs assessment studies; such studies were neither peer reviewed nor run on representative samples	
Data on causes of school dropout comes from at least one recent study collecting primary data on dropout causes with a representative sample	
Data on causes of school dropout comes from at least one recent peer-reviewed study collecting primary data on dropout causes with a representative sample, and reflects findings from impact evaluations, or structured feedback from beneficiary communities.	

Q4.4-KEQ1.2. Based on the scale below, how would you rate the cost-effectiveness of UNICEF's interventions targeting dropout reductions in your country? Please select one

1: not cost effective	
2: only marginally cost-effective	
3: cost effective	
99: Cost-effectiveness was not measured	

Q4.5-KEQ1.4 On a scale of 1 to 4, with 4 being highly aligned and 1 being not aligned, how would you assess the extent to which UNICEF efforts have been coherently aligned with other UN agencies' or development institutions' to successfully adapt or scale up interventions to reduce dropout? Please select one

1: not aligned with other UN agencies / other development institutions	
2: only marginally aligned with other UN agencies / other development institutions	
3: somewhat aligned with other UN agencies / other development institutions	
4: highly aligned with other UN agencies / other development institutions	
99: not applicable, there was no collaboration with other institutions in programming to reduce dropout	

Q4.6-KEQ1.2 Based on your experience, would you agree that UNICEF resources were strategically allocated to adapt and scale up programmatic approaches that improved school retention of children at risk of dropping out?

→ Open question, not compulsory

Q4.7-KEQ2.1 Let's now focus on Multiple and Flexible Pathways (MFP) programming, that is, initiatives that support out-of-school children and adolescents (from pre-primary to upper secondary) to access learning opportunities. Examples include accelerated education programs via compressed curricula, bridging programs, second chance education. These can be part of the formal education system or outside the formal education system (i.e., as informal and/or non-formal education). Has your country office engaged in any MFP programs/interventions/activities?

[if no, end survey here]

Q4.8-KEQ2.1 Which of the following categories best describes the extent to which your interventions to improve access to MFPs were co-designed for scale with local actors, in alignment with national priorities? Select only one

	Comments
Interventions were pilot projects only marginally linked to national systems	
Interventions are aligned to national systems and priorities, but not designed to scale up	
Interventions are aligned to national systems and priorities and have been replicated at the local level, without scaling to district level or national level.	
Interventions are aligned to national systems and priorities and have been scaled up at the district, regional (whenever regions are administrative entities within the country) or national level.	

Q4.9-KEQ2.1 Of all the MFP programmatic responses implemented by UNICEF since 2019 in your country, which ones are the most successful in your opinion? What are the critical success factors?

→ Open question

Q4.10-KEQ2.1 While developing, implementing, adjusting, accelerating and scaling up MFP programmatic responses, did you use any tools, guidance, or technical support by the regional office and/or Headquarters? How did this help? Choose the rating that best reflects your experience. Select only one

	Comments
1: not at all	
2: helped a little	
3: helped a lot	
99: I have not used any	

Q4.11-KEQ2.1 What tools, guidance, strategies, or other forms of support that are not currently available could the regional office and Headquarters provide to help with developing, implementing and/or scaling up access to MFPs in your country?

→ Open question

Q4.12-KEQ2.2 Are the human resources within the CO sufficient to adequately support the implementation of MFPs, both in terms of numbers of staff and the technical strengths of staff members? Choose one:

Not adequate	
Somewhat adequate	
Adequate	

Q4.13-KEQ 2. Would you agree with the following statement? Please provide your feedback in a couple of paragraphs. "In my CO, UNICEF is adequately equipped to adjust, accelerate, and scale up its efforts to increase access to MFPs to learning and skills development, meeting the specific needs of the different profiles of OOSC."

Thank you for your feedback!

[end of document]