

EVALUATION

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**Didactic Versus Experiential Learning:  
What Works to Enhance Staff Learning, Development  
and Productivity during Times of Crises**

# **Evaluation of the M5S Staff Development Initiative**

**Final Report**

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## Acronyms

Name	Acronym
Country office	CO
Development Assistance Committee	DAC
Division of Human Resources	DHR
Evaluation question	EQ
General service staff	GS
Global Shared Services Centre	GSSC
Headquarters	HQ
Human resources	HR
Human rights-based approach	HRBA
Human Resource Development Team	HRDT
International professional	IP
Learning and development	L&D
Leaving no one behind	LNOB
Management masterclass	MMC
National Professional Officer	NO
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	OECD
PowerPoint presentation	PPP
Results-based management	RBM
Regional Joint Consultative Committee	RJCC
Regional management team	RMT
Regional Office	RO
UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia	ROSA
Sustainable Development Goals	SDGs
South Asia Region	SAR
Theory of change	ToC
Terms of reference	ToR
United Nations	UN
United Nations Development System	UNDS
United Nations Evaluation Group	UNEG
United Nations Children's Fund	UNICEF
UN Volunteers	UNV
Water, sanitation and hygiene	WASH

# Executive Summary

## A. Introduction and background

[South Asia Region \(SAR\)](#) is home to over 625 million children, accounting for slightly over a quarter of the world's child population. Progress was noted in several child-related outcomes prior to 2020, such as accelerated economic growth and a reduction in poverty.

UNICEF works in eight countries in South Asia: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. The UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA), based in Kathmandu, Nepal, provides technical support to these countries. Despite the considerable differences in country size, the region is affected by a poly-crisis, with multiple, complex, diverse, and concurrent crises, public health emergencies, climate change-induced natural disasters, and economic crises that push the most vulnerable beyond humanitarian thresholds.

Children's needs are often overlooked during emergencies, leaving them vulnerable to inadequate child protection and development. During humanitarian crises, they are often deprived of safe environments to learn and grow. To respond effectively to humanitarian crises in SAR, UNICEF seeks to optimize the use of internal and external surge mechanisms, including standby partnerships, rosters, and other talent-mapping initiatives, to improve UNICEF's ability to scale up its response.

UNICEF SAR's key programmatic areas include health, education, child protection, water, sanitation, and hygiene, social protection, and other cross-cutting programme areas, including gender, disability, resilience, and peacebuilding, as outlined in the [UNICEF Strategic Plan for 2022-2025](#). The strategic plan is structured to contribute to the full spectrum of child-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with particular emphasis on health, education, child protection, the environment, and equity, while also supporting broader goals such as climate action and gender equality. UNICEF SAR delivers on a number of core SDGs, including 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 13, and 16.

Human Resources (HR) is a core enabler in UNICEF's Strategic Plan 2022–2025, underpinning the organization's ability to achieve its ambitious goals for children worldwide. The HR function fosters a dynamic, inclusive, and high-performing organizational culture, which is recognized as essential for delivering results and accelerating progress toward the SDGs.

With a global commitment to responding to any situation, UNICEF headquarters (HQ) commissioned a series of reports and assessments that provided an unvarnished look at UNICEF's culture, revealing important areas where the mission's values were not always matched by the same level of support and care that staff members need and deserve as they carry out their vital work. This change in focus presupposed substantial organizational, operational, and programmatic changes in the UN system and created a great need for staff capacity development.

## B. Evaluation object

In response to the above and the frequent need for available, relevant capacity, [UNICEF ROSA developed a new approach to learning, the M5S Staff Development Initiative](#), comprising six components: staff exchange, stretch, surge, shadow, strength-based coaching, and mentorship. The guiding principles for the M5S include:

- a) Encouraging development and capacity building at all levels.
- b) Fairness in the selection of participants.
- c) Office priorities are considered.
- d) Voluntary participation for both staff members and offices.
- e) Carrying forward experiences and knowledge sharing.
- f) A unified approach for all participating offices.

The M5S Initiative complements other existing learning opportunities by being person-centred and accessible to most staff. The M5S staff learning and development initiative was introduced in January 2022 and is being implemented to date. The initiative does not have a stand-alone budget but is funded from the overall staff development budget provided to country offices (COs).

## C. Evaluation purpose and scope

The **purpose** of the evaluation was to examine the strategic adjustments needed in response to changing workforce demands. Hence, the focus was on assessing the relevance and strategic positioning, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability and scalability of the M5S. Specifically, the evaluation sought to identify and document key results, lessons learned, good practices and successful strategies, and innovations in designing and implementing the M5S initiatives; identify opportunities to enhance staff learning modalities across offices in South Asia; and provide recommendations to guide UNICEF SAR's decisions on the adjustments needed to strengthen the M5S programme.

The **scope of the evaluation** covered the period from January 2022 to June 2024. The evaluation focused on the M5S staff development initiative, which is still ongoing and cuts across all six types of the M5S learning components. **Geographically**, the evaluation covered all eight countries in SAR and the Regional Office. Since the M5S is accessible to all categories of staff, **participants in the evaluation** were selected from all categories of staff, disaggregated into management staff, technical/programme staff, and general service staff. The evaluation sought to answer questions as outlined in the TOR.

The key stakeholders in implementing the M5S are staff in the South Asia region. This includes staff across all job categories, including general staff, national officers, international professionals, and management. The Human Resources section in HQ is also an important stakeholder, as it is responsible for developing relevant staff training and development guidelines and policies for the organization.

## D. Evaluation audience

Findings from this evaluation will be used by the ROSA, SAR country offices, and the human resources sections across UNICEF. The findings and lessons learned will inform efforts within UNICEF ROSA to scale up and guide future iterations of the programme. The knowledge generated from this exercise will be used and adapted in the design and operationalization of the M5S as it is implemented in other regions.

## E. Evaluation design and methodology

This **evaluation complies with the guidelines and standards** set by the UN and UNICEF and adheres to the OECD/DAC principles<sup>52</sup> of impartiality and independence, credibility, usefulness, and participation.

<sup>52</sup> OECD/DAC: [Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance](#), 1991.

The evaluation used a mixed-methods approach and applied the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability.

The [methodology](#) comprised the following:

- Desk studies.
- Quantitative data collection.
- Two types of semi-structured interviews.
- Focus group discussions.
- A supervisor survey.

All data collection focused on positive and negative experiences with the M5S initiative. In addition, the interviews allowed for suggestions for changes to the types of activities and approach. This opportunity makes recommendations to be inclusive, stakeholder-owned, and nationally relevant.

Because all staff categories are eligible for the M5S learning, the scope of [evaluation participants](#) was narrowed by using selection criteria. In total, 52 staff across all staff categories and all SAR countries formed the sample for this evaluation.

[Data validation and analysis](#) used data source triangulation, analysing data from relevant statistics on the M5S and other learning initiatives, semi-structured interviews/supervisor surveys, and the desk review findings analysing the didactics of the M5S and other selected learning initiatives.

The methodological approach complied with all [ethical standards](#) set forth in [UNEG 2020 Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations](#) through careful selection of evaluation participants, selection of methods, design of data collection tools, and by providing anonymity in the evaluation response and reporting.

[Key limitations and constraints](#) included the lack of monitoring of the effects of all learning on changes in individual performance, the subsequent delivery to the CO framework, and ultimately changes in child opportunities. This could not be [mitigated](#). The evaluation provided examples of essential effects.

[Quality assurance](#) took place at three levels:

- By the consultant during the data collection and analysis
- By the Evaluation Management Group, being a ROSA staff group, which supported the work on a daily basis and was the receiving group when deliverables were submitted.
- By the Evaluation Reference Group, which was composed of a representative group of SAR staff.

## F. Findings

### Relevance of the M5S design and approach – strategic positioning

[Overall finding](#): The M5S proved highly relevant when viewed against UNICEF HR's person-centred focus. Individual learning was relevant for both career development and filling new needs in country offices.

With no strategy or defined expectations for the use of the M5S, and with the activity being corporate rather than programmatic, the usual assessment of national and international commitments did not apply. Hence, the relevance was assessed in relation to UNICEF's performance in SAR.

Notably, more women than men participated in the learning, even though male staff are overrepresented in SAR. No gender criteria were applied in the application and selection process.

## Effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of the M5S Initiative

**Overall finding:** The M5S Initiative provided immediately applicable skills. Hence, no time was wasted translating more general knowledge and skills into locally applicable knowledge and skills. Although some of the M5S components were viewed as relatively costly, the investment was viewed as largely cost-effective.

The desk review period showed that there is no dedicated CO or SAR annual report on learning or on the M5S and its effects. Only output-level recording exists in terms of the number of participants (m/f, job category, and country) for each learning initiative.

With no planned budget for learning, no strategy for achieving results, and no defined achievement of results, effectiveness and efficiency were assessed against a general management and learner sense of value for money. Initiatives such as surge and stretch and those that require the staff member to be away from their duty station were seen as costly, particularly for relatively small offices.

The M5S has created opportunities for staff to learn and acquire new skills, and it has also enabled staff to access other staff development modalities that would otherwise not be available. The evaluation provided a range of examples of changes in practice and the development of professional networks across borders, while also showing a substantial need for uniform, actionable principles for the use of the M5S. The evaluation found that the M5S added substantially to other learning opportunities by being person-centred, providing immediately applicable skills rather than knowledge alone, and being eligible for all staff categories. Furthermore, the content and purpose of the learning change with a changing context.

For these initiatives to be effective, there is a need to ensure that adequate backstopping arrangements are in place, particularly when a staff member is moving away from their duty station. This may include replacing the staff member with another staff member who is also in training. Such arrangements ensure that staff who are backstopping are not overstretched.

## Impact and effect

**Overall finding:** The M5S person-centred design has enabled learners to engage in new activities and take on new areas of responsibility with ease, benefiting both the organization and the children. Improvements in performance were noted before and after participation in staff development.

The **positive impact** involves improvement at both the professional/technical level and the personal level, e.g., engaging more in debates because of new, robust hands-on experiences that strengthen confidence; gaining a wider lens on one's own challenges, making them manageable; and/or learning new practices to address old problems.

The **negative impact** relates predominantly to the absence of a strategy or similar, and to the supporting systems and structures, e.g., the absence of follow-up procedures or the lack of feedback or explanation when the learning is not accepted. Such neglect in support and communication negatively affects the effectiveness of the learning, self-esteem, and daily motivation.

**Sustainability** was assessed from the perspective of sustaining the positive effects of the learning initiative and is also presented in the conclusions, lessons learned, and recommendations. The M5S training suite includes staff development options such as mentoring, stretch, and job shadowing that can be implemented in the same country/office without incurring significant costs, ensuring sustainability.

## G. Conclusions and lessons learned

**Overall conclusion:** The M5S initiative is well suited to a rapidly changing environment with substantial needs for localized thematic and broader professional learning that is immediately applicable to individual staff in delivering on the CO framework. The SWOT analysis found that the main strength lies in individually designed learning that provides immediately applicable skills, while the main weakness of the M5S in its current form

is the lack of simple support systems and structures, e.g., an M5S handbook and monitoring of changes in approaches and modes of operation, including the recording of the costs of the current use of each of the six M5S components.

**Relevance:** The corporate HR focus on a people-centred approach proved relevant to learning. Consistent with UNICEF's global strategy, the inconsistency between UNICEF HQs' priorities and the UN's overall priorities, e.g., the UNSD 2018 principles, limits the thematic choices for learning.

**Effectiveness:** The M5S provided immediately applicable skills. Hence, no time was wasted translating more general knowledge and skills into locally applicable knowledge and skills. Although some of the M5S components were viewed as relatively costly, the investment was viewed as largely cost-effective.

**Impact:** Different experiences were identified during the implementation of the M5S, and these vary across initiatives. In the absence of a programme document and a theory of change, there were no systems in place for the systematic, evidence-based establishment of impact at the corporate, individual, and child/family levels.

**Replicability/sustainability:** With well-considered adaptability to both internal and external needs and factors, the M5S is highly replicable in a rapidly changing global context – even with limited funding. The training suite includes staff development options such as mentoring, stretch, and job shadowing that can be implemented in the same country/office without incurring significant costs.

**Opportunities** exist in the vast, unexploited global experience, while the main threats are rapidly emerging challenges and the minimal funds allocated for building new capacities.

**Key lessons learned** included:

- **Relevance:** Continuous learning should be prioritized for all staff categories so that UNICEF personnel have the skills necessary for the organization to deliver on its mandate to meet children's needs in both developmental and emergency contexts.
- **Effectiveness:** The absence of monitoring the effect of learning at the individual, corporate, and child levels makes learning the end-target rather than the means to the end.
- **Cost-effectiveness:** The evaluation findings indicated that the M5S can be modified to be less resource-intensive without losing effectiveness.
- **Impact:** The M5S Initiative provides both professional skills and a relevant professional network, as well as a broader understanding of the context in which UNICEF operates.
- **Replicability/sustainability:** With well-considered adaptability to both internal and external needs and factors, the M5S is highly replicable in a rapidly changing global context – even in times of limited funding.

## H. Recommendations

**Overall recommendation:** The M5S Initiative has proven replicable, albeit with some amendments needed to align with the current SAR and global situation and to connect new skills and evidence-based delivery to CO and RO frameworks.

- a) Each of the following recommendations includes details, proposed actions, and a schedule for implementation, including the sections that will be leading implementation:
- b) Link country framework capacity gaps to learning and documentation for learner delivery to the framework and its outcome. ROSA Human Resources section headings. CO Learning Focal Points introduce and use the new M5S approach. **Priority: Short-term.**
- c) With an increasing need for rapidly adaptable learning, the M5S should continue to be a learning opportunity and adapt to meet emerging corporate needs. ROSA Human Resources section heading development. COs are using the tools under the guidance of the learning focal points. **Priority: Medium term**

- d) Develop an M5S strategy, theory of change, M5S SOP, and detailed step-by-step training materials for mentors, coaches, and peers, reflecting the above recommendations. ROSA heading development of documents with support from SAR CO HR section heads, based on CO feedback. **Priority: Short-term.**
- e) All staff who have participated in surge or stretch assignments during emergencies should be added to the surge roster so that UNICEF has a cadre of staff ready to be deployed at the onset of an emergency. ROSA HR section heading implementation. **Priority: Short-term**

The full schedule for implementing the changes is proposed to be from January 2025 to the end of 2026, with the first evidence of the learning effect by the end of 2027. Priority for each recommendation has been set as either short, medium, or long term, with an indication of the section that will lead implementation.

# 1

## Introduction and background

This report presents the main findings, conclusions, and recommendations of an evaluation of the M5S Staff Development Initiative, implemented by the ROSA Human Resources section in collaboration with UNICEF country offices in SAR. The evaluation was commissioned by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and conducted by independent consultant Dr. Birgitte Woel in 2024. The purpose of the evaluation was to examine the strategic adjustments needed in response to changing workforce demands. Accordingly, the focus was on assessing the relevance/strategic positioning, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability/scalability of the M5S Initiative. The objectives of the evaluation were to: (i) identify and document key results, lessons learned, good practices/successful strategies, and innovations in designing and implementing the M5S Initiative; (ii) guide UNICEF SAR’s decisions on adjustments needed to strengthen the M5S Initiative; and (iii) identify opportunities to enhance staff learning modalities across offices in South Asia. The intended audience is UNICEF country office human resources staff and learning focal points within and outside SAR.

This report is organized into the following sections:

- Section 1: Describes the learning context within which the M5S Staff Development Initiative was implemented and includes the SAR staff profile and the relevance of staff development.
- Section 2: Presents a detailed description of the evaluation object, including its scale and complexity, the various M5S components, and other learning initiatives being implemented.
- Section 3: Outlines the evaluation, including its purpose, objectives, and scope.
- Section 4: Contains an outline of the methodology and a summary of the evaluation’s limitations.
- Section 5: Presents the evaluation findings in relation to the evaluation questions and evaluation criteria.
- Section 6: Provides the conclusions and lessons learned.
- Section 7: Outlines recommendations to strengthen the programme and includes details on the section responsible for implementation, as well as the prioritization of each recommendation.

### 1.1 The learning context

#### 1.1.1 South Asia Region context

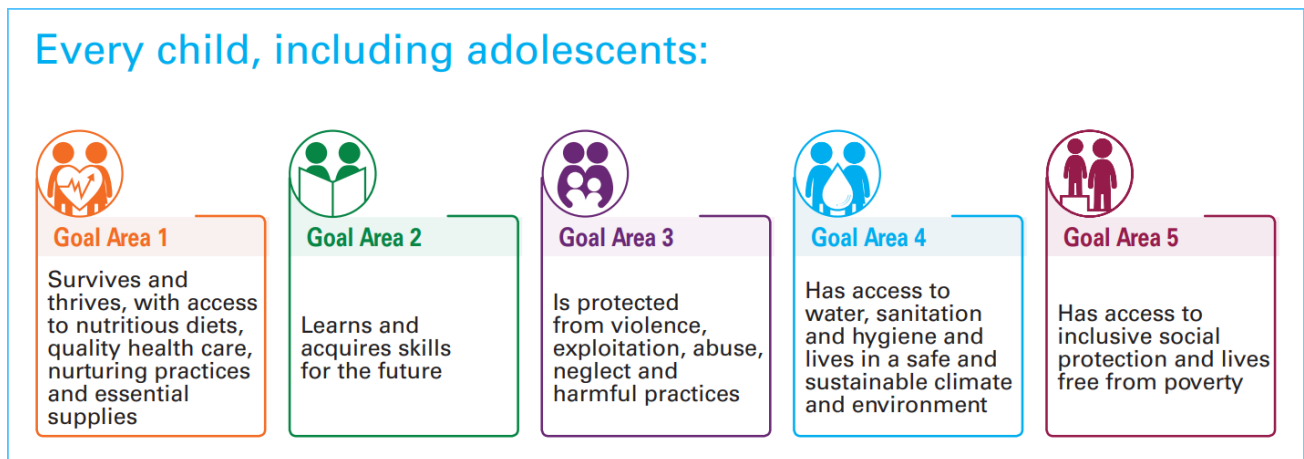
The South Asia Region (SAR) is home to over 625 million children<sup>53</sup>, accounting for slightly over a quarter of the world’s child population. Progress was observed in several child-related outcomes before 2020, including accelerated economic growth and a reduction in poverty. For example, the number of people living in extreme poverty fell from 500 to 156 million between 2007 and 2019, despite a growing population. However, these gains were upended by the COVID-19 pandemic. In sharp contrast to pre-COVID economic growth projections, all economies in the region posted negative growth rates in 2020, except for Bangladesh, where growth slowed sharply. Public external debt increased in at least half of the SAR countries, resulting in a higher proportion of revenue used for debt servicing.

UNICEF works in eight countries in South Asia: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. The UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA), based in Kathmandu, Nepal, provides technical support to these countries. Despite the considerable differences in country size, the region is affected by a poly-crisis, with multiple, complex, diverse, and concurrent crises, public health emergencies, climate change-induced natural disasters, and economic crises that push the most vulnerable beyond humanitarian thresholds.

In the past two decades, more than half of South Asians, or 750 million people, have been affected by at least one climate-related disaster, including flooding, drought, and cyclones. Although South Asia accounts for only 8 percent of global carbon emissions, the region is among the most affected. Climate change is expected to displace 62 million South Asians by 2050.<sup>54</sup>

UNICEF's Strategic Plan 2022–2025 is structured to contribute to the full spectrum of child-related SDGs, with particular emphasis on health, education, child protection, the environment, and equity, while also supporting broader goals such as climate action and gender equality. Specifically, UNICEF activities under Goal Area 1 address SDG 2 (zero hunger) and SDG 3 (good health and well-being). SDG 4 (quality education) is addressed through Goal Area 2 by providing access to quality education and skills for the future. By protecting children from abuse, neglect, and harmful practices, UNICEF directly contributes to SDG 5 (gender equality) and SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) - Goal Area 3. Providing access to water, sanitation, hygiene, and climate resilience addresses SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and SDG 13 (climate action). Lastly, UNICEF activities under Goal 5, focused on inclusive social protection, poverty reduction, and non-discrimination, contribute to SDG 1 (no poverty) and SDG 10 (reduced inequalities). Gender equality (SDG 5) is embedded across all goal areas, with a focus on ending harmful practices and promoting girls' empowerment. The UNICEF Strategic Plan 2022-2025 is presented in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: UNICEF Strategic Plan Goal Areas



In delivering this, UNICEF SAR applies the following management approaches:

- Being child-centred and results-based.
- Achieving equitable results.
- Promoting efficient and effective operations and cooperation.
- Innovating by doing things differently to add value for children.
- Acting at scale.
- Documenting evidence, change, impact, and challenges.

Acknowledging that children's needs are often overlooked during emergencies, leaving them deprived of safe environments to learn and grow, UNICEF personnel are a key facet of the humanitarian response that enables the organization to respond to complex and protracted emergencies. This includes having human resources that are agile and equipped with the relevant skills to be deployed in emergency situations. As SAR is a disaster and crisis-prone region, there is an immediate need for a range of regionally relevant skills. In this light, the M55 Initiative was developed.

Source: UNICEF Strategic Plan 2022-2025

<sup>54</sup> UNICEF SAR Annual Report, 2022.

## 1.2 SAR workforce profile and capacity

UNICEF human resources are a key facet of the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan. Human resources management is highlighted in the SP enablers and change strategies, from its emphasis on forging “an agile and responsive business model” to “decentralized and empowered governance and decision-making,” positioning “innovation” as a widespread mode of thinking and working and fostering “dynamic and inclusive people and culture.”<sup>55</sup>

The above includes a human resources function that is responsible for shaping an agile, people-centred workforce motivated, engaged, and equipped to deliver on UNICEF’s mandate. This involves supporting managers in enhancing staff motivation, managing performance effectively, and ensuring staff are clear on expectations and provided with opportunities for continuous learning and professional development. Furthermore, the HR function consolidates talent planning, acquisition, onboarding, performance management, development, and succession planning. This ensures UNICEF attracts, develops, and retains the right talent, with a strong emphasis on diversity, inclusion, and mobility. The HR function also ensures UNICEF is fit-for-purpose during emergencies by establishing adequate support structures and facilitating the rapid deployment of staff in crisis situations.

UNICEF staff are organized into three categories: General Service (GS), National Officer (NO), and International Professional (IP) staff<sup>56</sup>. GS staff are locally recruited and provide administrative and support services across all areas of the organization, both at headquarters and at field duty stations. NO staff are nationals of the country where their duty station is located and perform functions of a technical and professional nature. The requirements for the NO staff category are similar to those of IP staff, with a stronger emphasis on in-depth knowledge of the local setting, institutions, and partners. Lastly, IP staff are recruited internationally and serve in all duty stations globally. They hold leadership, managerial, or specialist functions that require technical expertise. Senior staff or Director-level positions are also part of this category.

The total staff working in UNICEF SAR is 2,052, spanning all categories and levels of staff. An analysis of this complement shows that 387 (19 per cent) are IP staff; 1040 (51 per cent) are NO; and 625 (30 per cent) fall within the GS category.

**Table 1: UNICEF SAR staff by gender**

SAR UNICEF OFFICES	NUMBER OF STAFF	MALE %	FEMALE %
Afghanistan	561	76	24
Bangladesh	311	55	45
Bhutan	34	44	56
India	462	54	46
Maldives	25	40	60
Nepal	150	53	47
Pakistan	361	64	36
Sri Lanka	51	39	61
ROSA, Nepal	97	45	55
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>2,052</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>39</b>

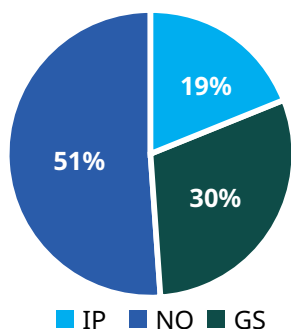
Source: Insight HR Dashboard - 18 June 2024

A gendered analysis of staff in the region shows that 1,251 (61 per cent) are male and 801 (39 per cent) are female. The graph below illustrates the complexity of staff training, as 19 per cent of staff are international

<sup>55</sup> [2024 Executive Board Orientation](#)

<sup>56</sup> [Compensation-benefits-and-wellbeing](#)

**Figure 2: Distribution of SAR staff by job category**



Source: Insight HR Dashboard -18 June 2024<sup>6</sup>

and often hold mid- or senior management positions for 2-5 years in the same country, after which they must relocate to a new duty station. UNICEF's Strategic Plan 2022-2025 requires gender parity at all levels of the workforce, especially among IP.

The distribution of staff categories, with 70 per cent being staff in management or technical positions, and thus with a frequent job rotation, explains the high need for additional staff learning, and this need constantly changes depending on the expertise of incoming staff and the rapidly changing situation of the SAR countries.

Thus, learning comes and goes and may not always match the actual context. It also means that optimal use of staff capacity may be difficult. This is considered in the evaluation.

<sup>57</sup> As of June 2024. IP= International Professional; NO = National Professional Officer; GS = General service staff.

### 2.1 Background for the object of the evaluation – the M5S Initiative

Between 2018 and 2019, UNICEF headquarters (HQ) commissioned a series of reports and assessments that provided an unvarnished look at UNICEF's culture, how the organization collaborates, and what could be done better to carry out the mission. The reports found an overwhelming pride in and commitment to UNICEF's mission among staff members. But they also revealed important areas where the mission's virtue was not always matched by the same level of support and care that staff members need and deserve as they carry out their vital work.

For UNICEF, this resulted in UNICEF's Journey of Organizational Transformation, with a focus on:

- Improving accountability and response mechanisms in the event of wrongdoing.
- Reforming the human resources system to make it more people centric.
- Strengthening the practice of core values of care, respect, integrity, trust, and accountability, every day and in every office.

Recognizing the need for capacity development and in line with UNICEF's Strategic Plan 2022-2025, the Division of Human Resources, now called the Division of People and Culture, developed learning programmes and initiatives to strengthen human resources capacity across the organization. These efforts also support the implementation of the OneHR Strategy and the Global HR Delivery Model and help deliver on the Strategic Plan 2022–2025. The OneHR Strategy states that between 2022 and 2025,<sup>58</sup> DHR will develop learning programmes and initiatives to strengthen human resources capacity across the organization. By doing this, we will enable the OneHR Community to have the relevant skills to be the strategic partners the organization needs. This will also support the implementation of the OneHR Strategy and the Global HR Delivery Model and help deliver on the Strategic Plan 2022–2025. The M5S Initiative is, therefore, a direct response to this objective of the strategy<sup>59</sup>.

This need for corporate changes, staff support, and staff development should be viewed in light of the United Nations' Development System (UNDS) 2018 change in principles. The emphasis on a strong focus on Results-based Management (RBM), a Human Rights-based Approach (HRBA), Leaving No One Behind (LNOB), the humanitarian-development-peacebuilding, or triple nexus, with a seamless transition from one type of support to the next and similar seamless collaboration between UN agencies, required changes in systems and structures. These radical systemic and programmatic changes were aimed at making UN initiatives more effective, efficient, and coherent.<sup>60</sup> This change in focus presupposed substantial organizational, operational, and programmatic changes within the UN system and created a significant need for staff capacity development<sup>61</sup>.

In response to increased and emerging needs for enhanced capacity, the Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA) in 2019 developed a comprehensive and innovative staff learning initiative to strengthen staff

<sup>58</sup> UNICEF Procedure on Learning and Development. Document Number: DHR/PROCEDURE/2017/005  
Effective Date: 23 August 2017.

<sup>59</sup> UNICEF One HR Strategy

<sup>60</sup> UNICEF Information Note: Update on implementation efforts on the repositioning of the United Nations development system, 2023

<sup>61</sup> Applying the OECD/DAC definition of capacity development involving systems, structures, hr (number and relevant experience), infrastructure and work environment.

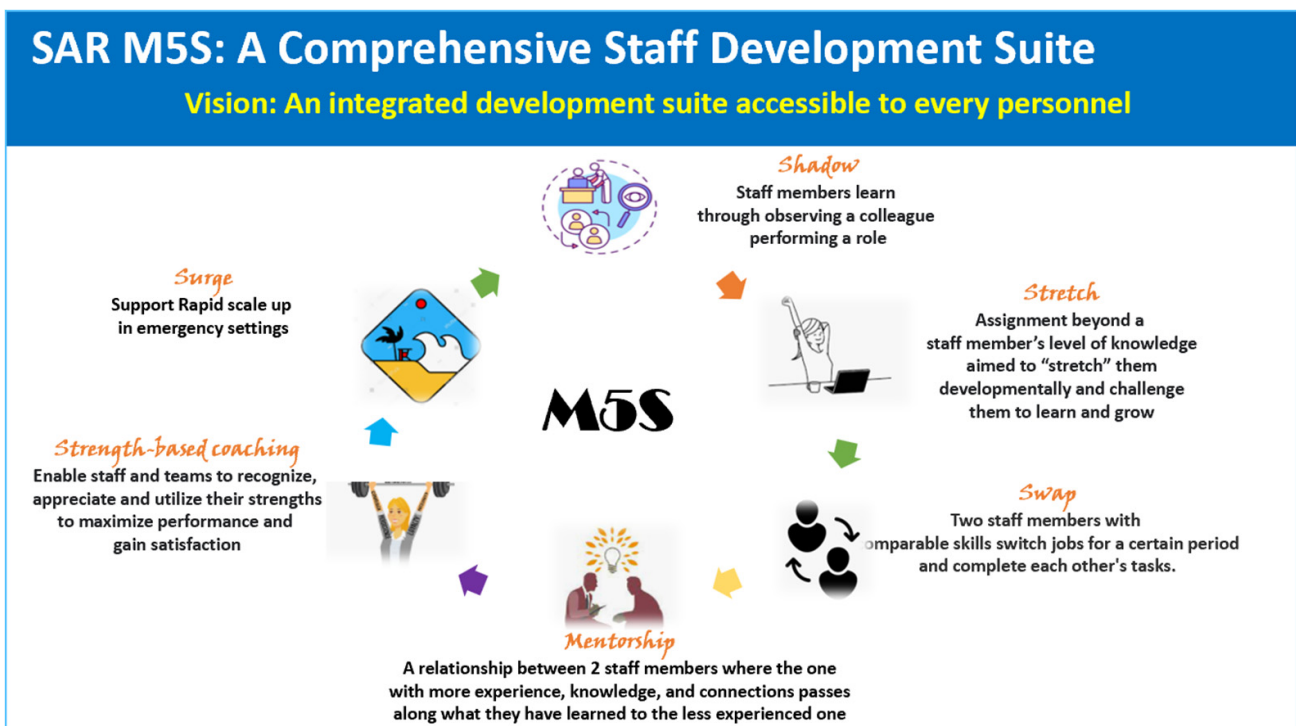
capacity and accelerate the delivery of UNICEF programmes throughout the region. This innovative and inclusive learning initiative draws on Knowles’ organizational theories, recognizing that employees are drawn to and retained by organizations for a variety of reasons, the most important of which is the ability to meet their needs and demonstrate their value. At the same time, organizations must fulfil their duties to meet their goals and objectives. To do so, organizations must develop and enhance staff capacity to deliver their programmes in both normal and crisis conditions.

To make the conceptual framework actionable, the M5S Suites was introduced as the methodological framework. It comprises six components: Mentoring, stretch, surge, shadow, swap, and strength-based coaching. The approach acknowledges the diverse needs of adults while making use of the range of accumulated experiences and personal motivations. It focuses on equipping adults with skills they can immediately apply to their careers.

## 2.2 The scale and complexity of the evaluation

The evaluation object was the M5S staff development initiative implemented in the South Asia region. In developing the M5S, ROSA drew on the human resources departments and the L&D focal points. ROSA developed the M5S composition and guidance, coordinates implementation, and monitors progress on the number of staff, job categories, and gender attending the learning. The figure below presents the components of the M5S, which are described in the ensuing sections.

Figure 3: M5S Staff Development Initiative Components



Source: M5S Staff Development Initiative pptx

The M5S Suite consists of mentoring (which was in place since 2019) and five other learning components or opportunities, acknowledging the needs in the region. These components have the following characteristics.

The ROSA [mentorship](#) programme was designed to align with the UNICEF Global Mentoring framework<sup>62</sup> and to complement the global initiative, with a focus on meeting the specific needs in the SAR region, including mentoring REACH graduates and Young UNICEF. REACH is a six-month professional development programme designed for national staff seeking international careers<sup>63</sup>. Young UNICEF is an employee resource group and a global network of UNICEF's young professionals aged 35 and below working across all job categories.<sup>64</sup> Based on a mutually-agreed plan, mentees, mentors, and the programme coordinator will collaborate to meet the mentee's learning goals by defining specific learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying relevant learning resources, selecting and implementing learning strategies, and evaluating the learning results.

A segment of the programme will cover reverse mentoring. On a voluntary basis, and upon indication of interest, senior managers will be paired with Young UNICEF members who can provide fresh perspectives and ways of working that will benefit these more established colleagues with many years of work in UNICEF. The success of the programme depends significantly on having a robust pool of mentors.<sup>65</sup>

[Strength-based coaching](#)<sup>66</sup> is based on a strength analysis using the Clifton Strengths Assessment.<sup>67</sup> This is used for both individual and team strength analysis. UNICEF pays the costs of the assessment, while the subsequent coaching on how best to apply one's own strengths in each context is borne by the learner. The coaching is relevant for both individual staff and groups of staff, with the intention of improving teamwork.

[Job-shadowing](#)<sup>68</sup> allows a staff member to learn by sharing professional space and time with another colleague who performs the role they are interested in learning about. The South Asia Job Shadowing Initiative will foster a culture of learning within the region, enabling staff members to learn new skills, explore career and professional development opportunities, expand their professional networks, and gain a better understanding of a different role or context. The duration can vary depending on the purpose and extent of the learning. The main participating offices to date are the regional and country offices in the UNICEF South Asia region. However, the initiative is open to being extended to other offices outside of SAR.

[Staff Exchange](#)<sup>69</sup> or SWAP is an inter-office and regional initiative within UNICEF, focusing on locally recruited staff, aimed at fostering development, versatility, and engagement. This component promotes organizational learning by facilitating the exchange of knowledge, experiences, and best practices within and between sections/COs/Ros, and by strengthening capacity through exposure to experiences, skills, knowledge, and good practices. The recommended duration is three months, with the possibility of extending if relevant.

The [Stretch](#)<sup>70</sup> component is a short-term assignment outside a staff member's regular work that requires them to 'stretch' and develop new skills. It might involve work at a higher level, a different type of work, or work in a different context (e.g., emergency duty station, Headquarters, more complex environments, etc.). The working arrangement can be part-time or full-time, and conducted remotely or on-site. Participants can also conduct the stretch assignment through a hybrid model that combines the two. Stretch assignments can be internal (within the same country/duty station) but in a different or the same function/team, or external (in another country). The duration of a stretch assignment may range from one to three months, with the possibility of modification.

The [Surge](#)<sup>71</sup> component is a response to the RO's need to reactivate and strengthen global Emergency preparedness Planning<sup>72</sup> and the Regional Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) to ensure the timely deployment of committed, competent, and trained human resources to save children's lives during the

<sup>62</sup> Summary of Peer-to-Peer Coaching and Mentoring for IMOs

<sup>63</sup> [REACH \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

<sup>64</sup> [Young UNICEF Global Strategy, 2023-2030](#)

<sup>65</sup> Concept note for UNICEF South Asia ROSA Mentorship Programme.

<sup>66</sup> Concept note for Strengths Coaching for Individual Staff, Managers and Teams.

<sup>67</sup> How the Clifton Strengths Assessment Works.

<sup>68</sup> Concept note for Job Shadowing Initiative Guidelines.

<sup>69</sup> Concept note for SAR Staff Exchange Between Regions.

<sup>70</sup> SAR Stretch Assignment Guidelines.

<sup>71</sup> Concept note for ROSA surge and concept note for SAR Surge.

<sup>72</sup> [UNICEF Emergency Preparedness Funding Initiatives – Fact Sheet](#)

rapid onset of emergencies. These mechanisms are managed and deployed at the regional level by either the regional chief of HR or the regional emergency HR focal point. They are commonly viewed as an agency's first line of response. The RRM's include both national and international professional staff working in the affected region who are nominated (sometimes cyclically) and are normally used for deployments in the region, although they can be used for worldwide deployments. They are vetted within the region. Surge assignments are generally short (from a minimum of seven days to a maximum of three months for appropriately qualified, internal staff and up to six months for external personnel) and require people to start working in the affected CO as soon as possible. Remote work can be considered on a case-by-case basis.<sup>73</sup>

Successful surge capacity is the result of a continual process, encompassing preparedness planning, response, and transition/recovery programming. Establishing such capacity, therefore, requires a holistic, organization-wide approach, in which agency mandate, structure, culture, and leadership are just as critical as protocols, processes, and systems. Surge learning addresses emergency needs at levels 1, 2, or 3. Staff trained under Surge are enrolled in the regional emergency roster.

The guiding principles for the M5S Initiative involve:

- a) Encouraging development and capacity building at all levels.
- b) Fairness in the selection of participants.
- c) Office priorities are considered.
- d) Voluntary for both staff members and offices.
- e) Carrying forward experiences and knowledge sharing.
- f) A unified approach for all participating offices.

The **eligibility** to participate is divided into two categories:

**Category A: The complete M5S Suite**

- All staff members holding a fixed term, continuing or permanent appointments in any of the South Asia Offices
- They have served at least two years in the duty station (Junior Professional Officers (JPOs) may be flexible)
- Satisfactory performance for the last 2 years

**Category B: Surge, shadow, and mentorship**

- All personnel (including consultants, United Nations Volunteers (UNVs), and interns) provided that the length of their contract covers the activity duration.

Regarding **implementation status**, the initiative was launched on 15 January 2022. The initiative is still ongoing and forms part of the larger UNICEF L&D programme and delivers to this agenda.<sup>74</sup>

**Geographically**, the M5S covers all staff in all eight countries in the SAR region and the UNICEF regional office.

The M5S is financed regionally with US\$100,000, from which the country offices (COs) can seek L&D support. The support received from UNICEF HQs has been reduced from US\$100,000 to US\$80,000 annually. In addition, the M5S Initiative is funded through country office budgets, as with other L&D initiatives. This amount is, however, not specific to the M5S but covers all staff development initiatives that are conducted. Senior management endorses and sponsors these initiatives through the Country Management Team (CMT), the Regional Human Resource Development Team, and the Regional Joint Consultative Committee (RJCC).

Various stakeholders are involved in the operation of the M5S initiative. These are presented in Table 2 below, outlining each stakeholder and the role that they play in the implementation of the initiative.

<sup>73</sup> [Human Resources in Emergencies](#)

<sup>74</sup> Section 1.3

**Table 2: Key stakeholders and beneficiaries in the implementation of staff development initiatives**

Stakeholder	Role
Division of Human Resources (HQ)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Works with the global OneHR community, partners, and clients to ensure that UNICEF staff are provided with the work environment and support to give their best for every child.</li> <li>➤ Develops global human resource development guidelines and policies for the organization</li> </ul>
Learning focal points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Coordinated staff development at the country level.</li> </ul>
Learning and Development Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Works with management and staff to establish priorities and cost for the costed Annual Learning &amp; Development Plan</li> <li>➤ Monitors and supports the implementation of group learning activities</li> <li>➤ Records and reviews individual requests (as per the below considerations), and channels to the Representative for consideration</li> <li>➤ Records and tracks all approved learning activities that involve staff absences or budget expenditure (both individual and office priorities).</li> </ul>
Supervisor/Section Chief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Assesses the staff members' and team's potential, identify gaps, and discuss suitable group and individual learning activities and opportunities, in line with the staff member's career aspirations</li> <li>➤ Ensures appropriate time for learning activities, when approved</li> <li>➤ Ensures feedback sessions are conducted, as appropriate</li> <li>➤ Reviews and rejects or recommend for Representative's consideration, all study leave, or all requests for learning that will incur a cost or time commitment of staff within the team.</li> </ul>
Senior management (Representative/Deputy Representative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Considers staff learning requests and approves/rejects as appropriate.</li> </ul>
Regional Human Resource Development Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Endorsement of regional human resource development initiatives</li> <li>➤ Part of the Regional Management Team</li> </ul>
Beneficiaries	
Staff across all job categories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Proactively and continuously develops their knowledge, competencies, and skills by identifying together with his/her manager individual developmental needs and suitable learning opportunities.</li> <li>➤ Agrees on learning needs with the supervisor at the performance planning stage of the performance management cycle (at the start of the year) and reflects these in Achieve. If staff are undertaking tertiary or other studies outside of UNICEF, they are asked to also reflect these in their Achieve development plan.</li> </ul>

UNICEF, through its Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA) and country offices, acts as a duty bearer by providing technical support, advocacy, and capacity-building to strengthen systems that deliver on child rights.

The main rights holders under the UNICEF ROSA MSS initiative are children and adolescents across the eight countries of South Asia. The initiative specifically targets the most marginalized and vulnerable groups, including:

- Children living in poverty, remote or hard-to-reach areas, and urban slums.
- Adolescent girls, who face unique challenges related to gender inequality, child marriage, and limited access to education and health services.
- Children affected by humanitarian crises, disasters, and conflict.
- Children with disabilities and those facing multiple deprivations, such as a lack of legal identity, poor access to water and sanitation, or exposure to violence and exploitation.

UNICEF ROSA's programming is rights-based and prioritizes these children and adolescents as the primary rights holders, aiming to address their intersecting disadvantages and fulfill their rights to survival, development, protection, and participation

## 2.3 Learning opportunities outside the M5S Initiative

UNICEF offers various learning and career development programmes and resources that align with organizational goals and priorities and meet stakeholder demands. UNICEF staff have the opportunity to develop their capacity through several learning initiatives, in addition to the M5S.<sup>75</sup> The assessment of what the M5S adds to the existing learning opportunities presupposes a brief introduction to these other opportunities.

The [REACH Programme](#) is part of the STEP (Strive Towards Excellence Programme) and aims to enhance the capacity and bench strength of national staff through the delivery of a holistic, blended learning programme that focuses on key technical and soft skills identified as critical for high-performing Staff. The programme is designed to empower high-performing national staff to attain international careers while also supporting staff's professional development, career transitions, and new culture alignment.

During 2022, the SAR focus shifted from conventional paradigms of instrumentalist participation and empowerment to rights-based institutionalized forms of participation informed by some of the most evolved empowerment and participation practices by UNICEF country offices. The content for the massive open online course [ASPIRE! Leadership for Planning and Decision-Making with Adolescents](#) aims to strengthen knowledge and competencies for implementing rights-based, accountable, and participatory adolescent programming.<sup>76</sup>

ASPIRE is an open 10-hour online course designed for UN staff, public functionaries and youth-engaging professionals working in government, the non-governmental sector, the private sector, and related domains. The ASPIRE stands for:

- A - support adolescent Agency and voice
- S - develop State/Institutional policies and mechanisms for participation
- P - ensure meaningful Participation
- I - ensure Inclusion, and
- RE - ensure REolutions based on adolescents' issues and concerns

As a response to emerging changes, UNICEF added the [Management Masterclass \(MMC\)](#) for mid-level managers. These learning programmes complement the others already in place for senior managers, including those for country office representatives, directors, and their deputies.

[IMPACT+](#) is a skills-building programme that enhances the effectiveness of national staff in their current roles while preparing them for future roles. It aims to enhance the capacity and bench strength of National Staff through a holistic blended learning approach focused on key technical and soft skills identified as critical to high-performing staff and career success. The programme builds both technical skills, i.e., programme planning, humanitarian response, basic economic and social policy, monitoring and evaluation, *and* soft, personal skills.

The [UNICEF Global Induction Training](#) is virtual instructor-led training delivered over two half days for newly onboarded colleagues in UNICEF. The training is tailored to all UNICEF regions and broadcast from the Global Shared Services Centre (GSSC) in Budapest, Hungary. UNICEF Global Induction Training sessions are made available to each region as a flagship offering of the [Global Learning Centre](#), established at the GSSC. Sessions are scheduled and coordinated regionally with a minimum of 15 and a maximum of 30 participants per session. Participants should have joined UNICEF in the previous three to six months.

In February 2021, the Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA) became the first region to pilot the Global Induction Training designed by the Global Share Services Centre (GSSC) learning team in Budapest for new staff. Staff from the ROSA and GSSC teams worked together on a comprehensive design that allowed for nuances and content tailored to the South Asia context, resulting in the M5S suite.

<sup>75</sup> Described in ToR, Annex 1.

<sup>76</sup> UNICEF SAR Annual Report, 2022,

## Staff learning needs

Learning initiatives in the region are crucial to meeting staff development needs across the organization. These learning needs are identified based on the regional learning priorities and consultations with the different sections. If additional learning needs are identified by the Sections, these are considered by the HRDT and, if possible, added to the Learning Plan, as is the case in Sri Lanka, Bhutan, and Maldives.

The M5S seeks to provide staff with opportunities to develop their skills and competencies, ensuring the continued relevance of their skills in a continuously changing context, with the view to performing as planned and expected by all levels of partners. The lack of a career path and opportunities within the organization has often been cited in Global Staff Surveys as an area of concern, compounded by uncertainty about how to move from one contract type to another for national and GS staff who would like to advance to higher job categories. Furthermore, there is a perception of a lack of professional skill development within the organization.<sup>77</sup>

Some of the staff development needs that the M5S Initiative seeks to address through the various initiatives comprise:

- International exposure opportunities to enhance career development opportunities.<sup>78</sup>
- Experience working in a different context within or outside the South Asia Region.
- The ability of staff to deliver to the current and future needs of the organization, and thus implicitly target families and children.
- Cross-pollination – hands-on learning from experienced colleagues.
- Providing staff learning and diverse international exposure opportunities and enhancing career development opportunities.<sup>79</sup>
- Gain experience working in a new country within or outside the South Asia Region.
- Gain confidence in developing my career.<sup>80</sup>
- Capacity building and development of staff, both for the current and future needs of the organization.
- Access to learning to expand their knowledge and skills.
- Create opportunities for staff learning at the same/similar levels within country offices or across different regions.
- Increased staff exposure to varying professional experiences, teams, offices, and working environments.

## 2.4 Staff learning and development contribution to the SDGs

UNICEF investments in staff training and professional development through the M5S and other initiatives aim to enhance staff skills and knowledge. This ensures that staff can implement effective programmes across the 5 goal areas, thereby directly contributing to SDGs such as quality education (Goal 4), good health, nutrition, and wellbeing (Goals 2 and 3), and clean water and sanitation (Goal 6). The M5S Initiative's focus on ensuring that there is an equal chance of both male and female staff participating promotes gender equality and social inclusion, thereby ensuring that staff are equipped with skills that allow them to promote gender equality (Goal 5) and reduce inequalities in their work and the workplace (Goal 10).

Furthermore, by fostering a culture of continuous learning and innovation, UNICEF staff are better prepared to develop and implement solutions to emerging challenges outlined in SDG 9 on Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure. It is envisaged that developing strong leadership and management skills among staff will help UNICEF to operate more efficiently and effectively, ensuring that resources are used optimally to achieve the SDGs.

By investing in its staff, UNICEF ensures it has a capable, motivated workforce ready to tackle the multifaceted issues affecting children and their communities, thereby making significant strides towards achieving the SDGs.

<sup>77</sup> [2022 Global Staff Survey – SAR report](#)

<sup>78</sup> [2022 Cross-Regional Staff Exchange Summary Report for Staff in Asia](#)

<sup>79</sup> [2022 Cross-Regional Staff Exchange Summary Report for Staff in Asia](#)

<sup>80</sup> [the South Asia Learning And Staff Development Suite - M5S](#)

# 3

## Evaluation purpose, objectives and scope

### 3.1 Purpose and objectives

The Evaluation, Impact and Learning Section, with the support of the Human Resources section of the UNICEF South Asia Region initiated the evaluation of the M5S initiative. The purpose of the evaluation was to examine the strategic adjustments needed in response to changing workforce demands. Hence, the focus was on assessing the relevance/strategic positioning, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability/ scalability of the M5S. An analysis of coherence was not relevant for L&D, since this does not have to adhere directly to international and national plans and strategies, but rather to corporate priorities. These were analysed under the relevance/strategic positioning criteria.

Furthermore, the purpose was to recount successes and lessons learned that may be incorporated, and to serve as a foundation for future studies in this field.<sup>81</sup> The evaluation also seeks to generate recommendations to further strengthen the M5S initiative in the region.

The **objectives** of the evaluation were:

1. To identify and document key results, lessons learned, good practices/successful strategies, and innovations in designing and implementing the M5S Initiatives.
2. To guide UNICEF SAR's decisions on adjustments needed to strengthen the M5S Initiative.
3. Identify opportunities that exist to enhance staff learning modalities across offices in South Asia.<sup>82</sup>

### 3.2 Scope

The **scope** of the evaluation covered the period from January 2022 to June 2024. The object of the evaluation is the M5S staff development initiative, which is still under implementation. **Geographically**, the evaluation covered all eight countries in the South Asia region and the Regional Office.<sup>83</sup>

**Thematically**, the evaluation cut across all six types of the M5S learning components.<sup>84</sup> Since the M5S is accessible to all categories of staff, the **scope of participants** in the evaluation was selected from all categories of staff, disaggregated into management staff, technical/programme staff, and general service staff.

To achieve the objectives, the ToR (Annex 1) proposes **main evaluation** questions that, overall, adhere to the OECD/DAC criteria for evaluations and address relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, impact, and scalability. Being a staff learning evaluation, the criteria were adapted to fit the purpose of an L&D evaluation:<sup>85</sup> Relevance was viewed in the light of strategic positioning, understood as the response to corporate priorities in terms of UNICEF's Strategic Plan 2022–2025, OneHR Strategy, and global priorities as UNDS 2018 principles, including gender and inclusion. The latter had a dual lens, looking at gender and inclusion as L&D thematic areas and as a criterion for selecting staff for L&D. Effectiveness and efficiency had some overlap and were therefore assessed together, though with specific criteria as well. The effectiveness

<sup>81</sup> ToR, Annex 1.

<sup>82</sup> ToR, Section B-C.

<sup>83</sup> See Section 2.1

<sup>84</sup> As described in Section 2.1.

<sup>85</sup> Evaluation matrix is in Annex 2.

criterion assessed the added value of the M5S. Since there was no financial data available specifically on the M5S L&D initiative, efficiency could not be assessed with evidence for the correct use of funds or similar. Instead, the focus was on the costs per se and the perceived benefits of the investment. Impact was assessed and evidenced through examples of “what is done differently” and “how does it benefit the partners and/or the children.” Sustainability has another meaning in the context of L&D, specifically in relation to scalability. Thus, the two are analysed together, although some sustainability findings are disaggregated and related to the scalability findings.

An evaluation matrix, Annex 2, was developed to ensure coverage of the evaluation questions (EQ) listed in the ToRs and other questions arising from the desk review.<sup>86</sup> The ToR presented a range of questions. These were overall included in the evaluation framework, which also indicated “who will be asked what and how.” Where relevant, the formulation of the questions was slightly modified to better align with the interview approach. Other questions were added to reflect the broader information needs that arose from the desk review. Finally, questions relating to “lessons Learned” were removed as the interview template prompted reflection over what has worked and what has not” and a column for entry of proposed changes to each of the EQ items.<sup>87</sup> Finally, a question was added that allowed the interviewee to include aspects not covered by the template. Please see Annex 5 for the interview templates. The matrix has main EQs and sub-questions (items) that each deliver to the main EQ. All main questions have indicators, and all items include a listing of the data sources, the data collection method, and an indication of how each item aligns with the OECD/DAC criteria. The matrix has columns for positive and negative experiences, the effects of each, and a column for proposing changes. These proposals were extensively used in formulating recommendations.

**Key intended users** will include ROSA, SAR country offices, and human resources sections across UNICEF. These specifically include human resource practitioners, learning focal points, and staff development committee members. The findings and lessons learned will feed into efforts at UNICEF ROSA to inform scale-up and future iterations of the programmes. The knowledge generated from this exercise will be used and adapted to design and operationalize these initiatives in other regions.

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<sup>86</sup> Annex 2.

<sup>87</sup> See interview templates in Annex 4.

## 4.1 Evaluation principles

This evaluation conforms to the guidelines and standards set by the UN and UNICEF and was guided by the Revised Evaluation Policy of UNICEF (2023), the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation (2016), the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN system (2008), the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation (2020), the UNEG Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation (2014), and the UNICEF-Adapted UNEG Evaluation Reports Standards (2017). Being a staff learning evaluation, not all the above standards for analysis and reporting fully apply in this context.

The evaluation adheres to the [OECD/DAC principles](#)<sup>88</sup> of impartiality and independence, credibility, usefulness, and participation. The evaluation used a selection of the [OECD/DAC criteria](#)<sup>89</sup> for evaluations as relevant to this learning evaluation. It assessed the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability/ scalability. Furthermore, the evaluation assessed the learning adherence to the [2018 UN reform principles](#),<sup>90</sup> emphasizing:

- Use of RBM/HRBA at all levels of implementation (planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting, and knowledge sharing).
- Innovation (design of the learning per se).
- Transformational change – how does this learning apply and support transformational changes?
- Triple nexus – how is this considered thematically and in the selection of learners?
- Leaving No One Behind (LNOB)/inclusion – how has the learning paid attention to inclusion, with a view to enhancing opportunities for staff facing some challenges?

While acknowledging that the M5S L&D initiative has no ToC and thus no predefined mode of operations and outcomes, and to respond to the ToR criteria, the evaluation used a [utilization-focused approach](#)<sup>91</sup> to address ROSA needs for insight into the broader relevance<sup>92</sup> of the M5S initiative. To generate the required insight, the evaluation methodology had a [summative approach](#)<sup>93</sup> to assess the outreach of the M5S and the characteristics of the outreach to date, and a more [formative approach](#) capturing the individual learning from and experiences with the M5S, with the aim to prepare actionable recommendations. This, in combination, allowed for an assessment of the broader relevance and thus scalability of the M5S initiative.

To assess UNICEF's adherence to human rights principles, which are relevant in this context,<sup>94</sup> the data consolidation and analysis considered the cross-cutting issues of gender equality,<sup>95</sup> equity,<sup>96</sup> and HRBA. The evaluation applied a strong equity and gender focus by i) including equity and gender in the design, methodology, data collection and analysis; and ii) reflecting equity and gender analysis in the findings,

<sup>88</sup> OECD/DAC: Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance, 1991.

<sup>89</sup> [OECD/DAC Evaluation Criteria](#)

<sup>90</sup> Section 1.1.

<sup>91</sup> [Better Evaluation Knowledge : Utilisation-focused evaluation](#)

<sup>92</sup> This involves relevance of the design, organization of the initiative, mode of participation, applicability etc.

<sup>93</sup> [Centre for Innovative Teaching and Learning: Formative and Summative Assessment](#)

<sup>94</sup> The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

<sup>95</sup> Defined as: The concept that women and men, girls and boys have equal conditions, treatment and opportunities for realizing their full potential, human rights and dignity, and for contributing to (and benefitting from) economic, social, cultural and political development. UNICEF SAR Glossary of Terms and Concepts, 2017.

<sup>96</sup> Defined as: The process of being fair to men and women, boys and girls, and importantly the equality of outcomes and results. Gender equity may involve the use of temporary special measures to compensate for historical or systemic bias or discrimination. UNICEF SAR Glossary of Terms and Concepts, 2017.

conclusions and concrete recommendations and action points that can be addressed in the design of a possible future M5S for a strengthened integration of equity and gender in the M5S strategies.

## 4.2 Composition of methods

The evaluation used a participatory, utilization-focused, mixed-methods approach within the OECD-DAC evaluation framework, assessing the criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, and impact, and incorporating the perspectives of diverse stakeholders and participants. It also took into consideration cross-cutting issues of equity, gender, human/child rights, and disability.

This evaluation drew on quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis strategies to address the evaluation questions. These complementary approaches were deployed to ensure that the exercise responded to the intended evaluation objectives; integrated gender, equity, and disability principles throughout the evaluation process; and, to the best extent possible, included participation and consultation with key stakeholders. These data collection methods are presented below.

### 4.2.1 Desk review

The desk review involved documents and materials provided by UNICEF RO and country offices, as well as documents downloaded from the Internet.<sup>97</sup> The document review resulted in a need for additional information from UNICEF ROSA, which was provided. The document review provided a thematic focus for the evaluation and a shared perception that the M5S could complement other learning opportunities, as the M5S aims to provide individually relevant skills rather than general skills and/or new knowledge alone. Complementarity and relevance were tested during the evaluation. The ToRs, combined with the desk review, formed the basis for the content of the evaluation matrix and selection of participating staff. The list of documents reviewed during the evaluation is provided in Annex 3.

### 4.2.2 Quantitative data collection

Data collection was conducted in collaboration with ROSA. It concerned details on participation in the M5S and other learning, disaggregated by gender, job category, job title, office, and contact details. The quantitative data utilized for this evaluation were obtained from UNICEF's Human Resource dashboard Insight system. In addition, UNICEF ROSA provided data on participants in the various staff development initiatives. These details were used for evaluation of outreach, the number of learners per learning component or initiatives, and gender distribution in learning. The selection of M5S participants who were interviewed in this evaluation was based on the participants' list that came from the ROSA HR section.

### 4.2.3 Qualitative data collection

#### Semi-structured interviews

Interviews were based on semi-structured evaluation questions (EQs) presented in a template that introduced the questions in writing. The template was shared with participants upon confirmation of their participation to help interviewees become familiar with the evaluation's focus and prepare accordingly. The template was supported by a guide to the template design. The interview used three templates reflecting the three categories of participants – management, technical/programme staff, and general service staff. Each template selected EQs and items from the evaluation matrix template as relevant to the actual staff category. The template has six main columns. Each EQ included several items that guided its focus. The template format prompted reflection on both positive and negative experiences and how they have affected daily work and performance. Each item provided an opportunity to propose changes for use in the selection and formulation of recommendations.

<sup>97</sup> Lists of reviewed documents, Annex 3.

### Remote filling of the interview template

To broaden stakeholder involvement, part of the interviews were conducted by having individuals complete and return the template. The interviews used three templates, each reflecting a participant category – management, technical/programme staff, and general service staff. Each template included EQs and items from the evaluation matrix template, selected as relevant to the staff category. The template has six main columns. Each EQ included several items that directed the focus of the EQ. The template format prompted reflection on both positive and negative experiences and how these have affected daily work and performance. Each item provided an opportunity to propose changes for use in the selection and formulation of recommendations.

In total, the templates provided answers to all questions presented in the evaluation matrix. Each interviewee answered the items with which he/she had experience while leaving the rest open. This means that in some cases, some of the items were not or were only partially answered. There was a final item permitting the entry of issues that had not been raised in the template.

### Focus group discussions

To gather perspectives from learning focal points in the region, a focus group discussion was held. The discussion explored their role in the M5S as well as gathering their perspectives on the initiative and other suggestions on improvements that need to be made.

### Supervisor survey

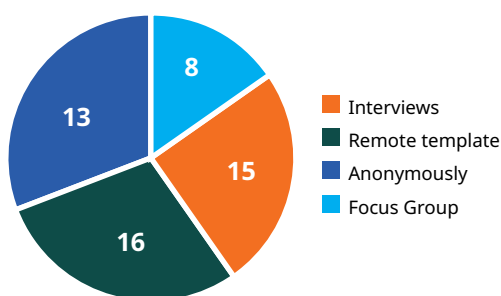
To have a better representation from those having direct experience with the learning planning, a survey was developed and sent to the regular supervisor and supervisees during the staff development initiative (Annex 6). The survey sought feedback on participants' performance before and after the training initiative, as well as supervisors' suggestions for improving the initiative. For confidentiality purposes, there was no personally identifying information on the supervisors or supervisees that was collected.<sup>98</sup>

All data collection allowed for positive and negative experiences with the M5S initiative. In addition, the interview allowed for suggestions regarding the types of activities and the approach. This opportunity makes recommendations to be inclusive, stakeholder-owned, and relevant.

## 4.2.4 Evaluation participants

To facilitate the evaluation, the UNICEF team prepared a comprehensive stakeholder mapping and identified key stakeholder groups and individuals to be directly consulted during the evaluation. This stakeholder mapping was used to identify survey respondents, as outlined below.

**Figure 4: Distribution of methods used**

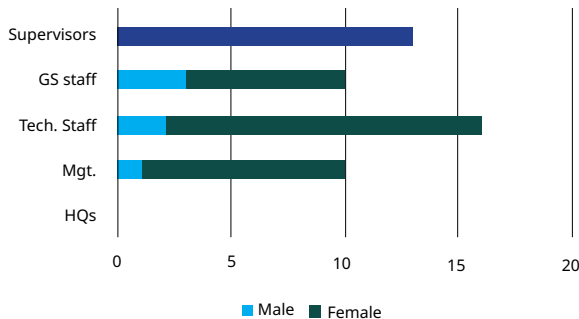


Because the number of M5S learners was large, the methodology used a probabilistic sampling approach in which all learners were equally relevant for the evaluation. Hence, there was no predefined definition of persons of specific relevance for this evaluation. The scope was narrowed by applying selection criteria for selecting evaluation participants. The criteria were (i) geographic representation involving all COs and ROSA; (ii) representation of learners from all six M5S components, with further representation of (iii) all three staff categories: Management, technical/programme, and general service staff. The disaggregation aimed to capture potential differences in experiences regarding the broader relevance of the learning initiative. In addition, the selection considered

(iv) the number of male and female participants for each type of M5S learning and invited a gender- and job-category representative selection of staff. The sample was designed in collaboration with UNICEF and included geographic and M5S component representation.

<sup>98</sup> Survey can be found in Annex 5.

**Figure 5: Gender distribution of evaluation participants**



The evaluation had 52 respondents participating through interviews, remote completion of a template, and a survey returned anonymously.

The supervisors participated anonymously, for which reason there is no gender distribution for this category of participants. The other categories of participants had significantly more female respondents, although being underrepresented in the staff cohort and being numerically equally invited for participation.

#### 4.2.5 Data consolidation, validation, and analysis

The data validation used data source triangulation, analysing data from respective statistics on the M5S and other learning initiatives, semi-structured interviews/supervisor surveys, and desk review findings, and analysing the didactics of the M5S and other selected learning initiatives. Descriptive statistics on staffing levels were taken from the UNICEF Insight HR dashboard and analysed accordingly. To assess UNICEF's adherence to human rights principles, which are relevant in this context, the data consolidation and analysis considered the cross-cutting issues of gender equality, equity and HRBA.

The data were analysed using data source triangulation, comparing M5S experiences from IP, NO, and GS. Since these were consistent, no distinction was made in the reporting of the findings. Furthermore, data triangulation was achieved by comparing quantitative data with qualitative data and review findings. Unforeseeable results were reported, for example, in the discrepancy between the number of female staff and the number of female participants in the M5S Initiative, despite the M5S Initiative having the highest participation in components that require absence from home and the duty station for a longer period.

### 4.3 Evaluation norms and ethical considerations

The methodological approach adhered to all ethical standards outlined in UNEG 2020 Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations, including careful selection of evaluation participants and the provision of anonymity in evaluation responses and reporting. This entails adherence by the UN Evaluation Group's (UNEG) four ethical principles:<sup>99</sup>

- **Informed consent:** All participants provided informed consent, ensuring the confidentiality of their responses. All participants were also informed of their right to withdraw from the evaluation at any given moment.
- **Privacy of participants and anonymity:** Participants' privacy and anonymity were maintained. Details of staff used to identify potential participants were anonymized to maintain participants' security and confidentiality. The data collection approach ensured anonymity as only the consultant would know who said what. The responses of each participant were synthesized with those of other staff in the same category. Thus, no names or other identification details were used during data recording or reporting.<sup>100</sup>
- **Credibility and Accountability:** The evaluator ensured transparency about the evaluation's purpose to all stakeholders involved and ensured fair and accurate reporting of the data.

The evaluator, on the other hand, was guided by obligations to ensure independence, impartiality, credibility, and the avoidance of conflicts of interest, as she was not a UNICEF staff member or involved in the implementation of the evaluation object.

<sup>99</sup> UNEG: Revised 2020 Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation, Section 2.

<sup>100</sup> Informed consent forms, Annex 4; protection protocols, Annex 5.

The design of the evaluation took these principles for ethics into account: (i) In the representative selection of categories of participants in the evaluation; (ii) by using a semi-structured interview approach which allowed the interviewee to explain individually relevant experiences with the M5S initiative; (iii) by introducing the template in advance which allowed for prior reflection and familiarity with the focus of the interview – and a subsequent option to withdraw.<sup>101</sup> The evaluation had gender and inclusion considerations.<sup>102</sup> Since no children were being interviewed or observed during this evaluation, no ethical clearance was sought.

## 4.4 Key limitations, constraints, and mitigations

Some limitations and constraints were found during the desk review and evaluation phase. The evaluation was designed and adapted to best overcome these limitations as indicated below.

**Table 3: Evaluation constraints and mitigation measures**

	LIMITATIONS AND CONSTRAINTS	APPLIED MEASURES
a.	Absence of project document or learning strategy with ToC made the background for introduction and purpose of the M5S Initiative to be unclear.	Interviews with the designers of the M5S Initiative made this clear.
b.	Absence of annual outcome reporting and/or summative recording of the use of the new skills Output in terms of record of learners/country is available.	The evaluation recorded samples of outcome.
c.	Relatively difficult participation	Repeated invitations to a quite large group of participants across the RO and COs and across all categories of staff.  Extended period for data collection.  To protect those participating in the evaluation, this report provides no list of participants in the annexes.
d.	Lack of participant disability data	Consultations with the learning focal point at ROSA for disability disaggregated data.

## 4.5 Quality assurance

Aside from the data validation, which took place during data synthesis and analysis, quality assurance took place at three levels:

- By the consultant during the data collection and analysis. If one interview provided very different data, either overall or to one of the EQs, the answer would be prompted during the interview to assess the specific and contextual validity recognizing that specific staff under given conditions can have different experiences with an initiative.
- The evaluator held regular meetings with the evaluation manager to review data collection methods, assess progress, and ensure relevance and rigour.
- By the Evaluation Management Group, being a ROSA staff group, who supported the work on a daily basis and is the receiving group when deliverables are submitted.
- By the Evaluation Reference Group, which is composed of a representative group of SAR staff. The ERG convened during the inception and conclusion phases of the evaluation to discuss the findings and refine and prioritize the recommendations. It had the approving authority.

<sup>101</sup> Interview templates in Annex 4.

<sup>102</sup> Section 3.2.3.

This section presents the evaluation findings in relation to the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria investigated and the questions the evaluation sought to answer.

## 5.1 Overview

Since there was no strategic document outlining the M5S's intentions, expected achievements, or its positioning relative to other regional or global learning initiatives, there was nothing against which to conclude on achievements in this regard. Furthermore, this limitation affected the planned analysis of data against job categories, as there was no definition of expected changes in learner behaviour/performance at the different levels, or a definition of how learning should add to the pre-defined shortage in capacity to deliver at the national level. In addition, the differences in experience across the staff categories proved minimal. The overall experiences were the same; they were just viewed from different angles. The planned triangulation of findings across staff categories was rendered irrelevant. Triangulation was only possible where triangulation between statistics, desk review findings, and qualitative data is relevant or possible.

SAR is a region with multiple and complex challenges, such as floods, earthquakes, and conflict. The findings indicated that the region is therefore viewed as less attractive for duty. This affects the duration of postings and the effect of learning.

The main target group for the M5S learning was all UNICEF staff, including short-term staff with contracts of at least 6 months. There were guiding principles for participant selection. These were not followed as a result, as the needs of COs also played a role. For example, Bhutan chose to let all staff participate in Strength-Based Coaching, a method that, among others, enhances teamwork, illustrating the agility of the M5S.

The findings are presented in the order given in the evaluation matrix. Each section is introduced by an overarching finding cutting across the detailed findings. Where evaluation participants are quoted, this often covers several of the same experiences. All quotes from respondents are presented in a template or presented in blue.

## 5.2 Relevance of the M5S Initiative's design and approach – strategic positioning

**Overall finding:** The M5S proved very relevant when viewed against UNICEF HR's person-centred focus. The person-centred, and thus individual, learning was relevant for both career development and for filling of new needs in COs.

### A. To what extent are the M5S initiatives aligned with SAR priorities and other similar initiatives (within UNICEF or other UN agencies) at the global level or in other regions?

With no strategic document for the M5S Initiative, the evaluation is more a status quo than a status of achievements against set targets.

UNICEF SAR priorities include:

- Being child-centred and results-based.
- Achieving equitable results.
- Promoting efficient and effective operations and cooperation.
- Innovating by doing things differently to add value for children.
- Acting at scale.
- Documenting evidence, change, impact, and challenges.
- Thematic areas include health, nutrition, education, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), child protection and social protection.

Across the three categories of staff, the evaluation shows that the support of learning relates more to thematically relevant skills than the overall skills listed in points *a-f*. Most UNICEF reporting is output-based; equality and inclusion are just about to be systematically planned for at both programming and monitoring levels, and that innovation is not yet considered a cross-cutting criterion. Hence, the evaluation indicated that neither ROSA nor COs had felt a corporate need for skills in these areas. This was supported by KIIs and online feedback from participants, management and programme staff, among others, stating that:

- Corporate prioritization not always aligned with global UN and other global priorities.
- New initiatives not linked with accessible learning opportunities. This includes structured initiatives supporting innovation and inclusion.

*Source: KIIs and online feedback from participants*

The Regional Office Management plan identifies staff development as an area for increased investment to ensure that staff progress in their careers. The establishment of the M5S initiative aligns with this priority of ensuring adequate human resources to deliver UNICEF interventions in both humanitarian and development contexts. M5S participation data show that staff from all countries have participated in the initiative. This includes staff from countries such as Afghanistan and Pakistan, which were classified as humanitarian contexts during the evaluation, as presented below.

**Table 4: Staff participation in M5S by country**

Country	Staff Development Initiative												Total
	Mentoring		Stretch		Surge		Staff Exchange		Shadowing		Strength Based Coaching		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Afghanistan	7	7					3						17
Bangladesh	4	10	2	2	2	2		3		4	3	1	33
Bhutan			3	5	1		2	1		2	15	18	47
India	5	12	2	2		4	1		1	1			28
Maldives			2	1				2				1	6
Nepal	2	3	3	1	2	2		4				1	18
Pakistan	3	3					1	2					9
Sri Lanka	2			3		1	1	2				2	11
ROSA	1	3		3		4		2	1	1	2	1	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>187</b>

*Source: M5S participation database*

Contrary to most other UNICEF learning initiatives, the M5S has no limitations regarding thematic choice or level of learning, which makes the M5S very well aligned to support the provision of skills supporting global and SAR priorities and the needs of a rapidly changing region.

A FGD with learning focal points, however, highlighted that GS staff participation in initiatives such as stretch and surge assignments was low, as these initiatives tended to target staff who are in higher categories, such as national officer or IP staff who tend to have supervisory roles. For instance, an analysis of staff who had participated in surge and stretch assignments from Sri Lanka and Nepal showed that these staff were from the NO staff category. Going forward, efforts should be made to see how staff in the GS category can benefit more from these initiatives.

## B. To what extent is the programme aligned with the OneHR strategy?

The vision of the OneHR strategy is:

Through the HR Transition and Transformation Initiative, UNICEF OneHR aims to shape an adaptive and capable people-centred HR Community that actively works with its partners to accelerate results for the children we serve.

With an M5S focus on adaptability and person-centred learning, the desk review of methods and lists of learner participation supported by ROSA and KIIs<sup>52</sup> that were conducted indicate that the initiative supports the OneHR strategy, e.g., by providing individual (staff and CO) learning that enables SAR offices to have the right staff in the right place at the right time as intended in the OneHR Strategy. Specifically, surge provides emergency-related skills across all staff levels, including the administrative level, while the other M5S components can be applied in any context. In addition, staff development plans are designed in line with global and regional priorities.

However, the desk review and KIIs indicate that there was no specific provision for HR staff skills to manage these new HR requirements. This is seen in the lack of correspondence between the areas of learning which are approved and the individual CO framework targets, together with the lack of proof of how each staff member applies and shares the new learning and delivers to specific framework targets, and thus to results for children.

*“As the learning focal point for the office, whenever I see relevant, you know, status assignment vacancies I share with relevant colleagues and then of course we support them with discussions on the planning, how to enter in planning in Achieve and how to discuss with their supervisor”*

– LEARNING FOCAL POINT FGD

Given the new and very different approach to learning, uniform systems and structures for equitable, transparent selection criteria were not in place across all COs. Some countries, such as India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, have developed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for selecting and supporting learners. These include selection criteria, e.g., an assessment of how a given learning fills gaps in the individual career plan and/or skill gaps in the CO deliverables; frequency of learning; and an annual learning assessment, which is passed to the Country Representative. Focus group discussion with learning focal points indicated that they are vital in staff accessing these training initiatives as they are involved in the development of SOPs, sharing of open vacancies for stretch, and supporting staff in documenting their training in the system.

The M5S Initiative is run through existing structures aligned with the One HR strategy. All eight offices in the region have functioning Learning Committees, while in the Regional Office, staff development needs are handled by the Human Resources section through a Human Resources Development Team. At the regional level, learning needs are also discussed in the Joint Consultative Committee that is chaired by the Regional Director and attended by the Staff Association representative and Section Heads. The activities of the staff learning committees are outlined in their terms of reference.

At the regional level, there is a Regional Human Resources Development Team (RHRDT). The activities of this committee are outlined in the RHRDT TOR.<sup>53</sup> Among others, the committee is responsible for setting yearly

<sup>52</sup> This includes the remote filling of the KI template

<sup>53</sup> [RHRDT TOR](#)

Regional Priorities, allocating the Regional Learning Budget, and securing additional learning funds from CO's and programmes. The RHRDT also exercises oversight and monitors whether all levels, genders, and staff groups across the Region have equal access to Learning and Development opportunities. The RHRDT is not tasked with formulating regional L&D goals, developing a regional learning plan, or evaluating the efficiency of L&D activities taking place in the region. Neither is it mandated to provide ongoing L&D progress reports to HQ or the COs. Only upon request from DHR does the RHRDT report on the learning activities undertaken across the Region.

### C. To what extent have the M5S initiatives that you participated in assisted you in owning your work and results?

The two types of KIIs supported by the surveys provide evidence of ownership of work. The feedback below was provided during KIIs with M5S participants shows how the M5S has assisted staff to own their work and results:

- International exposure at the country level and global level expands the frame of understanding. Gained technical skills in new areas, as well as management of processes that were different for different offices within UNICEF.
- Helped in understanding the perspective of evaluations at the global level, which was utilized at my work at the regional level.
- Completed the Surge mission to the country office in a country in conflict. It has given me an international lens, cross-country working experience, and an opportunity to contribute to achieving results for children exposed to conflict.
- The surge component empowered me to take ownership of my work through active involvement in field visits, monitoring, reporting, and coordination efforts.

The examples above emphasize the new, wider lens acquired and how this helps address old problems in a new way. This was supported by their getting hands-on experience with new tools. The M5S has created opportunities for staff to learn and acquire new skills, as well as for staff to harness other staff development modalities that would otherwise not be available. For instance, the surge mechanism provides national staff with opportunities to work in other countries outside their duty station, creating avenues for international exposure and career growth.

Although having far more positive than negative experiences which provide examples of the effect of weak or missing support systems and structures:

- The need to continue some work for the release of the office was difficult to manage.
- There is no opportunity to perform an end-to-end task.

Analysis of the following items shows a similar lack of or inconsistency in the availability and use of supporting systems and structures. Since supporting systems and structures must be more comprehensive and flexible at the outset of new initiatives, this finding will help shape the content of future supporting systems and structures.

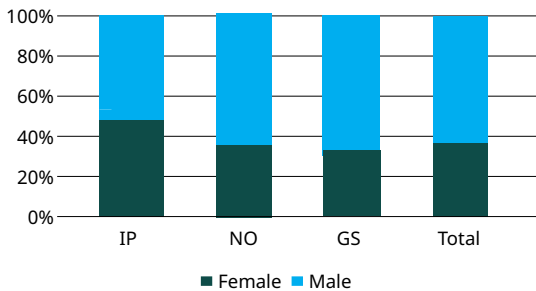
### D. Is the M5S relevant for all three legs of the triple nexus? Kindly provide examples.

The item was not answered by any participant. It showed that UNICEF HQ and UNDS priorities do not fully align (see point A).

### E. To what extent has UNICEF's Gender Action Plan been consistently integrated in the M5S strategies and activities?

The desk review, combined with KIIs, shows that the M5S design did not consider SAR [gender and inclusion](#) aspects. This is evident in the design of two components, Stretch and SWAP, both of which presuppose international exchange, whether within or outside the region. However, long-term absence from the family is not possible for everyone, which limits accessibility, potentially more so for female staff who are often mothers and household coordinators than for male staff. To assess gender representation in learning, an overview of staff gender distribution in the region was required.

**Figure 6: Gender distribution of job categories in SAR<sup>54</sup>**



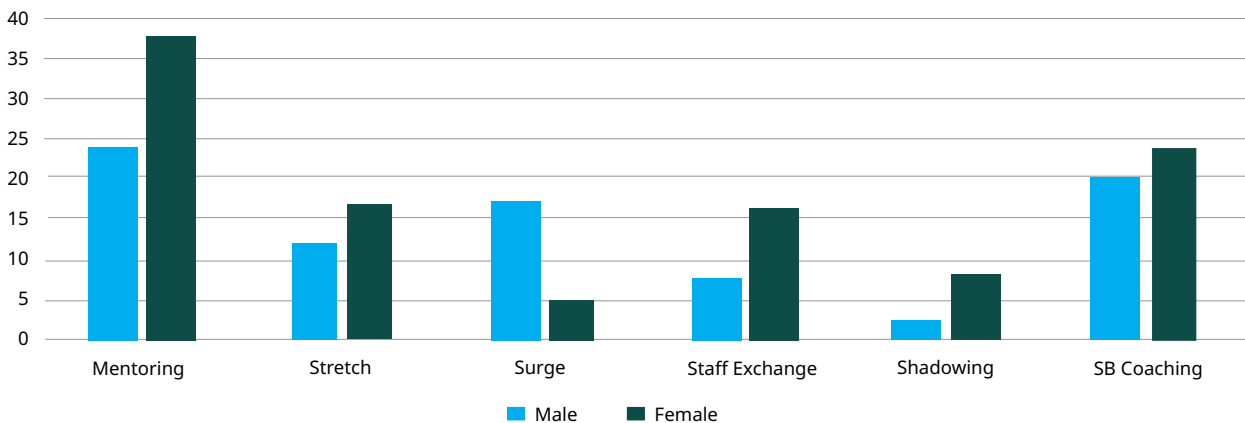
Source: Insight HR dashboard

The analysis of various statistics on staff composition and learning shows that, despite females being underrepresented in numbers, this is not reflected in actual participation in learning overall. This suggests that, during the period under evaluation, more female than male staff have embraced this new approach and seem more open to continued learning.

An analysis of M5S participation data shows that Mentoring was the most used staff development modality, with 62 staff (24 male and 38 female) participating. Twenty-nine staff (12 male and 17 female) participated in stretch assignments, while 22 staff went on surge

assignments. During the surge, 77 per cent of participants were male staff, with only 5 female staff. Job shadowing was the training initiative used least, with only 10 staff participating. The graph below presents details of staff participation across the different training initiatives.

**Figure 7: M5S participation by gender**



Source: M5S participation data base

*“ We did a short survey and wanted to see if we could really start the individual coaching. But interest was actually quite low at that time.”*

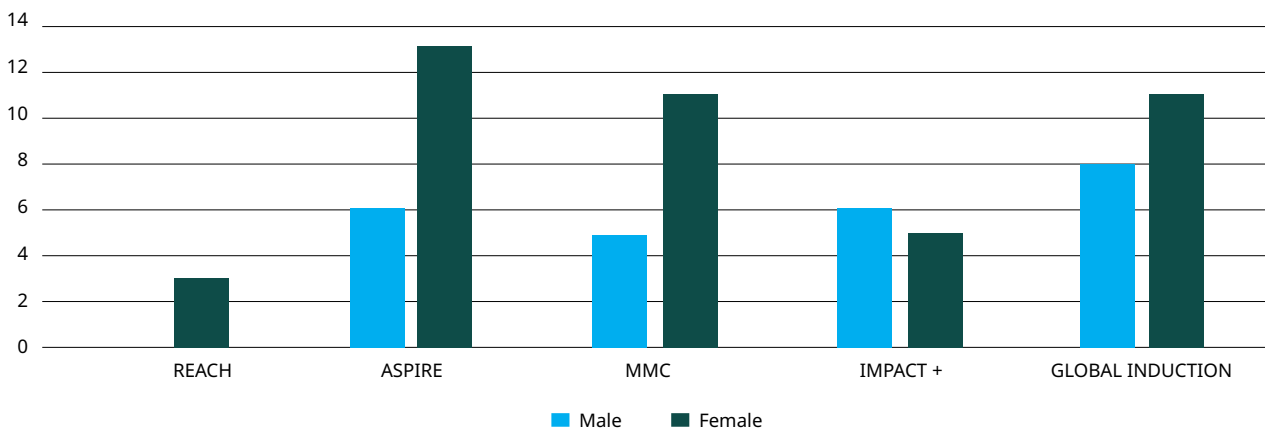
**- LEARNING FOCAL POINT FGD**

Even though the above indicates staff participation, feedback from learning focal points indicates that additional effort is needed to encourage more staff to participate in the various initiatives. Some initiatives, such as strength-based coaching and shadowing, need to be promoted more.

Applying a wider lens, the evaluation showed that female participation exceeds male participation across all assessed learning initiatives, except Impact+, which has a near gender balance. This is despite the fact that women in some SAR countries cannot participate in learning that requires a longer absence from home for cultural and family reasons. This is, however, not shown in the above learning data. The female interest in learning was also reflected in the overwhelming female participation in this evaluation.

<sup>54</sup> Insight HR Dashboard

**Figure 8: Participation in other initiatives by gender<sup>55</sup>**



Source: HR training data base

KIIs and surveys indicate that although gender was not considered in the selection process, however gender was considered at the intervention level in terms of:

- > The products developed during the M55, which included components of GAP.
- > More female staff were included in field visits, and gender-sensitive programming was central to health, nutrition, and emergency response interventions.
- > Priority of empowering women and girls and reducing gender-based disparities in access to services, particularly in crisis-affected areas.

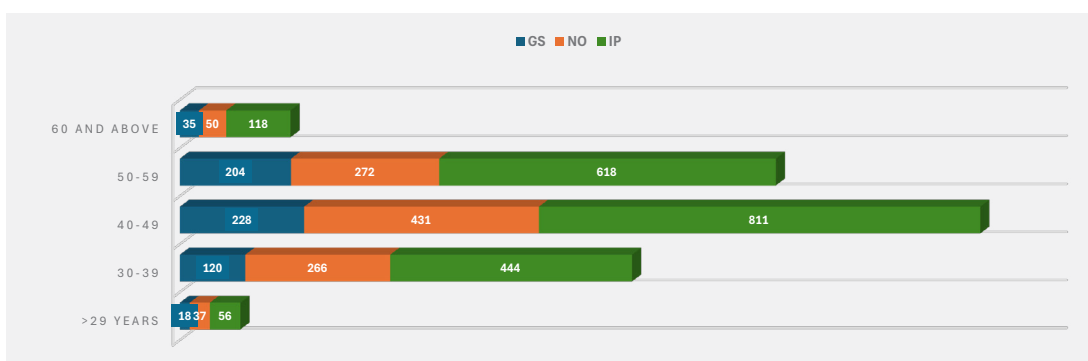
An assessment of the inclusion of staff with disabilities or other challenges in the M55 training initiative found that the region has no systematic record of tracking the participation of staff with various challenges, making specific efforts for this group difficult. Participation data that was shared by the Regional Office did not have any breakdown of staff by disability, resulting in the inability of this evaluation to assess this aspect comprehensively.

In addition, UNICEF aims to employ more young staff to have a better age balance. This is contrary to the current conditions for attending M55 learning, as staff employed as United Nations Volunteers (UNVs), who tend to be younger, are not eligible for participation in L&D.

The graph below presents the age distribution of staff across the three job categories. The graph shows that most staff are in the 40-49 age band. The age groups up to 40 years are significantly underrepresented. Noticeably, the age groups up to 40 years are strongly underrepresented. This will result in reduced recruitment opportunities for higher positions.

**Figure 9: UNICEF SAR age distribution**

Source: Insight HR dashboard



<sup>55</sup> Source: Learning initiatives monitoring data

## 5.3 Effectiveness and efficiency – delivery of the M5S Initiative

**Overall finding:** The M5S Initiative provided immediately applicable skills. Hence no time was wasted on translating more general knowledge and skills into locally applicable knowledge and skills. So, although some of the M5S components were viewed as relatively costly, the investment overall proved cost-effective.

### F. What is done differently and/or more effectively after the introduction of M5S?

The desk review period showed that there is no dedicated CO or SAR annual report on learning or the M5S and its effects. Only output-level recording exists for the number of participants (m/f, job category, and country) for each learning initiative. The outcome/effect level recording is omitted, disregarding the intentions of “UNICEF’s Journey of Organizational Transformation” to ‘Improving accountability and response mechanisms in the event of wrongdoing’ and the UNDS 2018 principles emphasizing the consequent use of RBM. Learning should result in improvements at the corporate and implementation levels.

Without monitoring the effect/value of learning, this evaluation can only provide examples of individual changes in practices. Feedback from participants via KIIs and an online form is presented below.

- Opportunity to develop tools and strategies for conducting root cause analysis for VPD outbreak. This helped in achieving results for children in my area.
- Gained technical skills in new areas, as well as management of processes that were different for different offices within UNICEF.
- Effective use of data helps to identify the programme areas with poor performance and action is taken to improve the quality of services.
- Started looking at the specific work area from a CO perspective and trying to improve the CO practices.
- The field office I visited was heavily using eTools and PDs. As BhCO ventures towards developing PDs and extensively using eTools, it is helping me as well as supporting other colleagues to effectively work on those two areas
- I improved my skills in reviewing research documents, national strategy, policy writing, and research reports.

All but one statement mentions one’s own gains and some corporate gains, while the first also mentions the effect of the learning on the lives of children. This suggests that learning is understood as a purely personal issue, while the main link to the CO framework’s delivery seems blurred. The statements exemplify that learning extends beyond the pure acquisition of new skills and adds new and broader perspectives on the use of those skills across various work operations.

The supervisor survey indicated that after staff completed their training under the M5S, there were changes in behaviour and career aspirations. For instance, staff pursued greater stretch and sought more challenging assignments to enhance their capabilities. In other instances, staff were able to better articulate their opinions and thoughts on the job, which they were not doing prior to their going on training. There are also instances where supervisors saw a direct impact on the work that was done by the staff member. “The learning improves the quality of programme. Use of the data help to identify the programme areas with poor performance and the action taken can help to improve the quality of services.”

Examples of this wider perspective and personal/attitude development comprise:

- Great, and engaging more strategically at the moment.
- Seek more challenging assignments; able to better articulate opinions and thoughts.

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*“The learning improved the quality of programme. Use of the data helped to identify the programme areas with poor performance and the action taken can help to improve the quality of services”.*

**-SUPERVISOR FEEDBACK**

*“The supervisee became more familiar with the work-related policies and procedures and applied them in their daily work”. Supervisor feedback*

**-MENTORING**

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Holding this against an internal needs assessment conducted by ROSA in 2022, the coherence is significant as the staff needs comprise:

- Providing staff learning and diverse international exposure opportunities, and enhancing career development opportunities.
- Gaining experience working in a new country within or outside the South Asia Region
- Gaining confidence in developing a career.
- Capacity building and development of staff, both for the current and future needs of the organization
- Accessing learning to expand their knowledge and skills
- Creating opportunities for learning for staff members at the same/similar levels between country offices or across different regions
- Increasing staff exposure to varying professional experiences, teams, offices, and working environments.

Feedback from the supervisor survey indicates that the M5S Initiative has been effective as a training modality for staff development in three areas, namely career growth, staff performance, and knowledge. Participation in the training created opportunities for staff to gain promotion. Other staff were seen as more effective and efficient in performing their duties, and in some cases, there was evidence of improvements in on-the-job knowledge.

On the negative side, it was noted by some KII participants, “that I do not see that so many new things were learned; it is more of an injection of exposure to a different environment and different people. It made the staff realize what others are facing, that we are not bad at all in the (sending) office, and that UNICEF is bigger than the (sending) office.”

Furthermore, for the M5S training initiatives to be effective, it is essential that adequate arrangements are made for staff going on training to hand over responsibilities to someone else so they are not overstretched. For instance, when staff participate in a staff development initiative, such as a stretch assignment that requires them to be away from their regular job, they need someone to backstop them so they can remain fully focused on the new assignment. One supervisor highlighted that instances of overstressing staff members should be addressed so that they can fully benefit from the training. This was corroborated by learning focal points who shared that backfilling is a challenge for small- to medium-sized offices, as they do not have adequate human resources to cover gaps when a staff member moves from their post. During a FGD with learning focal points it was highlighted that “There is a difficulty on backfill. We are a small to medium country office, so in most of the sections we have like one or two people who will be in a unit section. So, backfill is always a challenge for us.”

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*“As a staff development initiative, when staff go on stretch, it is important to ensure that responsibilities from their original office do not build up. The staff then ends up doing ‘one and a half’ jobs which can be a strain on them. It also means that other team members then have to shoulder additional responsibilities which, in a small team, can be a challenge”*

**SUPERVISOR FEEDBACK - STRETCH**

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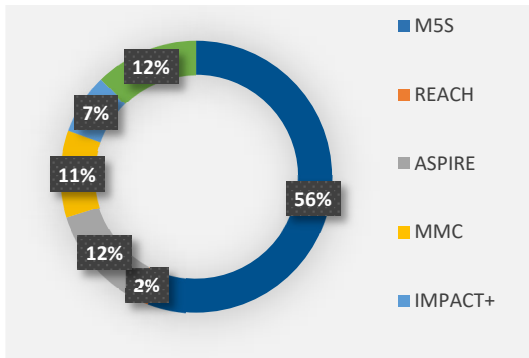
Backstopping arrangements, however, should be carefully looked at for relatively small offices. Supervisor feedback indicates that for small COs, it’s challenging to back up when a staff member is on stretch for 3 months, as staff in the office who provide backstopping also have their regular jobs, resulting in them being overstretched. Offices could therefore explore an option in which a staff member who moves away from their job or duty station is replaced by someone who takes over their responsibilities, so that other staff members do not feel stretched.

### G. How does the M5S add to other learning opportunities?

The OneHR vision<sup>56</sup> focuses on moving from a more general training approach that addresses many learners at the same time to a people-centred approach that provides tailor-made training for individual staff. Furthermore, it adds to the existing learning, which is pre-designed to a specific level and type of capacity, e.g., global induction for new staff, MMC for mid-level managers, or ASPIRE, which is designed for staff engaging with youth.

<sup>56</sup> Section 4.2.1

**Figure 10: Learners in M5S and other learning initiatives.<sup>57</sup>**



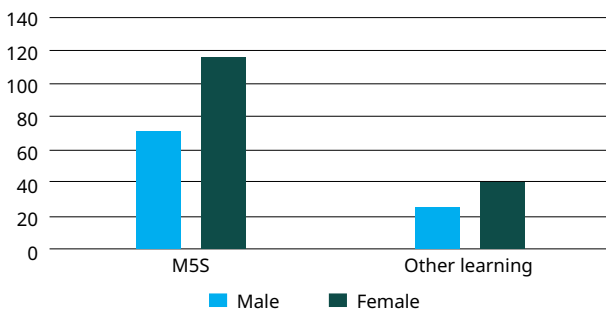
Source: HR training database

The participation percentage indicates that the M5S has added diversity to the learning opportunities and has been well-received.

The evaluation covering the period from 2022 to date did not allow for a conclusion on whether the M5S has attracted participants from other learning initiatives or has increased the total number of learners.

The above picture of a general and quite equal interest in both types of learning is also evident in the gender distribution of participation in the two learning initiatives. Across both the M5S Initiative and other learning initiatives, female participation is similarly over-represented. Female staff represent about 62 per cent of participants across the two initiatives. A concerted effort is needed to increase male participation in the M5S training initiative.

**Figure 11: Gender disaggregated participation in the two types of learning.**



Source: HR training database

A comparison of the didactics<sup>58</sup> of the M5S and other learning initiatives indicated an overall experience among the participants:

The M5S Initiative fostered a deeper understanding of the complexities on the ground and strengthened problem-solving abilities in dynamic, high-pressure environments, particularly in challenging contexts like emergencies.

Analysing the briefs describing the M5S components and the other learning learning initiatives, some unique characteristics of the M5S and other learning initiatives appeared:

**Table 5: Characteristics of M5S and other learning initiatives**

DESIGN DETAILS	M5S INITIATIVE <sup>59</sup>	OTHER LEARNING INITIATIVES <sup>60</sup>
Participants	All levels of staff across IP, NO and GS staff	Overall designated to specific categories of staff
Content	Individually adapted	Overall pre-designed and general
Learning method	Person-centred on-job-learning. New skills are applied/tested during the learning period.	Learning is little person-centred and does not allow for application during the learning period.
Learning duration	Most M5S learning plans for a three-months learning period – with possibility for modifications.	Most learning condensed to a separate learning situation/period followed by non-supported application.

<sup>57</sup> Fig. 11 and 12: Source: Learning initiatives monitoring data

<sup>58</sup> The meaning of didactics is systematic instruction: [www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/didactics](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/didactics)

<sup>59</sup> Described in section 1.2.

<sup>60</sup> Described in section 1.4.1.

DESIGN DETAILS	M5S INITIATIVE <sup>59</sup>	OTHER LEARNING INITIATIVES <sup>60</sup>
Achievements	Learners get new knowledge <i>and</i> skills in what to do, why to change/adapt and how to do it.	Learners get new knowledge. There is no systematic provision for acquisition of skills.
Outcome	Learning is applied during or immediately after the learning period	The learning may not be applied at all due to lack of skills in the “what,” “why” and “how.”

The OneHR vision emphasizes the strong interrelation between adequate staffing and the effective and efficient delivery of enhanced living and development conditions for children globally. The M5S Initiative focuses on the acquisition of knowledge *and* skills rather than knowledge alone, and supports the strategic vision to “accelerate results for the children...” because immediately and individually applicable skills are more likely to be applied and generate change than general knowledge alone. This is supported by evaluation findings under item F.

#### H. How was the M5S learning sourced financially?

Staff development funds are received from UNICEF HQ based on the number of staff positions in the region. These funds are, however, not earmarked for a specific learning programme. Within ROSA, most COs do not have a dedicated learning budget. Instead, the funds used for learning and development are very much decentralized, and often, costs are charged to a variety of sources. The M5S learning is therefore funded alongside other learning initiatives offered in the region. There is no specific budget for the M5S or other learning. Funds are carved from the CO budget, at times supported by ROSA. There is no specific donor funding for learning, although a range of new work areas have arisen over the past decade. These include emerging political and climatic challenges, all of which require immediate and effective responses – and thus the introduction of new practices, both administratively and programmatically. The lack of a direct donor investment in partner learning suggests that learning is perceived as an internal activity disconnected from corporate performance.

#### I. How cost-effective do you see the M5S when compared to other learning initiatives?

The total funds allocated to the M5S and other learning initiatives per learner were not assessed in this evaluation due to a lack of detailed cost breakdowns for the different aspects of the M5S Initiative. Furthermore, without a record of changes in mode of operation and results at the child level, the cost-effectiveness cannot be established.

Without having figures available, the KIIs show that the M5S components, implying travel and DSA, were viewed, by some, as highly costly. This includes SWAP, Stretch, and Surge, all of which involve learning in another UNICEF office within or outside the region. An example of this is the table below, which shows costs that were incurred by COs to support staff who went on a staff exchange.

**Table 6: Staff exchange programme cost**

Country	Completed Staff exchanges	Total Cost
Afghanistan	5	\$ 60,152
Bhutan	3	\$ 40,352
Maldives	1	\$ 13,485
Pakistan	5	\$ 49,828
Sri Lanka	2	\$ 20,774
ROSA	2	\$ 36,221
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>\$ 220,812</b>

Source: 2022 staff exchange programme report

For 18 staff who did a staff exchange outside their office. The average cost of the staff exchange was about \$12,267, which may be costly, particularly for small offices with limited budgets for staff learning and development. In addition, the learning period is long, up to three months. The costs are covered by the receiving office. Nevertheless, the components requiring travel had the highest participation<sup>61</sup>.

In addition to the above, supervisors shared that, since HR promoted cross-regional exchange, sending staff for staff development outside the region has made the programme very expensive. Some of the staff who participated in stretch assignments had gone to countries in Africa, for instance, which required the establishment of sending and

<sup>61</sup> Tables under item E.

receiving offices to share the costs of travel and daily subsistence allowance. Given the resource-constrained environment in which UNICEF operates, cheaper staff development options, such as assignments within the region as envisaged under the M5S Initiative, should be explored. This, however, needs to be balanced with the international nature of UNICEF and the need for staff to gain experience in different operating environments (humanitarian, developmental, and regional).

The KIIs indicate other negative cost-effectiveness and efficiency aspects of the M5S. Feedback from the KIIs that were conducted is presented below:

- Being an exchange between two staff of the same category and at the same level, the tasks performed during the staff exchange are overall the same as in their own CO. The gains do not match the costs of the posting.
- Lacking staff with CO experience and expertise for a period of time generates gaps in CO delivery, without significant capacity gains.
- The swap/exchange component is a very effective way to learn new approaches to programme delivery.

The KIIs across all staff categories indicate that the more cost-effective components such as Mentoring, typically running once a month over six months, had implementation problems involving (i) mentors were often too busy to conduct the mentoring; (ii) the mentor and mentee were based in different countries had different situations for which reason the mentoring was not always relevant, or (iii) the needs and expectations from the mentee were never made clear, which made the mentoring stop or be less relevant. It should be noted that ROSA has recorded substantial benefits from this component.

The desk review, supported by KIIs, established that there was no recording of the mentorship process, including meetings, progress, and the conclusion of the mentoring arrangement. It is, therefore, not known how many completed and benefitted from this component. Hence, the cost-effectiveness of this potentially cost-effective M5S component cannot be established.

Another cost-effective component, job shadowing, had relatively few participants. It suffered from some of the same problems mentioned under Mentoring, but also had positive experiences that **prompted self-awareness of one's own management and added to the learner's skills, thereby lifting the office's capacity.**

Feedback from staff from the KIIs and the online survey shows that, across cost-effectiveness, there are both positive and negative experiences. Positive experiences with the cost-effectiveness of the M5S Initiative included:

- It provides hands-on experience at working and learning levels. And so, it is more sustained as it can be used immediately and directly. This reduces the cost of repeated training.
- M5S, being a composition of components, it is possible to select and compose training to match both needs and budget.
- Being skilled learning, and not provision of knowledge only, the learning is applied both during the learning period and immediately after.
- I think the M5S is more cost effective as it leverages internal resources and focuses on practical, hands-on experience, reducing the need for costly external training.

Negative experiences included:

- With no given budget against CO targets for performance or accountability for performance, it is not easy to assess cost-effectiveness.
- Despite finding suitable matches for staff exchanges under the M5S Initiative, several staff members were unable to participate due to last-minute cancellations by the other party or funding constraints. It affected staff morale and hindered capacity building. Missed opportunities led to frustration and reduced trust in the initiative.
- It was widely noticed that there is a tendency that staff see learning solely as a personal career/financial development. This makes corporate and child gains be less.
- For the small COs, it's challenging to back up when a staff member is on stretch for 3 months.
- Since HR promoted cross-regional exchange, it became a very expensive programme.

Overall, it was observed that **cost-effectiveness depends on staff sharing their learning with the organization**. The same applies to sharing learning with partners. The evaluation found no evidence that the new skills benefitted or had a spill-over effect to implementing partners in terms of sharing or providing learning in the ways of working. This may affect the national internalization of new approaches, as UNICEF IP staff rotate, thereby implicitly affecting the sustainability and efficiency of the learning.

#### J. To what extent has the M5S Initiative responded to and/or adjusted as necessary to the changing context and emerging needs/priorities in your office/region?

Unlike from other learning initiatives, including virtual opportunities, the desk review of the M5S component guides and other M5S descriptive materials<sup>62</sup> confirms that the M5S Initiative was designed to accommodate actual and emerging needs by having a Surge component enabling new enrolments in the SAR surge roster, and by being very flexible in design. On the latter, all M5S components can be designed to have longer or shorter durations, e.g., more mentoring sessions in a shorter time or fewer sessions, depending on office needs and the actual staff experience. Moreover, each learning can be designed to have exactly the required focus and content for staff and COs to address actual skill needs that reduce CO delivery. An example of this from the KIIs and semi-structured interviews is that:

- It provided me with the right tools, skills, and knowledge to support actual governmental health needs in vaccines.
- The M5S Initiative has provided multiple platforms for learning, development, and firsthand experience, enabling staff to choose opportunities tailored to their specific needs. This flexibility makes it a valuable tool for personal and professional growth across different roles and contexts.

Hence, the M5S Initiative is highly relevant in a time and place where changes in living conditions are unpredictable and unprecedented. This requires rapid changes in the type and mode of effort, and thus in the acquisition of new or refined skills, addressing emergency situations as provided in the Surge component. An example:

- My advanced technical skills in VISION as a Superuser – especially in fund management, monitoring, reallocation, and disbursement processes for emergency humanitarian programmes, as well as in partnership management with CSOs – were highly valued by both the Team Leader and the Head of Office.

## 5.4 Impact – effect

**The M5S person-centred design has enabled learners to engage immediately and with ease in new activities and areas of responsibilities benefitting both the organization and its beneficiaries.**

#### K. How has the M5S learning model ensured effective and easy use of new skills after the assignment?

The design of the M5S Initiative supports an effective and easy use of new skills after the learning period, and in some components, e.g., mentoring, already during the learning period. The guided, hands-on experience, which characterizes all the M5S components, enables the use of new skills in one's own situation, facilitating their application during the learning period and into one's job. Cutting across all six M5S components, the positive experiences with the use/applicability of M5S skills involve:

- In most M5S components, new learning is applied while working. This helps with gradual changes in operations, which are more easily implemented and meet less resistance.
- The learning by exposure was immediately applicable at the home office.
- Learned how policymaking at the global level works and how to manage the requirements for programme planning at the country level. This involved me in the development of the RCA tool, supporting two country offices in developing SOPs, a tool for their countries to use remotely.

<sup>62</sup> List of documents, annex 3.

- Being on the job while learning means that we do not need to use personal time on work after learning sessions.
- This experience heightened my ability to adapt and respond to unforeseen challenges, particularly in humanitarian crises, and highlighted the importance of maintaining flexibility in programme planning and execution.
- It provides staff, especially national staff, with new perspectives and exposure to how other country offices operate.
- Overall, it has increased staff enthusiasm and appreciation for the organization.

Supervisor feedback (13) from staff who participated in stretch, mentoring, and swap indicates that staff performance improved after the training. Supervisors were asked to identify the areas in which the staff member performed poorest prior to the training and the areas that had improved after the training. The table below presents this feedback by the training initiative that staff participated in.

**Table 7: Supervisor feedback on staff performance**

TRAINING INITIATIVE	PERFORMANCE THAT WAS RATED POOR PRIOR TO THE TRAINING	CHANGES IN PERFORMANCE THAT WERE NOTED AFTER TRAINING.
Stretch assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performing activities on time</li> <li>• Taking initiative.</li> <li>• Being able to speak up in meetings especially in meetings including those senior.</li> <li>• Limited region wide exposure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spoke up more.</li> <li>• Gained confidence and authority, was able to quote examples from the country to which she had been posted for the Stretch.</li> <li>• The supervisee became more confident and aware of how the regional office operates.</li> </ul>
Stretch assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proactiveness.</li> <li>• Complacency.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Networking improved</li> <li>• Staff member could easily get clarification and support as required.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Routine work was falling behind a little for lack of enthusiasm.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enthusiasm, ideas, drive increased, and even routine work was better done after stretch.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging in professional development, taking up new responsibilities, change management, data analysis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tried to look at things from a CO perspective and recommend solutions.</li> </ul>
Mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes in SAP system in processing of payments and understanding of the new SOPs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchanged the knowledge that affects performance by performing the same tasks in a more timely manner, with less guidance, with increased learning and improved performance.</li> <li>• Better understanding of established SOPs.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Systematic follow up on work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The staff member became active in following tasks systematically.</li> </ul>
SWAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The supervisee's technical knowledge in data management, analysis and data utilization seemed to be poor.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The supervisee learned how to analyse data and use data for decision-making.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The staff member came in on a SWAP initiative. The area that may need additional support is briefing of the staff member of the context before well in advance so that they can be prepared for the context and culture.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The staff member learned rapidly and was able to work well with the team in the office. She did very well and exceeded expectations.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The person who came to ROSA under me was excellent. The staff who went on exchange had a good exposure, but I don't think there was any notable difference in her performance after return... maybe it's more of increased motivation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having international exposure does motivate national staff, as they plan to move to international posts in the future.</li> </ul>
Surge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nothing noted.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No change as the surge was in line with his skills and experience.</li> </ul>

Source: Online supervisor feedback

**Figure 12: Quarterly knowledge sharing flyer**



From the feedback above, it can be observed that there were changes in staff performance. The changes observed are not specific to a single training initiative but can be seen across the various initiatives. One supervisor of a participant who participated in a swap assignment, however, noted that there were no changes in the staff member’s performance, as the swap was in an area the staff member was already working in. This could indicate that, for Swap to be effective as a staff development initiative, the staff member needs to be exposed to new areas of work that are not aligned with their day-to-day activities, so that the full benefits of the training can be realized.

The KIIs confirmed the desk review findings that there are no defined procedures for giving back to the CO, RO, and the organization at large for returning learners apart from a brief of the closest staff. This may partly explain the management and focal point experiences with differences in learning purposes among the staff and between the staff and the employing office.

The Regional Office has, however, put in place a feedback mechanism in which staff who have participated in the M5S Initiative provide one-time feedback on their learning experience and reflections on their observations during the learning. The feedback sessions serve as motivation for other staff to participate in future training, but they are insufficient for adopting the introduced practices.

**L. What indications are there of positive and negative effects of the M5S Initiative?**

Although this item overlaps with the other effect/impact items, the evaluation had clear indications of positive and negative effects of the M5S Initiative:

**Table 8: Indication of positive effects of the M5S**

LEARNING	POSITIVE EFFECT
<b>Cross-cutting experiences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff interest in learning because:</li> <li>Exposure is a great learning opportunity as it adds skills to handle the tasks done at duty station.</li> <li>Expands network.</li> <li>May also help in taking the next career move.</li> <li>Job satisfaction. Overall, it has increased the enthusiasm and appreciation by the staff for the organization</li> </ul>
<b>Shadowing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Becomes conscious of own management style.</li> <li>Used daily in management of senior staff.</li> <li>Lifts the capacity of a given office.</li> <li>Prompts self-awareness.</li> <li>Adds to the learner’s skills.</li> </ul>
<b>Mentoring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn to be responsive/effective on the job.</li> <li>Learns that not one size fits all/everywhere.</li> <li>Very useful for new staff.</li> </ul>
<b>Stretch</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn how to handle own challenges in a new way.</li> <li>Helps in career progression.</li> <li>Higher job satisfaction</li> <li>Apart from the on-job-learning a broader contextual and cultural understanding is acquired.</li> <li>Opens opportunities for a broader knowledge with exposure to development practices in other contexts.</li> <li>Provides a learning beyond the professional learning</li> </ul>

LEARNING	POSITIVE EFFECT
<b>Strength-based coaching</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The on-job training helps in applying new approaches while having support.</li> <li>Improved teamwork.</li> <li>Excellent as it helps the staff discovering own potential.</li> </ul>
<b>Surge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enables expansion of the ROSA roster of available emergency related skills.</li> <li>Empowerment of female staff.</li> <li>Relevant and necessary</li> </ul>

A consolidation of the findings shows impact/effect at two key areas of learning, namely immediately applicable professional learning, and wider contextual understanding that there is no single best practice for any job. Experiences with the negative effects of the M5S Initiative also cut across most components.

**Table 9: Indication of negative effects of the M5S Initiative**

LEARNING	NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES
Mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no overview over mentoring activities as much is done outside the scope of the M5S.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relevant HR staff will not know when a mentoring has been terminated or completed.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The intended systems for arranging and implementing mentoring never came to work as intended resulting in the above experiences.</li> <li>This is now in place.</li> </ul>
SWAP, Surge, Stretch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The absence of staff for a period (smaller COs). In addition, many take leave upon return to have time with their families.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When staff go on stretch, it is important to ensure that responsibilities from their original office do not build up. The staff then ends up doing 'one and a half' jobs which can be a strain on them. It also means that other team members then must shoulder additional responsibilities which, in a small team, can be a challenge.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stretch is expensive.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Misunderstanding that Stretch will give IP jobs. The accountability in terms of higher in-job performance is not considered.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being an exchange between two staff of same category and at same level the tasks performed during the learning are overall the same as in own CO. Thus, the capacity gains are limited.</li> </ul>
Strength-based coaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The duration of the coaching period is too short.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Complete Gallup's Clifton Strengths Assessment is paid by ROSA whether being an individual or a group of staff. The subsequent counselling on how to best use the established strengths will in principle be at own costs.</li> </ul>
Surge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mobility is low above level P3. This means that same staff, often NO staff, is called upon repeatedly. This makes some COs have difficulties in delivering as expected and planned.</li> <li>Despite contributing to the expanding roster of trained staff, there are still gaps in skills for rare types of emergencies as skills are most often acquired in the most frequent types of emergencies.</li> </ul>

As seen in earlier findings, the negative experiences relate more to a lack of systems and structures for the M5S Initiative than to the learning effect per se. This illustrates that learning is not a stand-alone or personal initiative. It is rather an initiative that contributes to CO at all levels of performance.

### **M. What indications are there that show positive changes and effects of the M5S Initiative can be sustained?**

ROSA has established mechanisms to ensure the positive changes and effects of the M5S Initiative are sustained. There is a standing meeting held once every quarter where staff who have participated in the M5S Initiative can present what they have benefited from the initiative and highlight lessons learned from the exercise. Such a mechanism creates visibility for the initiative, allowing other staff who have not yet participated to access the various training options. However, staff sharing their experiences at these meetings should be prioritized so that all staff can share theirs. Currently, sharing is voluntary.

The M5S Initiative is run through existing structures aligned with the One HR strategy, such as country office learning committees and human resource development teams. Such an approach ensures that there is a function responsible for tracking participation in the initiatives and that staff who have participated in these initiatives are recognized. For instance, staff participating in surge assignments are entered into the surge roster so they can use their skills whenever surge capacity is needed.

Furthermore, staff who have participated in various training initiatives, such as stretch assignments, can apply for higher roles within their job grade or into other categories, such as NO or IP. This presents opportunities to ensure the positive effects of the M5S Initiative are applied in these roles.

The lack of documentation of the positive effects of the M5S Initiative, however, threatens the sustainability of learning effects. The experiences of staff who have participated in the M5S Initiative are not documented. Currently, learning focal points only track the names of people who have participated in these initiatives. A system for documenting staff experience with the M5S Initiative could greatly enhance its sustainability. Such documentation will also highlight the components of the M5S that need adjustment for maximum effect.

The M5S has a suite of training initiatives that could be implemented at minimal cost, greatly enhancing opportunities for sustainability. These include mentoring, job shadowing, and stretch assignments that can be implemented in the same office or online without significant investment. On the other hand, initiatives such as surge attract high costs, as staff members often must travel to an emergency setting. Stretch assignments could also require significant investment if the staff member must travel outside the duty station, as indicated in Table 6.

The findings under item N were used for recommendations, while there were no scorings under item O.

**The overall conclusion:** The M5S initiative is well-suited to a rapidly changing environment with substantial needs for localized, thematic, and wider professional learning that is immediately applicable when supported by the required systems and structures that enable a flexible design and use. The initiative is an essential mechanism for ensuring that staff have bespoke training initiatives that they can access to address their training needs.

The M5S is relevant to addressing corporate staff development needs; however, the absence of a programme document outlining the initiative's key objectives and targets makes it challenging to assess its performance. In addition, the lack of a monitoring system to track programme performance makes it difficult to assess the initiative's effectiveness.

Some initiatives, such as job shadowing and mentoring, are cost-effective because they require minimal funding to conduct the training. Cost-effectiveness for other initiatives, however, could not be established because of the absence of a financial tracking system that shows the funds invested in the various training initiatives.

The success of the M5S is threatened by the lack of dedicated funding for the initiative, as well as a changing environment that may see staff development prioritized less, with the few available resources channelled to other corporate priorities.

## 6.1 Conclusions - SWOT analysis of the findings

The conclusions represent the key and consolidated evidence-based findings relating to the objectives of the evaluation, which were:

1. To identify and document key results, lessons learned, good practices/successful strategies, and innovations in designing and implementing the M5S Initiative.
2. To guide UNICEF SAR's decisions on adjustments needed to strengthen the M5S Initiative and 3. Identify opportunities that exist to enhance staff learning modalities across offices in South Asia.

The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis provides an overview of the positive and negative evaluation findings concerning the design of the M5S Initiative and conditions for the implementation. In addition, the analysis indicates which factors are internal and which are external. The findings are listed in random order and pertain only to the SAR situation.

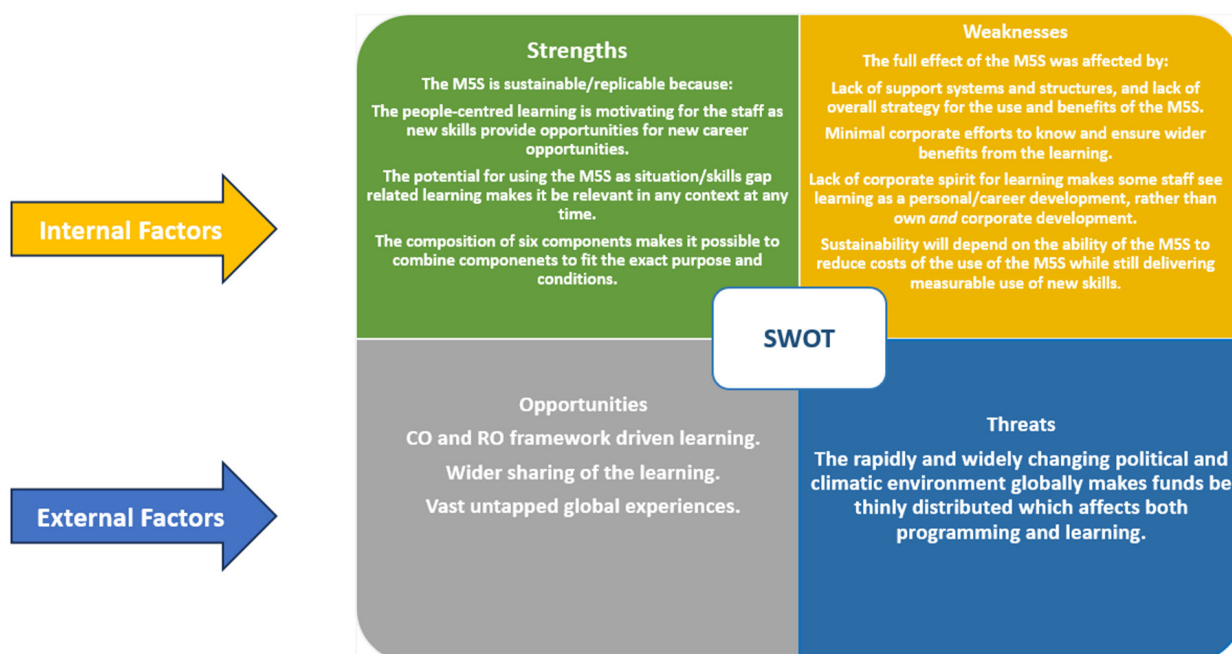
Internal findings relate to the M5S design and corporate implementation conditions that can be addressed by UNICEF at relevant levels - HQs, RO, and/or CO, while external findings relate to the environment outside UNICEF's direct influence.

**Relevance:** Corporate HR's focus on a people-centred approach proved relevant to learning. Delivering to UNICEF's global strategy, the inconsistency between UNICEF HQs priorities and UN overall priorities, e.g., the UNSD 2018 principles, limits the thematic choice of learning.

**Effectiveness:** The M5S Initiative provided immediately applicable skills. Hence, no time was wasted translating more general knowledge and skills into locally applicable ones. Although some of the M5S components were considered costly, the investment was deemed largely cost-effective.

Three of the M5S components were considered costly given the current funding constraints. Without monitoring the effect or value for money, UNICEF will not know the cost-effectiveness of the M5S components, which may hamper continued recruitment for the M5S Initiative.

Figure 13: M5S SWOT Analysis



Cost-effectiveness cannot be established without monitoring the effect against costs and comparing this with similar assessments of other learning.

The evaluation findings indicated that the M5S Initiative can be modified to be less resource-demanding without losing its effect.

**Impact:** Different experiences were identified during the implementation of the M5S Initiative, and these vary across initiatives. In the absence of a programme document and a theory of change, there were no systems in place to systematically and evidence-based establish impact at the corporate, individual, and child/family levels.

**Replicability/sustainability:** With well-considered adaptability to both internal and external needs and factors, the M5S Initiative is highly replicable in a rapidly changing global context, even with limited funds. The M5S training suite has staff development options such as mentoring, stretch, and job shadowing that can be implemented in the same country/office without incurring high costs.

## 6.2 Lessons learned

The lessons learned are organized against the EQs, as this allows a return to a given section with the background for the listing.

Table 10: Lessons learned

Criterion	Lesson Learned
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Continuous learning should be prioritized for all staff categories so that UNICEF personnel have the skills that are necessary for the organization to deliver on its mandate of meeting children’s needs in both developmental and emergency contexts</li> <li>b) The people-centred approach makes the M5S learning be owned and motivating although not ensuring skills that are relevant for delivery to the CO framework.</li> </ul>

Criterion	Lesson Learned
Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c) Absence of monitoring of the effect of learning at individual, corporate and child level makes learning be the end-target and not the means to the end.</li> <li>d) The close to equal participation in M5S and other learning initiatives partly indicates a need for people-centred learning and that the M5S, therefore, complements other learnings.<sup>63</sup></li> <li>e) There is need for targeted communication to various categories of staff particularly for those staff categories and gender that is not adequately represented in the various staff categories. Such an approach ensures that there is equity in accessing training for all staff.</li> </ul>
Cost-effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>f) The person-centred design of the M5S Initiative makes it adaptable to actual and emerging needs and to any staff situation and experience. So, there is no wasted learning or waiting for the right learning to be developed.</li> <li>g) Tracking of cost of investments that are being made in staff development is essential as this assists in assessing where extra resources may need to be invested as well as showing the effectiveness of these investments.</li> </ul>
Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>h) The M5S Initiative provide a personal development encompassing new knowledge and technical skills, and a wider perspective on the job, the office, procedures, and own performance.</li> </ul>

<sup>63</sup> Section 4.2.2, analysis of item G.

## 7

## Recommendations

The recommendations outlined here are based on insights and conclusions drawn from this evaluation and have received endorsement from members of the Evaluation Reference Staff Group, who are managing the M5S learning and development initiative. During the presentation to the ERG, recommendations were carefully examined and categorized based on their priority and the parties responsible for implementing them, based on their relevance. In addition, there have been meetings and discussions with the evaluation manager throughout the work process to ensure the highest level of relevance for ROSA and SAR offices.

The recommendations aim to enhance and document the relevance, effectiveness/effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of the M5S Initiative. The recommendations are directly related to conclusions and lessons learned, which are based on the literature review, KII, and online survey inputs – not least the proposed changes made in the KIIs.

The recommendations are presented in two columns: one column presents the recommendation, and the other *suggests* how it can be implemented. It is strongly recommended that all recommendations be operational within the next two years and that there be evidence of their effect by the end of 2027 at the latest. The priority for each recommendation has also been set as short-term, medium-term, or long-term.

**Overall recommendation: The M5S Initiative has proven replicable albeit with a need for some amendments to adhere to the current SAR and global situation and connecting needs for new skills and, subsequently, ensuring evidence-based delivery to CO and RO frameworks.**

**Table 11: Actionable recommendations for a continued M5S Initiative**

	SCHEDULE	HEADED BY	RECOMMENDATIONS	PROPOSED ACTIONS
a.	Using M5S as it is till end 2025.  Full evidence-based linkage between the CO framework and learning from January 2026.  <b>Priority: Short-term</b>	ROSA Human Resource section heading development.  CO Learning Focal Points introducing and making use of the new M5S approach.	<b>Link country framework capacity gaps with learning and documentation for learner delivery to the framework and the related country programme outcomes.</b>  Monitoring of learning delivery to the CO framework  <b>Finding:</b> When developing a country programme for a period of five years, addressing new and emerging needs and new UN(ICEF) requirements, there is likely to be a gap in skills among the available staff. Define and prioritize filling these and identify the best learning for each.  Needs-based learning will move the focus from personal gains to corporate gains – which ultimately will be viewed as personal achievements.	Create M5S – or learning – SOP at ROSA and/or CO level, demanding use of the new skills. This can be done by a prior description of how and where the skills should be applied and how this contributes to the CO framework.  This would require minimal adjustment in current procedures and would provide evidence of the effect of all learning. This would further enable an assessment of which learning provides the best/fastest/most relevant delivery to the CO framework.

	SCHEDULE	HEADED BY	RECOMMENDATIONS	PROPOSED ACTIONS
			Needs-based learning will not be gender or otherwise exclusive. Gender and inclusion considerations can be added to the considered needs. If the staff complement is gender balanced and inclusive, so will the selection for learning be.	
b.	<p>Using M5S support documents as they are rolled out.</p> <p>Effective combination of M5S components applied and documented by 01.12.2026</p> <p><b>Priority: Medium</b></p>	<p>ROSA Human Resources section heading development.</p> <p>COs are using the tools under the guidance of the learning focal points.</p>	<p><b>With an increasing need for rapidly adaptable learning, the M5S should continue being a learning opportunity and continue adapting to meet emerging corporate needs.</b></p> <p><b>Finding:</b> The immediate applicable skills have been effective and efficient in an ever-changing environment.</p>	<p>To reduce the high costs of some M5S components, it is proposed to use various components cost-effectively, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shorter SWAP or Stretch periods combined with subsequent mentoring or peer support from the visited office.</li> <li>• Using retirees and/or consultants as mentors and coaches to ensure sufficient and relevant experience for the entire mentorship.</li> <li>• Offer coaching for the effective use of individual, personal strengths and not for team coaching only. The test and report could be provided by the current consulting firm, while subsequent coaching could be provided by trained retirees or early-learners.</li> <li>• Make mentoring and coaching warrant enough sessions to ensure full learning, e.g., at least six sessions over three months. With busy days once-a-month sessions make many learners use business-as-usual approach and/or forget how the new skills should be applied.</li> <li>• Train the teaching staff (mentors, those being shadowed etc.) how to best play their role by providing a conceptual introduction and by providing a few basic tools.</li> <li>• Introduce procedures for setting expectations and commitment right before the commencement of the learning.</li> <li>• Introduction of peer learning, where staff with the same type of learning support each other in the implementation of the new skills.</li> <li>• Make effective use of global expertise. For example:</li> </ul> <p>Part of the individual travelling could be replaced with invitations of experts to SAR. An external professional in e.g. children and climate change or use of the triple nexus in programming could visit either a few countries needing a specific learning – or visit three representative countries – with visits to relevant sites and subsequent discussion of how to apply relevant knowledge and skills in the specific context. This could be followed by a mentoring period supporting the use of new skills. The trained COs could act as peers for other SAR countries when needs arise.</p>

	SCHEDULE	HEADED BY	RECOMMENDATIONS	PROPOSED ACTIONS
c.	<p>Using M5S supporting documents as they are rolled out.</p> <p>Cascading of experience fully applied and documented by 01.12.2026</p> <p><b>Priority: Medium</b></p>	<p>ROSA Human Resource heading development.</p> <p>COs using the tools.</p>	<p><b>Provide measures for experience sharing from staff who are participating in the M5S Initiative, particularly from male staff.</b></p> <p><b>Finding:</b> New skills are inefficiently shared.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cascading of experience is a cost-effective way of learning. As mentioned under point c, all learners should commit to sharing – not only the new knowledge and/or skills, but also the experiences with this.</li> <li>Staff who have participated in M5S initiatives should document their experiences through writing a short reflection on their experience.</li> <li>To make this work, it is critical that experience sharing is regarded as work and is conducted within work hours. The workload and deadlines for work should be adjusted to accommodate investment in learning. It is an effective and cost-efficient use of time when well organized.</li> </ul>
d.	<p>01.01.2025-01.07.2025</p> <p>Rolled out by end 2025</p> <p><b>Priority: Short-term</b></p>	<p>ROSA HR section calls for development workshop getting inputs and guidance.</p> <p>ROSA heading the development of documents based on CO feedback.</p> <p>ROSA HR section heads and monitors roll-out and use at CO level to enable timely amendment or support</p>	<p><b>Develop an M5S strategy, theory of change, M5S SOP and detailed step-by-step training materials for mentors, coaches and peers reflecting the above recommendations.</b></p> <p><b>Finding:</b> The M5S Initiative does not currently have a single strategy document where the initiative is presented together with an outline of the theory of change and results framework</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a M5S strategy document with clearly outlined objectives, intentions and providing clear tools for the skills gap analysis, prioritizing of learning above-mentioned analyses for focused selection and/or combination of components and determining a relevant duration of the learning. The strategy should have description of how best to ensure gender and inclusion in learning.</li> <li>Outline how female staff will benefit, particularly in positions where they may be underrepresented.</li> <li>Incorporate mechanisms for more male/female participants in initiatives where either gender is underrepresented to achieve gender parity</li> <li>Outline considerations for how countries in SAR could be more equally (number, gender, inclusion) represented in the M5S Initiative, e.g., considering the level for and necessity of travel, mix of costly and less costly approaches in the same learning session etc.</li> <li>Develop a theory of change for the M5S with clear linkages to the OneHR Strategy and UNICEF Strategic Plan objectives.</li> </ul>

	SCHEDULE	HEADED BY	RECOMMENDATIONS	PROPOSED ACTIONS
e.	01.01.2025-01.07.2025  Rolled out by end 2025  <b>Priority: Short Term</b>	ROSA Human Resources heading development.  COs using the tools.	<b>Secure dedicated resources to sustain and scale up M5S, ensuring that financial and human capital is available for consistent programme delivery.</b>  <b>Finding:</b> There are no dedicated resources that have been set aside for the M5S to be implemented across SAR.  Staff participating in staff development away from their duty station often have to continue with responsibilities from their duty station.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DHR should provide adequate resources for staff development based on the headcount in each office.</li> <li>Head of Office should ensure that there are staff learning and development resources that have been set aside in the country office budget.</li> <li>Develop L&amp;D budget against CO targets for performance monitoring and accountability for performance.</li> <li>Supervisors should make adequate arrangements for backstopping to allow staff to participate in staff development without pressure from their duty station</li> </ul>
f.	01.01.2025-01.07.2025  Rolled out by the end 2025  <b>Priority: Short-term</b>	ROSA Human Resources heading development.  COs using the tools.	<b>Develop a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation (M&amp;E) system for the M5S to track progress, measure impact, and identify areas for improvement.</b>  <b>Finding:</b> There is currently no systematic way of monitoring the delivery of the M5S Initiative to track the number of participants who have gone through the training and how they are using the skills acquired during the training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a monitoring framework for the M5S. The annual performance monitoring could have a part where all learning is listed; what is done differently and – the following year how this has delivered to the framework, e.g. in increase in registration of children for inclusion because of simpler approach or increase in children being vaccinated because of more appealing or simpler procedures.</li> <li>Provide gender disaggregated data on how male and female staff are participating in and making use of the new M5S-related skills.</li> </ul>
g.	01.01.2025-01.07.2025  <b>Priority: Short-term</b>	ROSA Human Resources leading implementation.	<b>All staff who have participated in surge or stretch assignments in emergency situations should be added to the surge roster so that UNICEF has a cadre of staff that is ready to be deployed at the onset of an emergency.</b>  Finding: Staff who have participated in surge training initiatives are not getting many opportunities to participate in emergency responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update the surge roster with details of staff who have participated in stretch or surge assignments in emergency duty stations.</li> </ul>
h.	01.01.2025-01.07.2025  <b>Priority: Short-term</b>	ROSA and CO learning focal points with support from HR section	<b>Encourage more male and GS staff to participate in the M5S initiative</b>  Finding: There are currently more female staff participating in the M5S staff learning and development initiative, despite male staff representing a greater percentage of staff  There are currently few GS staff participating in initiatives such as stretch and surge assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targeted communication to male staff to encourage them to participate in M5S initiatives where, in particular where males are underrepresented.</li> <li>Targeted mobilization for GS staff to participate in stretch and surge assignments to prepare them for more responsibilities</li> </ul>

# Terms of reference

## Didactic versus Experiential learning: What works to enhance staff learning, development and productivity during times of Crises, a case study of South Asia

Section/Unit and supervisor the consultant or contractor reports to	Evaluation, Impact and Learning, Lovemore Mhuriyengwe
Title of the Consultancy/Contract	Evaluator: Didactic versus Experiential learning
Duty Station	Remote
Duration of the Consultancy/Contract	From May – August 2024
Expected Travel	No travel expected
Work Plan Activity/related outcome	With effective implementation by ROSA and through capacity strengthening support to COs and partners, high quality evaluations and research products guide regional level actions and country programmes through the delivery of timely and credible evidence.
Budget Code for the Consultancy/Contract	
Budget Code for the Insurance	

### A. Background

South Asia is prone to yearly flooding, landslides, droughts, and earthquakes. The effects of climate change can be felt in the erratic nature and severity of these natural disasters. Conflict and political challenges often mean that emergency and humanitarian response is delayed – exposing children to high-risk situations. Children’s needs are often overlooked during emergencies, leaving them vulnerable to health issues. During a humanitarian crisis, they are often deprived of safe environments to learn and grow. Safeguarding children’s rights during humanitarian crises requires multifaceted strategies and actions. UNICEF personnel are thus a key facet of the humanitarian response that enables the organization to respond to complex and protracted emergencies. This includes having human resources that are agile and equipped with the relevant skills to be deployed in emergency situations.

The Core Commitments for Children are a key pillar of UNICEF’s response during humanitarian crisis. They highlight the need for timely deployment of personnel at the onset of emergencies which enables rapid emergency response. Under this provision, experienced and suitable personnel need to be identified within 48 hours after the sudden onset or deterioration of a humanitarian crisis and are deployed through surge mechanisms. Furthermore, regional offices, country offices and field offices need to be adequately staffed to enable ongoing humanitarian response. This requires that human resource plans be established for immediate, medium- and longer-term needs, including scale-up, scale-down and exit strategies. In this setting, it is critical that the region has enough individuals who can quickly deploy at all levels to respond to emergencies.

To adequately respond to humanitarian crises in SAR, UNICEF needs to optimize the use of internal and external surge mechanisms, including standby partnerships, rosters, and other talent-mapping initiatives, to improve UNICEF’s ability to scale up its response at the onset of an emergency and get the right balance of personnel between country and field and/or zonal offices. This therefore entails the need to have personnel who are adequately trained, equipped, and ready for deployment.

According to organizational theories, employees are drawn to and retained by organizations for a variety of reasons, the most important of which is the ability to meet their needs and demonstrate their value.

Organizations, on the other hand, must carry out their duties. To fulfill their goals and objectives, organizations must develop and enhance staff ability to deliver their programmes in both normal and crises.

### Theoretical Framework

The adult learning theory espoused by Knowles<sup>64</sup> outlines the diverse needs of adults, such as prior experiences, responsibilities, and personal motivations and how it impacts learning. The theory outlines that by understanding how adults learn, learning programmes can be designed based on the real-world context from which adult learners come from. It therefore focuses on equipping adults with skills they can immediately apply to their careers. It is based on the principles presented below<sup>65</sup>.

LEARNING PRINCIPLE	HOW ADULTS LEARN
Learning from Life Experiences	Adult learners come with a wealth of life experiences. They tend to engage more deeply with learning when they can relate the content to their personal and professional experiences.
Self-Directed Learning	Adult learners prefer to have a say in what and how they learn. They value autonomy and appreciate the opportunity to control their learning path.
Readiness to Learn	Adults are more likely to be receptive to learning when they perceive a need for the knowledge, or skills being taught. They appreciate the practical application.
Problem-Centred Learning	Adult learners thrive in problem-centred learning environments. They prefer to tackle real-world challenges and apply solutions to their own contexts.
Learning Pace	Adult learners have a self-regulated learning pace. They may want to delve deeper into topics of interest or spend more time on areas where they struggle.
Integrating the New and Old	Adults bring a wealth of prior knowledge to the learning process. New information is often integrated with existing knowledge frameworks.
Learning Environment	Adult learners benefit from collaborative and interactive learning environments that allow them to share experiences and insights with peers.

Based on the above principles, adults are internally motivated and self-directed. Staff development programmes should therefore aim towards self-directed and responsible learning that is in line with the staff member's professional and personal objectives. Also, it should promote the learners' internal motivation to acquire knowledge or skills.

During the current Strategic Plan period 2022-2025, the Division of Human Resources (DHR) has set out to develop learning programmes and initiatives to strengthen human resources capacity across the organization. These initiatives enable the DHR to have the relevant skills to be the strategic partners the organization needs. This will also support the implementation of the OneHR Strategy and the Global HR Delivery Model and help deliver on the Strategic Plan 2022-2025.

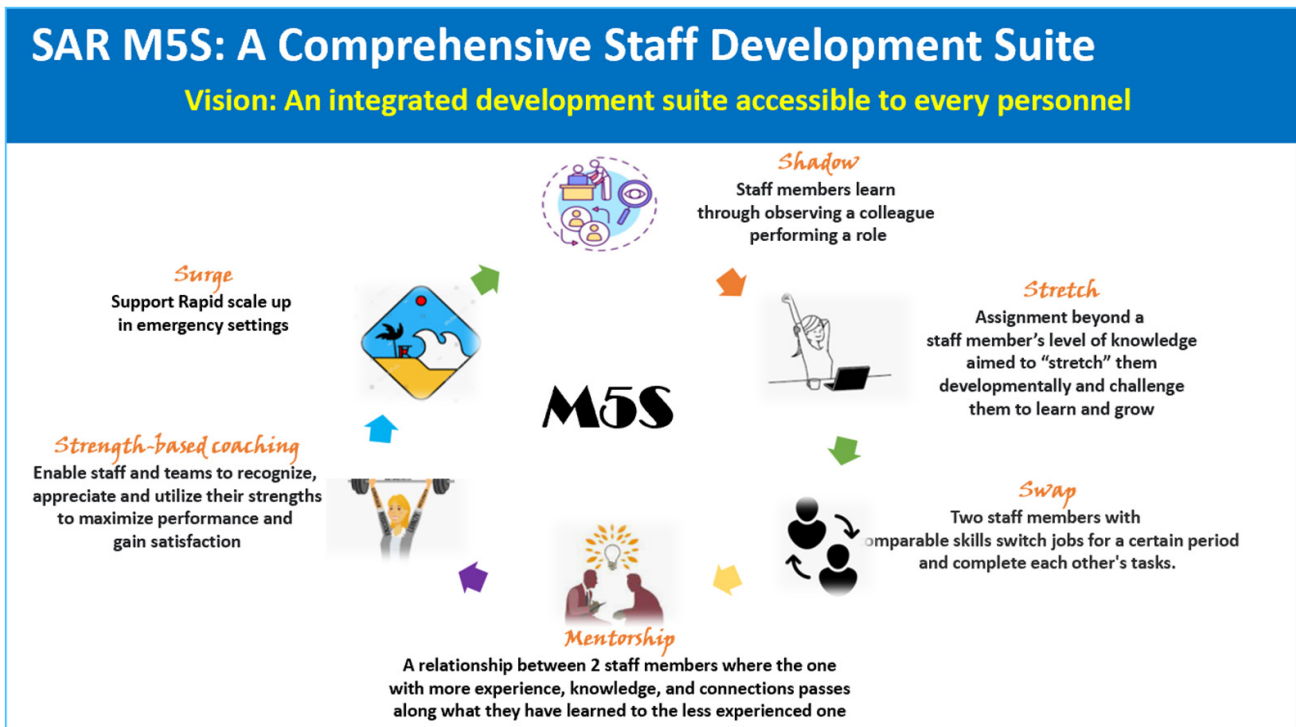
Considering the above, the Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA) has been undertaking a comprehensive staff learning and development strategy to strengthen staff capacity and accelerate the delivery of UNICEF programmes throughout the region. These programmes are based on the well-known M5S Suite (mentoring, stretch, surge, shadow, and strength-based coaching) as presented below.

These initiatives seek to ensure that there is adequate human resources capacity and skills that will enable the organization to be strategic and deliver results for children. Initiatives such as stretch assignments, swap and job shadowing that are conducted under the M5S are vital in ensuring that there is continuous learning within and across regions. As staff move from one country office to another, they share their experience and learn from what colleagues in other country offices and regions. Furthermore, as they operate in different contexts, staff appreciate the work that they and other colleagues do and realize how each staff member's role contributes to improving the lives of children. As a result, the need for staff development has remained strong, and the programme intervention for staff development must continue to evolve as it responds to the changing environments.

<sup>64</sup> [Adult Learning Theory and Principles | University of Phoenix](#)

<sup>65</sup> [What is Adult Learning Theory: A Comprehensive Guide | NEIT](#)

Figure 1: M5S Product Suite



## B. Purpose and objectives

The Evaluation, Impact and Learning Section, with the support of the Human Resources section of the UNICEF South Asia Region (SAR), is evaluating the M5S initiatives rolled out in the region. The purpose of this exercise is to examine the strategic adjustments needed in response to the changing workforce demands. It is necessary to assess the effectiveness, scalability, and efficiency of ROSA's learning and development programme in SAR. The goal is also to recount successes as well as lessons learned that may be incorporated, to serve as a foundation for future studies in this field.

## C. Objectives

The objectives of the evaluation are: 1. To identify and document key results, lessons learned, good practices/ successful strategies and innovations in designing and implementing the M5S initiatives. 2. To guide UNICEF SAR's decisions on adjustments needed to strengthen the M5S programme and 3. Identify opportunities that exist to enhance staff learning modalities across offices in South Asia.

## D. Intended Utilization

This evaluation will be used by the ROSA, SAR country offices, and the human resources sections across UNICEF. The findings and lessons learned will feed on efforts at UNICEF ROSA to inform scale up and future iterations of the programmes. The knowledge generated from this exercise will be used and adapted in the design and operationalization of these initiatives in other regions.

## E. Scope

This evaluation will be conducted between May and August 2024 and will cover the design and implementation of the M5S initiatives implemented from 2021 to January 2024. The evaluation will look at the implementation of the programme amongst cohorts that have participated in these initiatives from the Regional Office and eight country offices. The evaluation will focus on the following OECD DAC Criteria: Effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, and sustainability.

## F. Evaluation QUESTIONS AND SUB QUESTIONS

This exercise will seek to answer the following questions (with an acknowledgement that the questions may be revised by the consultant/ team, in consultation with the Evaluation Reference Group (ERG), during the inception phase):

### Strategic positioning

1. To what extent are the M5S initiatives aligned with SAR priorities and other similar initiatives (within UNICEF or other UN agencies) at the global level or in other regions?
2. To what extent is the programme aligned with the OneHR strategy?
3. To what extent have the M5S initiatives assisted staff to own their work and results?
4. How has participation in the M5S initiative helped staff to meet their development and learning objectives?

### Programme delivery

5. What evidence is available on the achievement of results, as outlined in the concept notes/programme document of the various initiatives?
6. To what extent is the M5S considered cost effective given the resource constrained setting in the region? Could similar or better results have been achieved for less money? How can SAR increase the cost effectiveness and efficiency of the M5S?
7. To what extent has the M5S initiative responded to and/or adjusted as necessary to the changing context and emerging needs/priorities?
8. To what extent has UNICEF's Gender Action Plan been consistently integrated in the M5S strategies and activities?
9. How have the M5S learning models ensured effective skills transfer during and after the assignment?
10. How effective has participation in staff development initiatives been in improving staff capacity and productivity?

### Sustainability

11. What indications are there that show positive changes and effects of the M5S can be sustained?
12. What are some of the areas that can benefit from improvement to increase the M5S fitness for purpose in humanitarian and development contexts?
13. What are the possible options and implications for SAR to consider in informing and strengthening the design of the learning models in the next iteration of the M5S?
14. What mechanisms need to be put in place to sustain and take the M5S initiative to scale?
15. What lessons have been learned in the roll out of the current suite of M5S products?

### Methodology

This evaluation will utilize a mixed-methods approach and draw on quantitative and qualitative data strategies to collect and analyze information relative to the evaluation questions. These complementary approaches will be deployed to ensure that the exercise responds to the intended evaluation objectives; integrates gender, equity, and disability principles throughout the evaluation process, including participation and consultation of key stakeholders to the best extent possible.

Quantitative data will be used to assess programme reach against target. Data collection and analysis methods that provide valid and credible information about the results disaggregated by sex, age and disability will be utilized. The methodology to be defined for delivering this evaluation will integrate international evaluation norms and standards<sup>66</sup> and ethical principles<sup>67</sup> as it is stated in UNICEF Evaluation Policy(2018)<sup>68</sup> and [UNICEF's procedure on ethical standards in research, evaluation, data collection and analysis \(2021\)](https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/files/Revised_Evaluation_Policy_Interactive.pdf).<sup>69</sup> To successfully answer the questions outlined in this TOR, the evaluation team is expected at a minimum to utilize the data collection methods outlined below.

<sup>66</sup> <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/1914>

<sup>67</sup> <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/102>

<sup>68</sup> [https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/files/Revised\\_Evaluation\\_Policy\\_Interactive.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/files/Revised_Evaluation_Policy_Interactive.pdf)

<sup>69</sup> [UNICEF procedure on ethical standards in research, evaluation, data collection and analysis \(2021\)](https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/files/Revised_Evaluation_Policy_Interactive.pdf)

**Desk Review:** This will include a review of background, key documents, and other relevant literature including programme strategies, policies, concept notes, theory of change, monitoring, and evaluation frameworks, monitoring data and analysis reports.

**Abstraction and analysis of programme performance data:** UNICEF will provide data from its administrative information systems used for planning, monitoring, reporting and programme performance management. These will be used to further assess the achievement of results in specified areas to map and analyze achievement. In addition, this analysis will look at the programme's financial performance as reported in VISION. Sex-disaggregated data will be reviewed, where available, and assessed against programme targets.

**Stakeholder mapping:** During the inception phase a comprehensive stakeholder analysis will be conducted to identify all relevant UNICEF partners, including those that may have not worked with UNICEF directly but played a key role in the outcomes to which UNICEF contributes or have in-depth knowledge of the context or issues covered by the evaluation. This stakeholder analysis will identify key informants for interviews.

**Key Informant Interviews:** A selected number of key informant interviews will be conducted with stakeholders. Key informant interviewees will include UNICEF HR and learning focal points at the RO and CO level as well as a purposive sample of participants in the various initiatives. Interviews will be conducted to maximize efficiencies and deliver the report within the specified period.

**Case Studies:** To generate evidence on the effectiveness of these initiatives, case studies will be compiled from a sample of participants who have participated in these programmes. A sample of staff will be interviewed using one-on-one semi-structured interviews. These will provide data to assess the programmes relevance and effectiveness by capturing journeys of changes from staff who participated in the M5S programmes. The interviews will follow a semi-structured questionnaire with open-ended questions to elicit natural responses and allow for a narrative approach, enabling participants to 'tell their stories.' The tools for these cases will follow a highly gender sensitive approach. By utilizing a case study format, staff will feel more comfortable discussing potentially sensitive topics in a group, allowing for more thoughtful discussions.

It is expected that the evaluation will apply a strong equity and gender focus by i) including equity and gender in the design, methodology, data collection and analysis; and ii) reflecting equity and gender analysis in the findings, conclusions and concrete recommendations and action points that can be addressed in the design of a possible future M5S for a strengthened integration of equity and gender in the M5S strategies.

During the inception phase, the evaluator will detail the methodology proposed, which will include an elaboration of the assessment matrix, data collection tools for the chosen methodology, sample size calculations and sampling procedure to ensure inference of the results to data collection and analysis, ethical considerations, limitations, and mitigation measures. It is anticipated that the elaboration of the methodology at inception will not have a financial implication.

## H. Consultant tasks

The evaluation consultant will be responsible for conducting the evaluation. The specific tasks of the evaluation consultant will include but may not be limited to:

- Conducting a desk review.
- Conducting preliminary discussions with project teams.
- Writing an inception report that includes the methodology.
- Conducting stakeholder analysis
- Semi-structured interviews with stakeholders and initiative participants
- Conducting interviews participants
- Briefing and debriefing sessions with UNICEF staff and management.
- Produce a draft final report that includes background, methodology, achievements, challenges, and recommendations.
- Producing the final report, PowerPoint, infographic, and evaluation brief.

## I. Deliverables

The evaluator is expected to deliver the following products:

- Evaluation inception report, comprising not more than ten pages plus annexes. The inception report should be prepared by the evaluator before going into the full-fledged evaluation exercise. It should detail the evaluator's understanding of what is being evaluated and why, showing how each evaluation question will be answered by way of: proposed methods; proposed sources of data; and data collection procedures. The inception report should include a proposed schedule of tasks, activities, and deliverables. The inception report provides the programme unit and the evaluators with an opportunity to verify that they share the same understanding about the evaluation and clarify any misunderstandings.
- Draft evaluation report, comprising not more than 40-50 pages plus annexes, with an executive summary of not more than 5 pages describing key findings and recommendations. The Project Unit should review the draft evaluation report to ensure that the evaluation meets the required quality criteria.
- Evaluation report audit trail – comments and changes by the evaluator in response to the draft report should be retained by the evaluator to show how the comments have been addressed.
- Final evaluation report – the evaluators will ensure that the report, to the extent possible, complies with the UNICEF Quality Checklist for Evaluation Reports. The report should be in line with [UNICEF evaluation report standards](#), and should, as a minimum, include the following:
  - Title and opening pages
  - Outcome and evaluation information details
  - Table of contents
  - List of acronyms and abbreviations
  - Executive summary
  - Introduction
  - Description of the intervention
  - Evaluation scope and objectives
  - Evaluation approach and methods
  - Data sources, data collection procedures, and instruments
  - Data analysis
  - Major limitations of the methodology (including steps taken to mitigate them)
  - Analysis of the situation about the outcome, the outputs and the learning and development strategy
  - Analysis of opportunities to provide guidance for future programming.
  - Key findings
  - Conclusions
  - Recommendations
  - Lessons learned.
  - Annexes including list of people met.
- Evaluation brief and a power point presentation for UNICEF management and/or other stakeholders. The evaluation report should be complete and logically organized. It should be written clearly and be understandable to the intended audience.

## J. Child Safeguarding

Is this project/assignment considered as "[Elevated Risk Role](#)" from a child safeguarding perspective?

Yes  No If YES, check all that apply:

**Direct contact role**  Yes  No

If yes, please indicate the number of hours/months of direct interpersonal contact with children, or work in their physical proximity, with limited supervision by a more senior member of personnel: **Click or tap here to enter text.**

**Child data role**  Yes  No

If yes, please indicate the number of hours/months of manipulating or transmitting personal-identifiable information of children (name, national ID, location data, photos): [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

More information is available in the [Child Safeguarding SharePoint](#) and [Child Safeguarding FAQs and Updates](#).

## K. Consultant requirements

- At least master's degree in social sciences or a relevant area.
- Minimum ten years' experience in human resources, staff development, evaluation, education, or a relevant social science field.
- Knowledge of UNICEF and the region.
- International experience in organizing training, conducting training needs assessment.
- Expertise in conducting similar or related programme evaluations/assessments.
- Experience working on humanitarian projects/ interventions and an understanding of needs and responses in such situations.
- Understanding of research and evaluation methodologies, including methodologies for collecting data in emergencies
- Working in training related organization will get preference.
- Must have excellent communication and presentation (oral and written) skills in English.

## L. Reporting line/Management

The consultant will report to the evaluation manager within the Evaluation, Impact and Learning section at ROSA.

## M. Location of the Assignment

The facilitator will work from the place of domicile.

## N. Time frame for the evaluation process

The overall duration of the tasks covered by this Tor has been estimated not to exceed thirty working days, including related deskwork, interviews, meetings, report drafting and presentation, to be delivered during May 2024.

The following table provides an indicative breakout for activities and delivery:

Activity	Deliverable	Tentative date of completion	Responsible party
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Briefing of evaluators/sharing relevant documents</li> <li>• Desk review and list of reviewed documents</li> <li>• Evaluation Inception Report (not more than ten pages plus annexes).</li> <li>• Preparing a detailed inception report and work plan</li> <li>• Comments and approval of inception report</li> </ul>	Inception report	May 2024	UNICEF Evaluation team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings/interviews with stakeholders</li> <li>• Data collection</li> <li>• Preparation of draft evaluation report</li> <li>• Debriefing with UNICEF Draft Evaluation</li> <li>• Draft publishable manuscript</li> </ul>	Draft report (maximum forty pages plus annexes), with an executive summary of not more than three pages describing key findings and recommendations. 30 October 2020 UNICEF, Evaluation team	June 2024	UNICEF Evaluation team

Activity	Deliverable	Tentative date of completion	Responsible party
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporating feedback on draft evaluation report</li> <li>• Finalization of the evaluation report</li> <li>• Submission of the final report</li> <li>• Final Evaluation</li> </ul>	Final report, infographic, draft publishable manuscript, and Evaluation brief and an on-line presentation for UNICEF management	June 2024	Consultant
Total number of days		30 days	

Total Number of Working Days: 30 days Number of days to be invested for each deliverable may change but the total number of days worked by the consultant cannot exceed 30 days for this assignment (i.e., for submission of the deliverables) as defined in the ToR.

Reporting Language: The reporting language shall be English.

## Evaluation matrix

	QUESTIONS	DATA SOURCE	CATEGORY OF PARTICIPANTS	Data collection tools/ Sources
<b>EQ 1</b>	<b>Strategic positioning - Relevance of the M5S design and approach</b>			
Item	Indicator: The <i>reasons why and the extent</i> to which the M5S initiative was relevant across the three staff categories and the RO and COs			
A.	To what extent are the M5S initiatives aligned with SAR priorities and other similar initiatives (within UNICEF or other UN agencies) at the global level or in other regions?	Desk review Relevant staff	Management staff Focal points	ToR Desk review <sup>70</sup> KII <sup>71</sup>
B.	To what extent is the programme aligned with the OneHR strategy?	Desk review Relevant staff RO and CO HR staff		KII
C.	To what extent have the M5S initiatives that you participated in assisted you in owning your work and results?	Relevant staff	Management staff Learners at all levels	KII
D.	Is the M5S relevant for all three legs of the triple nexus? Kindly provide examples.	Relevant staff	Learners at all levels	KII
E.	To what extent has UNICEF's Gender Action Plan been consistently integrated in the M5S strategies and activities?	Desk review Relevant staff	Management staff Focal points Learners at all levels	KII

	QUESTIONS	DATA SOURCE	CATEGORY OF PARTICIPANTS	Data collection tools/ Sources
<b>EQ 2</b>	<b>Effectiveness and efficiency – Delivery of M5S initiative</b>			
Item	Indicator: Number of participating learners that have fully or partly (respectively) adopted the new skills			
F.	What is done differently and/or more effectively after the introduction of M5S?	Desk review Relevant staff	Management Focal points Learners	KII
G.	How does the M5S add to other learning opportunities	Desk review Relevant staff	Management staff Focal points	KII
H.	Financing of/resources for the planned activities?	Relevant staff	Management staff Focal points	KII KII
I.	How cost-effective do you see the M5S when compared to other learning initiatives?	Relevant staff	Management staff Focal points	KII KII

<sup>70</sup> See list of documents in Annex 3.

<sup>71</sup> KII can be either online interviews or individual filling and returning of the interview template.

J.	To what extent has the M5S initiative responded to and/or adjusted as necessary to the changing context and emerging needs/priorities in your office/region	Relevant staff	Management Focal points Learners	KII
<b>EQ 3</b>	<b>Impact - Effect</b>			
Item	Indicator: The extent to which M5S initiatives have resulted in changes in mode of operation <sup>72</sup> among staff			
K.	How have the M5S learning methods ensured effective and easy use of new skills after the assignment?	Relevant staff	Focal points Learners	KII
L.	What opportunities have you realized as a result of participating in the learning initiative?	Relevant staff	Focal points Learners	KII

	QUESTIONS	DATA SOURCE	CATEGORY OF PARTICIPANTS	Data collection tools/ Sources
<b>EQ 4</b>	<b>Preconditions for continued use of M5S suite</b>			
Item	Indicator: N/A			
M.	What indications are there of wider positive and negative effects of the M5S?	Relevant staff	Management Focal points Learners	KII
N.	What mechanisms need to be put in place to sustain and take the M5S initiative to scale?	Relevant staff	Management Focal points Learners	KII
	OTHERS			
O.	Other experiences that have not been covered by EQ 1-3	Relevant staff	Management Focal points Learners	KII

<sup>72</sup> Covering all OECD/DAC criteria as relevant: Systems and structures, human resources (number, relevance of expertise), corporate infrastructure and work environment.

## List of documents reviewed

### Documents shared by UNICEF ROSA

Title
M5S Evaluation – ERG Note
M5S Evaluation – Information note
L&D Stakeholder Mapping
List of focal points
Staff by division/country, post type and category
Staff by division/country, post type and category_v2
SAR Gender Balance by Offices
UNICEF OneHR Strategy 2022-2025
ROSA Mentorship Programme
Mentee handbook
Mentor handbook
Mentorship 2021-2024
Empower – The South Asia Mentorship Programme
Staff Exchange framework
Job Shadowing Guideline (SAR)
Rapid Response Mechanism Toolkit
Revised Townhall PPT
ROSA Surge
SAR Stretch Assignment guidelines 2023
Strengths Coaching for Individuals, management, and teams
Strength Based Coaching
Template for Evaluation Inception report
UNICEF Evaluation Report Standards
Staff breakdown
<b>Bhutan</b>
L&D Plans, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024
SAR HRDash main
M5S – A Comprehensive staff Development Suite (PPP)
Stakeholder mapping

Title
New Talent Unit Mentoring Programme – Mentoring Guidelines
UNICEF procedure on Learning and development
HR Surge Guideline
Two knowledge sharing videos
UNICEF Procedure On Learning And Development. Document Number: DHR/PROCEDURE/2017/005
<b>India</b>
Career Development Plan 2024
ICO Career development Plan Template
Individual Learning Plan Template, 2024
Individual learning request form
Request for Approval to Apply for Stretch/ Exchange Assignment - 2024
Career development
FAQ L&D
L&D Guidelines for India CO
2024 UNICEF ICO L&D priorities
UNICEF India Stretch Assignment and Staff Exchange Guidelines
L&D Guidelines
<b>Bangladesh</b>
HRDash main
<b>Nepal</b>
2024 L&D Plan
Training Need form amended 2024
<b>Sri Lanka</b>
Learning and Training Plan 2022 Amended (July 2022)
Learning and Training 2020
SLCO Learning Plan 2019, 2021, 2022, 2023
SLCO Surge list

## Other documents

Title	Publisher	Year
UNICEF's Journey of Organizational Transformation	UNICEF	2020
UNICEF Strategic Plan 2022–2025	UNICEF	2022
SAR Humanitarian Action for Children 2022	UNICEF	2023
ASPIRE! Leadership for Planning and Decision-Making with Adolescents (MOOC)	UNICEF	

## Informed consent letter

### Informed consent letter

Before your participation in the evaluation UN procedures require that you provide your written consent to your participation in this evaluation. The purpose of the evaluation is to learn from experience and thereby inform and enhance future UNICEF programming.

All information that you shall give is strictly confidential and cannot at any stage be related to you by others or be connected to you by the consultant. No personally identifiable information will be shared in the report. All information will be stored safely under the care of the consultant.

There is no compensation for participating in this interview. But as your experiences may improve the future design and approach of the M5S initiative, you can play an important role in helping UNICEF have qualified staff at all levels.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You can, therefore, decline to participate. If you choose to participate and regret it, you can withdraw at any time. If you think that you want to be in the interview and you change your mind as the interview goes on, you can withdraw at any time during the interview. If you agree to participate, you can decide not to answer some of the questions, and you can stop the interview at any time. If you regret your participation at the end of or shortly after the interview, you can ask the consultant to omit part or all information from the interview.

Your decision about whether to participate in this evaluation or to answer any specific questions will in no way affect your employment. If you do choose to participate, please answer the questions honestly and openly, so that I can understand your experience and find out what you really think and have experienced. Before you say yes or no to participate in this evaluation, you can ask any questions. My contact is found in the invitation letter. If you join the evaluation, you can ask questions at any time during the interview.

If you experience any risks or consequences (psychological risk, social risk, economic risk, legal risk, employment risk, or any other risk) during or after this interview, kindly contact UNICEF ROSA by reaching out to the evaluation manager, Lovemore Mhuriyengwe ([Lmhuriyengwe@unicef.org](mailto:Lmhuriyengwe@unicef.org)), for assistance.

Kindly sign below and return it via email.

NAME:

SIGNATURE:

# Interview Templates

KII Semi-structured interviews/  
Remote filling of templates

Template A: Management staff					
Item	What worked well	Positive effect	What did not work well	Negative effect	Proposed changes
<b>EQ 1: Strategic positioning - Relevance of the M5S design and approach</b>					
Indicator: The reasons why and the extent to which the M5S initiative was relevant across the three staff categories and the RO and COs					
A. To what extent is the M5S Initiative aligned with SAR priorities and other similar initiatives (within UNICEF or other UN agencies) at the global level or in other regions?					
C. To what extent has the part of the M5S Initiative that you participated in assisted you in owning your work and results?					
D. Is the M5S Initiative relevant for all three legs of the triple nexus? Kindly provide examples.					
E. To what extent has UNICEF's Gender Action Plan been consistently integrated in the M5S strategies and activities?					

EQ 2 Effectiveness and efficiency - Delivery of the M5S Initiative					
Indicator: Number of participating learners that have fully or partly (respectively) adopted the new skills					
F.	What is done differently after the introduction of M5S?				
G.	How does the M5S add to other learning initiatives?				
H.	Financing of/resources for the planned activities?				
I.	How cost-effective do you see the M5S when compared to other learning initiatives?				
J.	To what extent has the M5S initiative responded to and/or adjusted as necessary to the changing context and emerging needs/priorities in your office/region?				
EQ 3 Impact - Effect					
Indicator: The extent to which M5S Initiative has resulted in changes in mode of operation among staff					
K.	How have the M5S learning methods ensured effective and easy use of new skills after the assignment?				

EQ 4 Preconditions for continued use of M5S suite				
Indicator: N/A				
M.	What indications are there of wider positive and negative effects of the M5S?			
N.	What mechanisms need to be put in place to sustain and take the M5S Initiative to scale?			
OTHERS				
O.	Other experiences that have not been covered by the EQs?			

Template B: Programme/technical staff						
	Item	What worked well	Positive effect	What did not work well	Negative effect	Proposed changes
EQ 1: Strategic positioning - Relevance of the M5S design and approach						
A.	To what extent is the M5S Initiatives aligned with SAR priorities and other similar initiatives (within UNICEF or other UN agencies) at the global level or in other regions?					
B.	To what extent is the initiative aligned with the OneHR strategy?					
C.	To what extent has the part of the M5S Initiative that you participated in assisted you in owning your work and results?					

D.	Is the M5S Initiative relevant for all three legs of the triple nexus? Kindly provide examples.						
E.	To what extent has UNICEF's Gender Action Plan been consistently integrated in the M5S strategies and activities?						

EQ 2 Effectiveness and efficiency - Delivery of M5S initiative							
F.	What do you differently after the M5S learning?						
G.	How does the M5S add to other learning opportunities						
I.	Cost effectiveness: How cost effective do you see the M5S when compared to other learning initiatives?						
J.	To what extent has the M5S Initiative responded to and/or adjusted as necessary to the changing context and emerging needs/priorities in your office/region?						
EQ 3 Impact - Effect							
K.	How have the M5S learning models ensured effective and easy use of new skills after the assignment?						
L.	What opportunities have you realized as a result of participating in the learning initiative?						

EQ 4 Preconditions for continued use of MSS suite				
M.	What indications are there of positive and negative effects of the MSS?			
N.	What mechanisms need to be put in place to sustain and take the MSS initiative to scale?			
<b>OTHERS</b>				
O.	Other experiences that have not been covered by the questions?			

**Template C: General staff (GS)**

	Item	What worked well	Positive effect	What did not work well	Negative effect	Proposed changes
<b>EQ 1: Strategic positioning - Relevance of the MSS design and approach</b>						
B.	To what extent is the programme aligned with the OneHR strategy?					
C.	To what extent has the MSS Initiative parts that you participated in assisted you in owning your work and results?					
D.	Is the MSS Initiative relevant for all three legs of the triple nexus? Kindly provide examples.					
E.	To what extent has UNICEF's Gender Action Plan been consistently integrated in the MSS strategies and activities?					

EQ 2 Effectiveness and efficiency - Delivery of M55 initiative							
F.	What is done differently and/or more effectively after the introduction of M55?						
G.	How does the M55 add to other learning opportunities						
I.	How cost-effective do you see the M55 when compared to other learning initiatives?						
J.	To what extent has the M55 initiative responded to and/or adjusted as necessary to the changing context and emerging needs/priorities in your office/region						
EQ 3 Impact - Effect							
K.	How have the M55 learning methods ensured effective and easy use of new skills after the assignment?						
L.	What opportunities have you realized as a result of participating in the learning initiative?						

EQ 4		Preconditions for continued use of MSS suite					
M.	What indications are there of wider positive and negative effects of the MSS?						
N.	What mechanisms need to be put in place to sustain and take the MSS initiative to scale?						
<b>OTHERS</b>							
O.	Other experiences that have not been covered by the questions?						

## Supervisor Survey

### Supervisor Survey: Evaluation of M5S Initiative in South Asia Region

Dear Colleague

UNICEF ROSA is conducting an evaluation of the M5S (Mentoring, Stretch, Swap, Surge, Secondment, Shadow) staff development initiatives that have been rolled out in the South Asia Region. As part of This evaluation, we are sending out this brief survey to the regular supervisor and supervisor during the staff development initiative of someone who has participated in these training initiatives. I would like to hear from you on the staff development initiative that your supervisee participated in.

The survey will take less than 15 minutes of your time. All responses to the survey are confidential. Your name, title or Office will not be attached to your responses.

1. In what role did you work with the supervisee?
  - > Regular supervisor
  - > Supervisor during staff development initiative
2. Which M5S training initiative did the supervisee participate in?
  - > Mentoring
  - > Stretch assignment
  - > Swap
  - > Surge
  - > Secondment
  - > Shadow
3. With a score from 1-5, with 1 being poor and 5 being Outstanding, how would you rate the performance of your supervisee before the training?
  - > 1-Poor
  - > 2-Needed improvement
  - > 3-Met expectations
  - > 4-Exceeded expectations
  - > 5-Outstanding
4. With a score from 1-5, with 1 being Poor and 5 being Outstanding, how would you rate the performance of your supervisee during or after the training?
  - > 1-Poor
  - > 2-Needed improvement
  - > 3-Met expectations
  - > 4-Exceeded expectations
  - > 5-Outstanding
5. Which area of performance, whether personal or professional, was the poorest? (Open ended)
6. What changes did you notice in their performance during or after they participated in the staff development initiative? (Open ended)

7. How did the training change the supervisee's mode of operation/approach? (open ended)
8. How is the learning being applied? (Open ended)
9. How has their participation in the training initiative affected office performance? Assumed more responsibilities
  - > Gained promotion
  - > Become more efficient
  - > Become more effective
  - > Become more knowledgeable
  - > Other
10. Please share any other comments that you might have on the staff development initiative that your supervisee participated in.

## Invitation to Participate

### INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE EVALUATION OF THE M5S INITIATIVE

To:

You are hereby invited to participate in the evaluation of the M5S Suite learning initiative. The project was implemented from 2017 till end of 2021. Being a new initiative, your experience and contribution is highly valued. The purpose of the evaluation is to learn from experience and thereby inform and enhance future M5S design and approach. All information is confidential.

The interview will take around one hour and will be an online meeting. You will also choose the best time for the interview. If you agree to participate, you will sign a Letter of Consent before the interview begins. It is attached to this invitation to provide a familiarization before the interview.

Since time does not allow to have on-line interviews with all relevant staff, several staff are invited for an individual, office-based filling of the interview template, which should be returned to the undersigned. There are contact and other details in the email text. There is one week allocated for filling and returning the template through email.

The interview template will be shared with you when you confirm your participation. For those participating in online interviews: Before starting the interview, the consultant will introduce the use of the template to ensure that all is well understood. After the introduction, the floor is yours and you can provide the scope and details of your experience that you feel are relevant for this evaluation and the future programming.

If you feel that your participation is relevant for this evaluation and/or if you need additional information, kindly contact the undersigned. For planning purposes, I kindly request that you provide your response by (to be decided).

Kind regards,

Dr. Birgitte Woel  
International consultant  
Email: birgitte.woel@gamil.com