



Inception Report

Country Programme Evaluation (2016-2024). Armenia

Commissioned by UNICEF ECARO

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

CO	Country Office
COAR	Country Office Annual Report
COVID-19	CoronaVirus Disease 2019
CP	Country Programme
CPD	Country Programme Document
CPE	Country Programme Evaluation
ECARO	Europe and Central Asia Regional Office
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
NLP	Natural language processing
RO	Regional Office
TransMonEE	Transformative Monitoring for Enhanced Equity
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework

1. Introduction

This inception report defines the object and scope, analytical framework, methodological approach, timeline, and deliverables for the evaluation of the current UNICEF Country Programme (CP) (2021-2025) and, to the extent possible, the previous CP (2016-2020) in Armenia. Coverage of the previous CP depends on data availability, as further elaborated on below. The report lays the foundation for the subsequent phases of the evaluation, including data collection, analysis, and reporting. Key activities undertaken during the inception phase included a comprehensive review of internal documentation and databases to understand UNICEF evidence base, a review of the country context, and the development of a framework for conducting key informant interviews (KIIs). An initial briefing with the Armenia Country Office (CO) was also held to refine the evaluation approach, addressing their specific needs and priorities.

The inception phase, culminating in this report, began with kick-off meetings between rowsquared's evaluation team, the Evaluation Manager at the Regional Office (RO), and the focal person for this evaluation at the CO. These meetings clarified the evaluation's purpose, scope, and timeline.

To further develop the evaluation methodology, we conducted a thorough desk review of key documents, including the last two Country Programme Documents (CPDs), the 2021-2025 Programme Strategy Notes, Country Office Annual Reports, Regional Director letters on highlights of the Annual Reports, the 2020 Situational Analysis, the 2021-2025 UNSDCF, and relevant data from the UNICEF's administrative systems, such as the Results Assessment Module (RAM 3.0) in InSight on both programme structure and reporting of results as well as in eTools on formal partnerships.

A data science consultant, engaged by the UNICEF Europe and Central Asia Regional Office (ECARO), contributed an AI-generated report based on a sub-sample of the evaluation questions, drawing from UNICEF databases and internal documents. Our team reviewed and expanded this report with additional data sources and analyses, making it a key information source for the evaluation. The report was shared with the CO.

It is important to note that the AI-generated report is not to be regarded as a substitute for the evaluation report. Instead, it is a tool that summarises and visualizes information from a variety of data sources (mainly UNICEF internal documents, such as Country Office Annual Reports) and databases (mainly InSight) and is to be used as input for the evaluation. We fully acknowledge that AI is unable of interpretation, and it is hence the responsibility of the evaluation team and particularly the main evaluator to make sense of the information contained in this report and to triangulate it with information from other sources.

Following our initial briefings and desk review, we developed an evaluation matrix, defined data requirements and planned for primary data collection, as described in Sections 3 and 4 of this report.

This report begins with an introduction to the context of Armenia, outlining the evaluation's background. Section 2 describes the object of the evaluation. Section 3 presents the evaluation framework, including the purpose, scope and users of the evaluation as well as the crite-

ria and questions that will guide the evaluation. Section 4 lays out our methodology to be used. This includes an explanation of the methodological design and analytical framework, the data sources to be used, the analysis of data, limitations and mitigation measures, and ethical considerations. Section 5 details the evaluation team's composition, roles, expertise and collaboration with the RO and CO, focusing on oversight, quality assurance, and coordination. Section 6 presents the work plan and timeline, outlining key deliverables, and the schedule for the completion of the evaluation.

1.1 Background

Armenia, a landlocked country in the South Caucasus with a population of approximately three million, has navigated a complex socio-political landscape since regaining independence from the Soviet Union in 1991 and following the 2018 Armenian Revolution which furthered the democratic transformation. Recent events have included significant socio-political and economic crises such as the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic and commencement of military hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh, culminating in the 2023 refugee crisis, with over 115,000 refugees, including estimated 35,000 children, fleeing to Armenia.¹ Armenia is also vulnerable to climate change² and is among the 60 most disaster-prone countries³.

Since 2019, Armenia has been classified as an upper-middle income country, despite being an International Development Association recipient country as recently as 2014⁴. The Government of Armenia has implemented macroeconomic policies which have supported both growth and resilience to shocks, including fiscal responsibility, anti-inflation measure, and financial sector oversight. In 2023, despite the downward economic pressure of the COVID-19 pandemic, Armenia experienced the highest growth rates in the region in 2022 and 2023 (12.6% and 8.3%, respectively)⁵ as a result of economic opportunities resulting from the ongoing Ukraine crisis⁶.

However, the well-being and rights of children remain affected by ongoing challenges, including economic inequality and regional disparities⁷. In particular, the benefits from Armenia's economic growth remains uneven, particularly among vulnerable populations. As of 2022, 32.3% of all children are poor, while 1.9% of children live in extreme poverty⁸. Several cases of violence against children highlight the need for improved Child Protection mechanisms.

Compared to other countries in the region, Armenia's social expenditures on healthcare, education, and social protection) comprise a significantly lower percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) (Figure 1 and Figure 2)⁹. The pandemic further resulted in strained health services, and educational disruptions, and further revealed the weakness of infection prevention

¹ UNHCR (2024): Armenia Refugee Response Plan October 2023-March 2024

² EU4Climate Armenia (accessed on 22 October 2024)

³ World Bank (2009): Disaster Risk Reduction and Emergency Management in Armenia

⁴ World Bank (2023): The World Bank in Armenia

⁵ Asian Development Bank: Poverty Data Armenia (accessed on October 12, 2024)

⁶ Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (2023): The Impact on Russia's War in Ukraine on the Armenia Economy

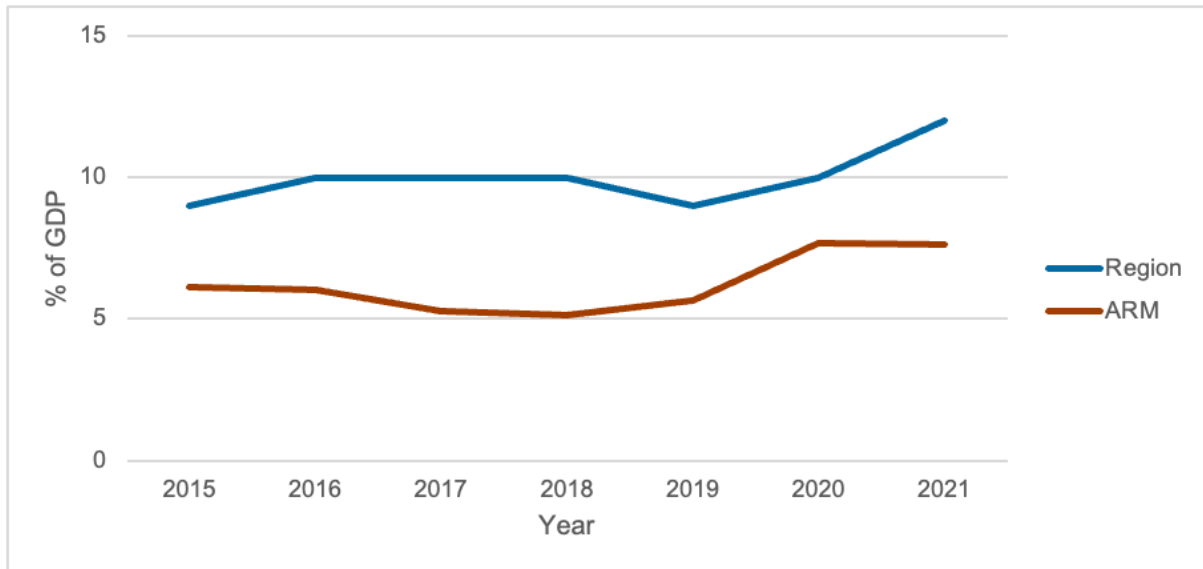
⁷ ARMSTAT (2023): Armenia – Poverty Snapshot over 2019-2022

⁸ ARMSTAT (2023): Armenia – Poverty Snapshot over 2019-2022

⁹ UNICEF: Programme Strategy Note 2021-2025

in health facilities as well as the necessity of improved water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities in healthcare and educational settings.

Figure 1: Percentage of government spending on health (UNESCO Institute for Statistics methodology)

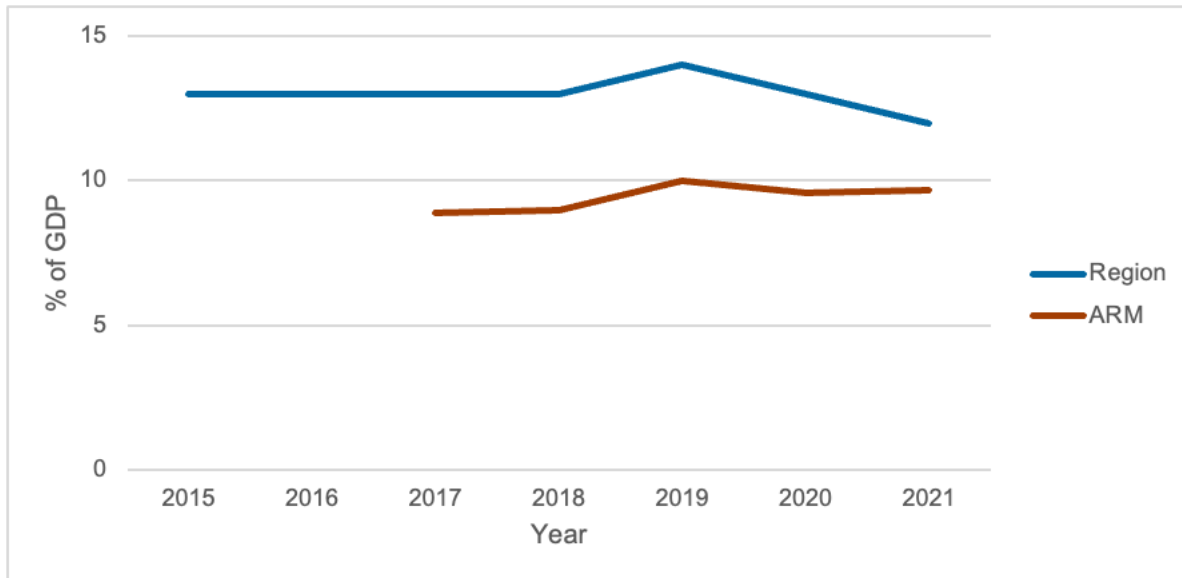


Source: TransMonEE database.

Infant mortality rates have halved over the last two decades to 6.1 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2019. Reduction in neonatal deaths (which accounts for 75 per cent of infant mortality) and post-neonatal mortality has stalled. Following the ban on sex-selective abortion in 2016, the gender ratio at birth has improved slightly, falling from 1.12 to 1.09 in 2022.¹⁰

Figure 2: Percentage of government spending on education (UNESCO Institute for Statistics methodology)

¹⁰ World Bank World Development Indicators



Source: TransMonEE database.

According to the 2020 World Bank Human Capital Index, factoring in what children actually learn, expected years of schools for a child in Armenia is only eight years. Furthermore, a child born today is only expected to be 58% as productive as an adult as they would be if they enjoyed complete education and full health. While this is higher than average for upper-middle-income countries, it is lower than the average for Europe and Central Asia.

The Armenia Transformation Strategy 2050, announced in 2020, lays out the Armenian State’s long-term socio-economic, educational and human development objectives for the next 30-year period, with a focus on "high-quality education, personal freedoms, and development"¹¹. The Strategy commits the government to addressing poverty through job creation, increasing real wages, and developing a green digital economy powered by renewable energy. The Strategy further intends to encourage workforce inclusion and development of women.

In line with these national objectives, the Government of Armenia has undertaken various initiatives aimed at improving the lives of children, focusing on areas such as education, child protection, social services, and health. Armenia has prioritized access to quality education for all children, including marginalized groups. Efforts have been made to enhance preschool education, integrate children with disabilities into mainstream schools, and improve overall educational infrastructure. In 2020, The National Programme of Education Development until 2030 was approved.

In response to the pandemic, the government implemented cash transfers, with special consideration for families of children living with disabilities and endorsed revised clinical modules and guidelines on breast-feeding and child nutrition, home visiting, hand and respiratory hygiene and safe immunization in line with the World Health Organization (WHO)/UNICEF recommendations¹². In addition, efforts to improve WASH resources and improve clinical guidelines and standards and the issue of universal health insurance gained momentum, and

¹¹ The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia (September 21, 2020): Press Release. Available [here](#).

¹² UNICEF (2021): Country Office Annual Report – Armenia

mental health and psycho-social support became national priorities in response to the needs of newly arrived refugee children.

However, between September-October 2023, more than 115,000 refugees, including around 35,000 children, fled to Armenia. These refugees joined another 38,000 refugee-like persons, of whom approximately 10,000 children, who fled to Armenia during the 2020 military hostilities or were escorted through the Lachin corridor between December 2022 and June 2023. The Government of Armenia has taken the lead in responding to the humanitarian crisis, including registering refugees in government-run registration centres, as well as granting temporary protection and launching cash assistance programs.¹³ Additionally, the host community response has been generous, marked by wide-spread support by volunteers, national and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and civil society actors. Still, both the refugees and host communities face complex mid- to longer-term needs as well as significant resource gaps.¹⁴ Considering all refugee children, the ratio of refugee to host community children is 6 to 100, which significantly stretches the capacity of education, health, and social protection systems in the country.

Despite security challenges, Armenia has continued to make significant progress including in the area of child rights, expanding the legal and institutional frameworks to support the welfare and rights of the child and by joining number of important international instruments, inter alia, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) on Communication Procedure, Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote convention), the Optional Protocol to International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Additionally, the government has focused on reducing the number of children in residential institutions, achieving a drastic decrease from approximately 12,700 in the early 2000s to around 1,300 in 2019. This shift indicates a commitment to promoting the right of children to live in family environments, free from violence, abuse, and neglect. Additionally, the government has taken steps to improve the coordination and monitoring of child rights realization through the revitalization of the Commission on Child Rights and the incorporation of child monitoring functions. However, challenges remain, including the need for a comprehensive system to collect, analyse, and disseminate data on children's rights, which is crucial for assessing progress and informing policy decisions.

Most recently, in 2024, the Government adopted the UNSDCF. UNICEF and other international organizations support Armenia's efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), advocating for stronger protections and ensuring that children have equitable access to essential services, education, and healthcare, especially in conflict-affected and under-served regions.

2. Object of the Evaluation

This CPE covers two consecutive CPs for Armenia. It primarily focuses on the current CP, which has been implemented since 2021 (and continues up to 2025). However, it will also

¹³ UNHCR (2024): Armenia Refugee Response Plan October 2023-March 2024

¹⁴ UNICEF (2024): Armenia Humanitarian Situation Report No. 14





cover the previous CP (2016–2020) where data is available. To be precise, this CP was extended by nine months and ended in September 2021. The current CP thus started in October 2021. For the ease of writing, we nevertheless refer to 2016-2020 and 2021-2025 as the duration of the two programmes. The object of the evaluation thus are UNICEF’s two CPs implemented from 2016 until 2024.

Country Programme 2016-2020

The overall goal of the CP 2016-2020 was to support Armenia in its efforts towards greater social inclusion, especially for the most deprived children. The CP 2016-2020 entailed four programme components (in addition to components for Cross-Sectoral, Management Outcome, and Programme Effectiveness, which we do not list here): 1) Survival, health and development of children aged 0-6 years, 2) The right of children to live in a caring and supportive family environment, 3) Enhancement of the realization of the rights of children with disabilities, and 4) Access to justice for children. These programme components, or outcomes, entailed several outputs and contributed to the SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 16, and 17 (Figure 3).

A review of the CP implemented in the beginning of 2018 confirmed the focus on and refined the following five areas: early childhood development, inclusive education, community-based social services for children (outcome 1), adolescent and youth development and participation (outcome 3), and evidence-based child rights monitoring (outcome 2).

Figure 3: Focus of the Country Programme 2016-2020

Country Programme	Outcome	SDG Goals	Output
2016-2020	0-6 Children (Health & Nutrition, Early Childhood Education)		Child Survival
			Nutrition
			Access to Early Learning
	Disadvantaged Families		Integrated Social Services and Public Financing for Children
			Schools Dropout Prevention
			Disaster Risk Reduction /Resilience/Environment
			Adolescents & Youth
	Children with Disabilities		Family Environment
			Special Education Needs
	Access to Justice & Child Rights Monitoring		Social Norms on Inclusiveness
Childs Rights Monitoring			
			Access to Justice & Violence against Children

Source: Authors’ illustration based on UNICEF Insight / Programme / Strategic Plan 2018-2021 Analysis Cube.

Figure 4 provides an illustration of activities as well as expenditure in the CP 2016-2020. It summarizes unique activities and expenditures by the five goal areas defined in the UNICEF Strategic Plan as well as categories for Development Effectiveness, Management, and Cross-Sectoral Purposes (as contained in the InSight Programme Structure). The largest number of activities implemented during CP 2016-2020 was for Survive and Thrive purposes (13 activities), followed by activities for Equitable Chance in Life (12), Learn (10), and Protection

from Violence and Exploitation (9). These four areas also had the highest total expenditures, namely between 6.2 million USD and 2.6 million USD each. Development Effectiveness had the least number of activities as well as lowest expenditures. The Cross-sectoral and Safe and Clean Environment goal areas both had similar numbers of activities (5 and 4, respectively) as well as expenses (995,706 USD and 779,529 USD, respectively).

Figure 4: CP activities and expenditure 2016-2020, by goal area







Source: Authors' illustration based on UNICEF Insight / Programme / Programme Structure.

Country Programme 2021-2025

The current CP in Armenia runs from 2021 to 2025 and entails four programme components (in addition to components for Programme Effectiveness and Operational Effectiveness, which we do not list here): 1) Social policy, 2) Health and nutrition, and 3) Education and inclusion for all children, and 4) Child rights systems and child protection (**Error! Reference source not found.**). These components, or outcomes, are tailored to the country's specific context and national development priorities. They were initially described in the Country Programme Document (CPD) and Programme Strategy Note elaborated in 2020. The CP aims to contribute to the SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 16, and 17.

Figure 5: Focus of the Country Programme 2021-2025

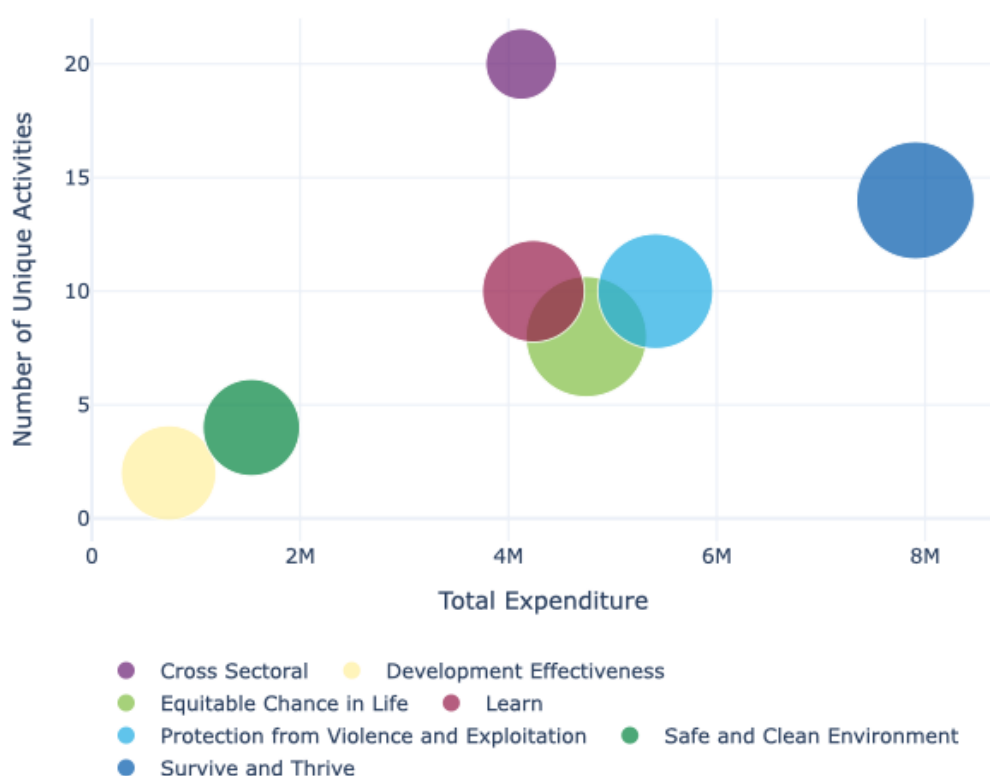
Country Programme	Outcome	SDG Goals	Output
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2021-2025	Social Policy		Integrated, Inclusive and Shock Responsive Social Protection
			Public Investments and Partnerships for Families and Children
			Enhanced National Capacities and Data Systems
			Positive Gender Socialization Processes
	Health and Nutrition		Preventive, Promotive and Curative Healthcare Services
			Coordinated and Responsive Nutrition Services
	Education and Inclusion for All		Healthy Lifestyles and Adolescent Well-Being
			Inclusive And Equitable Education Outcomes for All Children
			Strengthened Policies and Services for Children with Disabilities
			Quality And Inclusive Pre-school Education for All
	Child Rights Systems and Child Protection		Resilience and Climate Change
			Adolescents Development
Strengthened Child Rights Coordination System			
			Strengthened Child Protection and Justice Systems
			Children’s Well-Being and Prevention of Violence Against Children

Source: Authors’ illustration based on UNICEF Insight / Programme / Strategic Plan Analysis Cube.

The overall vision of the CP 2021-2025 is that “by 2025, all children in Armenia increasingly benefit from equitable enjoyment of their rights to survive, thrive, learn, be protected and participate – based on enhanced policies, services, resources and practices of duty-bearers, and in line with the country’s commitments to the CRC and the Sustainable Development Goals.” The main goal areas covered by this CP are Survive and Thrive, Learn, Equitable chance in life, and Cross-Sectoral (Figure 6). By far the main implementation strategy is Systems strengthening to leave no one behind, followed by Operational support to programme delivery, and to smaller extent, Advocacy and communications and Data, research, evaluation, and knowledge management.

Figure 6: Country Programme activities and expenditure 2021-2025, by goal area



Source: Authors' illustration based on UNICEF Insight / Programme / Programme Structure.

Figure 6 illustrates the number of unique activities as well as expenditure in the CP 2021-2025. The largest number of activities implemented during this CP was for Cross-Sectoral purposes (20 activities), followed by activities for Survive and Thrive (14), Learn (10), Protection from Violence and Exploitation (10), and Equitable Chance in Life (8). This marks a shift in programmatic focus from the previous CP period, in which Cross-sectoral activities were quite low. However, Development Effectiveness and Safe and Clean Environment remained relatively low-priority goal areas, with 2 and 4 activities, respectively.

Planned CP budget

The budget that was envisioned for the two CPs and contained in the respective CPDs is outlined in Table 1. Importantly, while the overall financial resources for the 2021-2025 CP increased over that of the 2016-2020 CP, the available Regular Resources (RR) decreased by over 700,000 USD.

Table 1: Country Programme budget as planned in the Country Programme Documents

Programme Component	RR (in 1,000 US\$)	OR (in 1,000 US\$)
CP 2016-20		
Child survival, health and development	1,185	2,585
The right of children to live in a caring and supportive family environment	1,275	3,010
Enhancement of the realization of rights of children with disabilities	1,050	1,735

Access to justice for children	1,045	1,170
TOTAL	4,555	8,500
CP 2021-25		
Social policy	1,062	1,969
Health and nutrition	608	2,009
Education and inclusion for all children	608	3,307
Child rights system and child protection	608	1,919
Programme effectiveness	964	1,814
TOTAL	3,850	11,018

Note: RR – Regular Resources, OR – Other Resources.

Intervention logic

Intervention mechanisms linking outputs and outcomes of each CP with the broader goals and needs as well as the assumptions and risks entailed are described in detail in the Theory of Change for each outcome in the Programme Strategy Notes for the current CP and in the results and resources framework in the CPD for the previous CP. These frameworks present the overall intervention logic of the CPs and summarize the main perceptions of change that CPs are aiming to achieve. The CPs primarily aim to strengthen national systems, pilot and model new approaches for service delivery, build national capacity, promote evidence generation and usage, empower adolescents to participate in decision making, and foster effective partnerships to realize children’s rights.

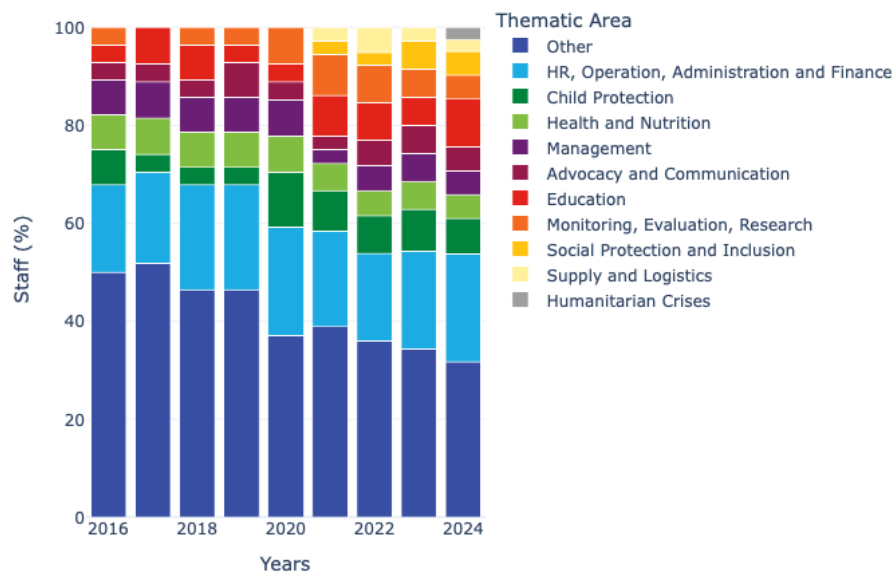
Overlaps and strategic shifts

The overall approach to human rights, gender, and inclusion has evolved during the implementation of both CPs. Both CPs underscore the importance of children’s rights: one of the four programme components respectively focus explicitly on this aspect. The CP 2016-2020 focuses on the rights of children in contact with the law and strengthened independent monitoring of child rights. The focus in the CP 2021-2025 shifts towards the creation of a strong child rights architecture, including strengthening child rights monitoring, enhancing systems and capacities, and educating parents and caregivers.

Both CPs acknowledge that children with disabilities and children in conflict-affected areas and emergency situations are among the most vulnerable groups in the country. There is therefore substantial focus on addressing mental health and rehabilitation. This entails a variety of interventions, ranging from integration into mainstream education to skill development. Other vulnerable groups identified in the CPDs are children in institutions (in CP 2016-2020), children living in border and climate-affected areas (in CP 2021-2025), as well as children living in poverty (in both CPs).

Even if there is substantial overlap across the two CPs, there is also a change in focus, as since 2021, the UNICEF Armenia office has added activities and staffing in areas of Social Protection and Inclusion, Supply and Logistics, and Humanitarian Crises (see Figure 7).

Figure 7 Proportion of human resource pool by programmatic area



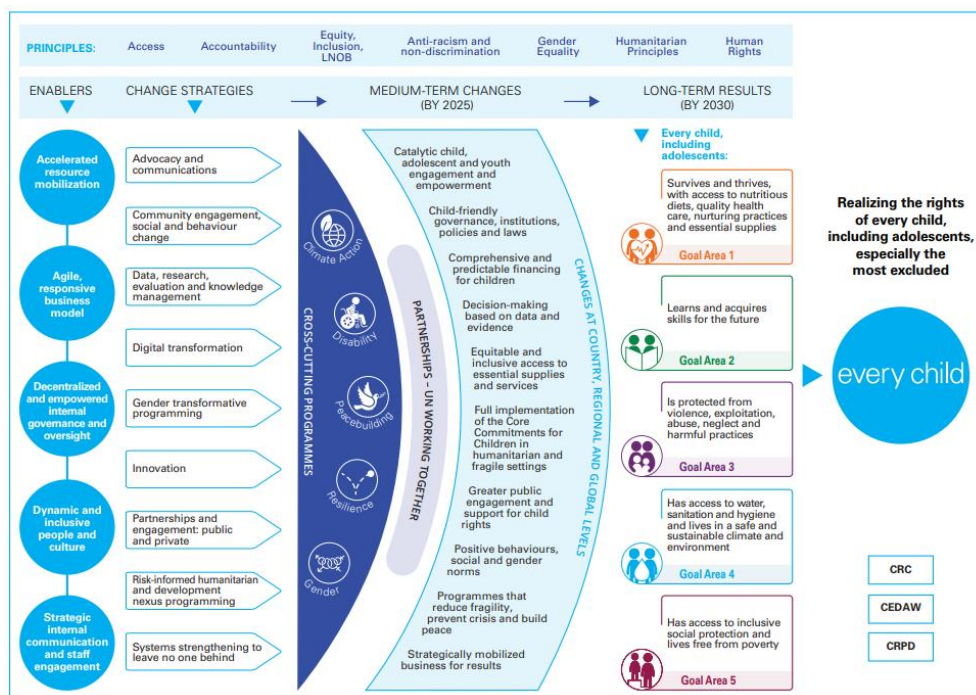
3. Purpose and Objectives of the Evaluation

The primary objective of this Country Programme Evaluation (CPE) is to assess how well the two most recent Country Programmes (CPs) in Armenia have contributed to the achievement of UNICEF’s strategic goals and outcomes. The focus of this evaluation is on UNICEF’s strategic positioning in the country and among national partners, choice of implementation strategies, and decisions made to deliver results for children within the organization’s mandate of protecting and fulfilling child rights, including the humanitarian-development nexus. Key aspects include verifying UNICEF’s contribution to the achievement of national priorities and strategic goals, its ability to leverage partnerships, and its capacity to lead in areas of strength to further strategic objectives and uphold children’s rights.

Based on feedback from past CPEs, the primary focus is on UNICEF’s strategic positioning, choice of implementation strategies, and decisions made at the country level to deliver results for children within the organization’s mandate of protecting and fulfilling child rights, including humanitarian-development nexus. This involves assessing UNICEF’s position within the country context and its interactions with national partners. Key aspects include verifying UNICEF’s influence contribution to the achievement of national priorities and strategic goals, its ability to leverage partnerships, and its capacity to lead in areas of strength to further strategic objectives and uphold children’s rights.

In terms of implementation strategies, we will consider whether the CPs are implemented through the most appropriate change strategies, as defined in UNICEF’s Strategic Plan 2022-2025 (see Figure 8) and previously in the Strategic Plan 2018-2021.

Figure 8: Theory of Change underpinning the current Strategic Plan



Source: UNICEF Strategic Plan 2022-2025.

The CPE acts as a tool for learning and addressing high-level strategic issues, enabling reflection on how to best prioritize actions to achieve results for children at both the country and regional levels. It aims to foster organizational learning by pinpointing successful strategies and identifying areas needing improvement. The CPE also aims to enhance accountability, particularly to national stakeholders, by providing an independent assessment of UNICEF's contributions to children's outcomes, with a focus on the most vulnerable populations.

The evaluation will retrospectively examine the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, and sustainability of the CPs implemented from 2016 to 2024. By identifying successful practices and extracting valuable lessons, the CPE will provide forward-looking recommendations that are expected to be actionable, helping to refine strategies and maximize UNICEF's contribution to strengthening child rights in the future. These insights will be crucial for guiding the development of the 2026-30 CP and the next United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), with planning activities scheduled over the course of 2024 and 2025.

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4. Scope of the Evaluation

The evaluation encompasses two consecutive CPs implemented from 2016 to 2024 in Armenia without focusing on specific outcome areas, sectors or sub-national territories. This approach facilitates a comprehensive strategic analysis. The CPE will not replace any thematic evaluations that may be planned or are already implemented by the Country Office (CO); and it is meant to complement Programme Reviews and other existing evaluation evidence.

This evaluation is to capture the time since 2016 until 2024, although coverage depends on data availability. We face two types of data availability issues. On the one hand, data is generally better available for more recent years, and this evaluation therefore places somewhat more emphasis on the CP 2021-25. On the other hand, some data are not available for the most recent year(s), which implies that the latest developments may not well be captured. In principle, it must be kept in mind that the current CP is still ongoing and will last until the end of 2025. This evaluation therefore cannot capture the entire duration of this programme.

5. Evaluation Framework

Evaluation stakeholders

The evaluation of UNICEF’s CP is designed to serve a wide array of stakeholders, categorized as either primary or secondary stakeholders. Primary stakeholders are those directly involved in implementing the CP or related strategic frameworks:

- UNICEF staff, including those at the regional and senior management levels, will utilize the evaluation for corporate learning and accountability.
- State bodies such as line ministries, state agencies, and the judiciary, will use the findings to support accountability and participation in the CP design process.
- Civil society organizations, key partners in implementing CP activities, will use the results to enhance service delivery.
- Academia will utilize the findings to inform research and evidence generation.
- Multilateral and bilateral donors, such as the European Union, USAID, etc., will review the findings for accountability and to inform their own programming.
- UN agencies, international finance institutions, and the private sector, all involved in supporting or partnering with UNICEF, will also leverage the evaluation results for learning and future planning.

Secondary stakeholders include groups that benefit indirectly from the CP’s contributions, like rights holders, duty bearers, and organizations not formally partnered with UNICEF but working on similar child rights issues.

Evaluation questions

During the CO kick-off meeting, we sought feedback on the initial evaluation questions, as outlined in the Terms of Reference. At the request of the Armenia CO, we have included additional evaluation criteria concerning the L1 Emergency. The table below provides an overview of the five evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, sustainability) and the respective evaluation questions that will guide this CPE.

Table 2: Evaluation criteria and questions

Criterion	Question
Relevance	To what extent is UNICEF responding to the (changing) needs of the most vulnerable throughout programme implementation?
Effectiveness	To what extent is UNICEF through its strategies, operations, partnerships and advocacy, managing to effectively achieve results for children?
Efficiency	Are UNICEF’s resources enabling the best delivery of the country programme as per identified (and changing) priorities?
Coherence	To what extent are UNICEF’s actions aligned, complementary, and supported by other stakeholders, triggering synergies to advance UNICEF’s advocacy and programmatic goals?

Sustainability	To what extent does UNICEF manage to ensure sustained political, financial and institutional commitment in priority areas within the most influential stakeholders?
Emergency	To what extent has UNICEF's response to the emergency enhanced UNICEF's ability to achieve results for children and families, including positioning and preparedness?

Evaluation matrix

This evaluation employs a mixed-methods approach, leveraging the most relevant data, information, knowledge, and evidence to address the evaluation questions. To encompass the diverse data and methods, we created a comprehensive evaluation matrix. This matrix forms the core analytical framework against which data will be gathered and analysed. It outlines evaluation questions, indicators, data sources, and analytical approaches and is included in Annex 1 for reference.

6. Methodology and Approach to the Evaluation

6.1. Rationale of the Methodological Design

The design for this CPE will be theory-based. Theory-based evaluation tries to answer the questions of how and why a policy works in which context by opening the ‘black box’ of mechanisms leading up to specific outcomes¹⁵. Theory-based evaluation applies theoretical assumptions on actions or inputs leading to certain outcomes that will be evaluated afterwards¹⁶. Theory-based evaluation is strongly connected to a stakeholder-based approach to evaluation¹⁷. In the context of a CPE, a theory-based evaluation approach provides an overall evaluative framework allowing the integration of several qualitative and quantitative methods, as further elaborated on below.

Responding to the explicit CPE focus on UNICEF’s role and contribution to national development agendas and UNICEF strategic goals, we propose to use contribution analysis as the most suitable model for this evaluation. Contribution analysis proposes a systematic approach to arriving at creditable contribution claims. Contribution claims are defined as a summary of the evaluative judgment after assessing the validity of the theoretical assumptions. Contribution analysis helps in understanding the likelihood the intervention has contributed to an outcome observed, or not. The strength of contribution analysis is its ability to unpack outcomes in a way that explicitly examines multiple actors and influences, and that answers questions about what worked and why.

¹⁵ Astbury, B., & Leeuw, F. L. (2010). Unpacking black boxes: mechanisms and theory building in evaluation. *American journal of evaluation*, 31(3), 363-381.

¹⁶ Funnel S et al. (2011) *Purposeful Program theory – Effective use of theories of change and logic models*. Jossey Bass. Wiley imprint.

¹⁷ Chen, H. T. (2005). *Practical program evaluation. Assessing and improving planning, implementation, and effectiveness*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Contribution analysis is done through an iterative step-by-step process that explores how the intervention has contributed to outcomes and uses a broad range of evidence to test this. According to Mayne (2008)¹⁸, the main steps of contribution analysis include:

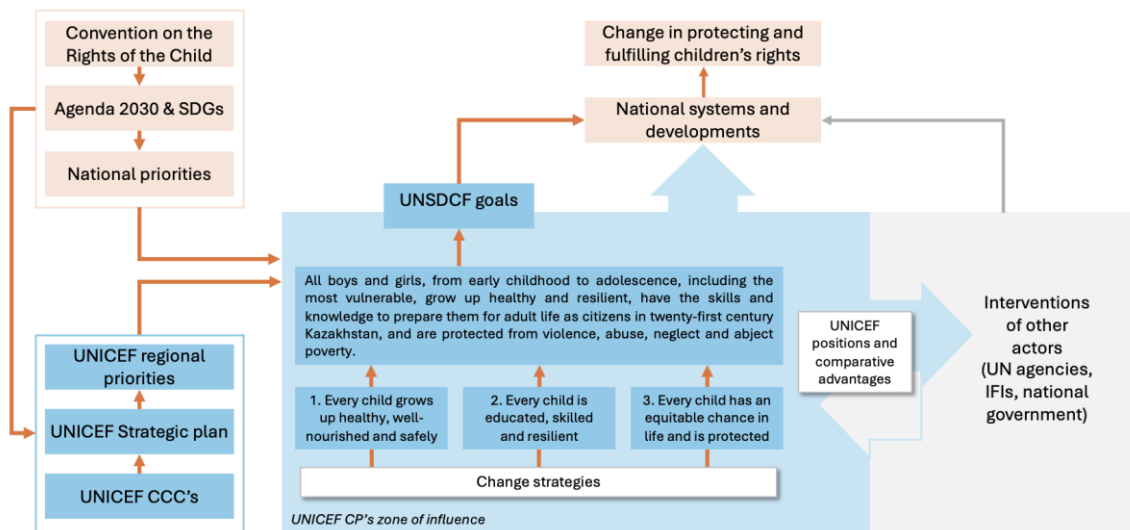
1. Identify the relevant cause-effect relationships to be analyzed to verify and assess contribution, including key influencing factors;
2. Construct the Theory of Change and its main assumptions and risks to be verified during the CPE;
3. Gather the existing evidence on each link in the Theory of Change;
4. Assemble and assess the contribution story and challenges to it;
5. Seek out additional evidence; and
6. Revise and strengthen the contribution story.

We will base our work on reviewing the existing Theories of Change that are elaborated at outcome level for the CP 2021-2025 and revised taken into account the results of the Programme Review recently performed. On basis of this review we will develop a matrix with main intervention pathways, assumptions and risks as basis for our further work in gathering and verifying evidence on potential CP contributions.

Figure 9 presents generalized causal model showing the potential contributions of CP interventions to national agendas and through them to changes in the protection and fulfilment of children's rights. Our assumptions are that change strategies that build on UNICEF's comparative advantages are key drivers that help UNICEF to strengthen its position and collaborate with other actors to make a valuable contribution to the national agenda. Potential contribution pathways outlined in the model also shows the focus of our assessment that largely follows the intervention but also includes verification of links to UNICEF strategic goals and strategic positioning of the UNICEF CP on a national scale.

Figure 9: Contribution model

¹⁸ Mayne, J. The Institutional Learning and Change (ILAC) Initiative, (2008). Contribution analysis: An approach to exploring cause and effect.



Source: Authors' illustration.

In addition to our contribution analysis, we will make use of a social network analysis conducted by an external service provider (see details on the positioning exercise below). In addition to this social network analysis, the evaluation will integrate external viewpoints from key stakeholders to complement UNICEF's internal processes, ensuring a thorough evaluation of the organization's performance. This approach provides a reality check on UNICEF's reporting.

We acknowledge the complexity of real-world relationships, especially when analyzing various areas of intervention. Comparative analysis must consider alternative explanations for change processes to assess the contributions of different actors accurately and to place them in the country context. This approach generates confidence in attributing contributions and crafting narratives that acknowledge UNICEF interventions' significant role in specific changes while recognizing the influence of other actors.

We plan this evaluation to be example-based, providing concrete illustrations of decisions made, policies influenced, or targets achieved, thereby making the evaluation more tangible and easier to understand. By focusing on real-world examples, we intend to ground the evaluation in practical outcomes rather than just theoretical metrics. Furthermore, using examples allows for a more detailed analysis of how different components of the CP work in practice, potentially revealing insights that might be missed in a more general evaluation approach.

6.2. Ethical Considerations

It is of utmost importance to us to conduct this evaluation in line with ethical principles. This implies that we will follow the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) ethical principles for evaluation of integrity, accountability, respect and beneficence in all our endeavours.¹⁹ We also considered UNICEF's Procedure on Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data

¹⁹ [UNICEF \(2021\): Procedure on ethical standards in research, evaluation, data collection and analysis. Document number: procedure/oor/2021/001](#)

Collection and Analysis²⁰, the Evaluation Office’s guidance on Children Participating in Research, Monitoring and Evaluation²¹, and the Policy on Personal Data Protection²². The following aspects reflect our approach:

All members of the research team will adhere to ethical guidelines and professional standards. We will conduct the evaluation in a rigorous, fair, and balanced way, and communicate findings transparently and respectfully. All data, primary and secondary alike, will always be treated confidentially. For primary data collection, we will follow a procedure of informed consent for participation. Potential participants of key informant interviews will be given the opportunity to ask questions prior to giving their consent to participate, even if data are collected remotely. Participants will be reassured that their participation is voluntary and that they are able to terminate data collection at any time without any repercussions. We will intend to find a safe, private physical location in which interviews can take place. Individual statements by interview partners will not be published and no interviewee will be singled out. Due to the public accessibility of the final evaluation report, the results of the evaluation are available to the participants, about which we will inform them. No audio recordings will be used, and opinion data will not be stored with personal identifiers.²³

As regards secondary data, a potential ethical concern could be with data from social media. However, we will only use information from public accounts, and the primary data providers will be public bodies or organizations. These social media posts are of no ethical concern because the users do not post information with an expectation of privacy; on the contrary, they even intend to reach a large audience. Should we have need to work with data from private individuals when looking at reactions to tweet, for example, the evaluation team will never identify people and only report results in an aggregated way, for example by showing if there are more positive than negative reactions. In no case will an individual be identified, and no individual data extracts will be reported anywhere. Furthermore, accounts of private individuals will not be systematically harvested. Since we do not intend to collect data from vulnerable groups or children under 18, we assume that no ethical review is required.

6.3. Data sources

This CPE will be based on data from various sources, as summarized in Figure 10. Using such a variety of data sources will enrich the analysis, facilitate the triangulation of findings, and ensure that findings are supported by more than one evidence source, to confirm internal and external validity.

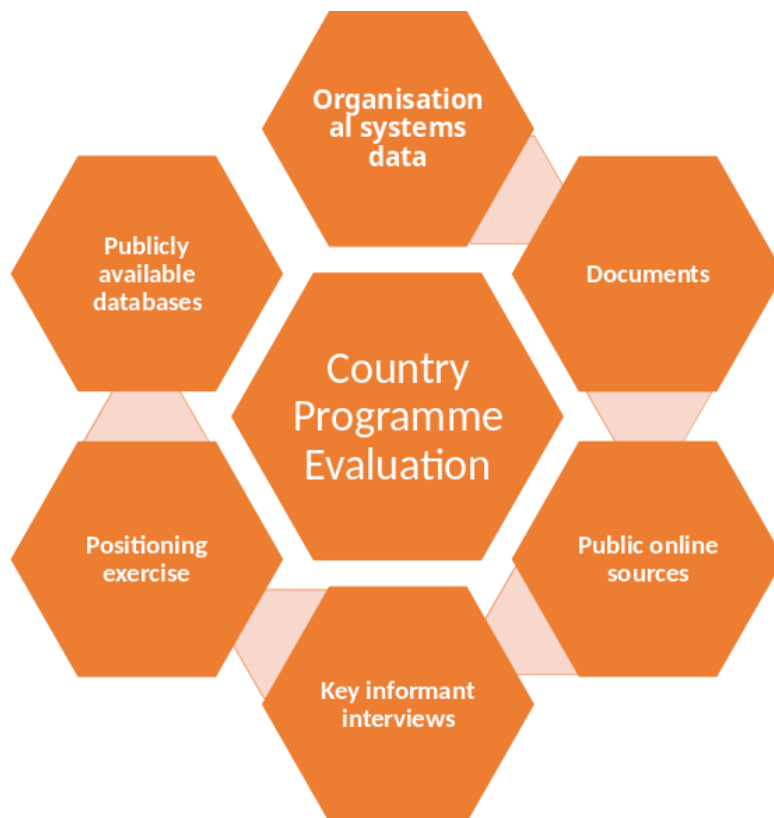
Figure 10: Overview of data sources to be used

²⁰ UNICEF (2021): Procedure on Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis. Document number: procedure/oor/2021/001.

²¹ UNICEF (2002): Children Participating in Research, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) — Ethics and Your Responsibilities as a Manager. UNICEF Evaluation Office.

²² UNICEF (2020): Policy on Personal Data Protection. Document number: POLICY/DFAM/2020/001.

²³ UNICEF (2020): Policy on personal data protection. Document number: POLICY/DFAM/2020/001.



Source: Authors' illustration.

Most of the data to be used in the evaluation are secondary data; the only primary data collection planned is in the form of key informant interviews. This strong reliance on secondary data sources has the advantage that time and resource intensive data collection will be minimized and the burden on UNICEF staff as well as vulnerable beneficiaries reduced. However, relying on existing data always comes with the need to assess the accuracy, reliability and representativeness of data, which will be a major focus of our analytical work.

While we foresee the mentioned data sources, which will be described in further detail below, as the primary ones in this assignment, we acknowledge the need to remain open to emerging or unforeseen data sources that may become available during the evaluation process. We acknowledge that the quality of existing data may vary, necessitating the reinforcement or replacement of findings with supplementary sources. Therefore, we propose to maintain flexibility and responsiveness in our approach, allowing for the incorporation of relevant supplementary data sources within reasonable limits, ensuring a comprehensive and contextually grounded evaluation.

Documents

A first source of information to be used are documents available within and outside UNICEF. The starting point for the CPE is a review of the last two CPDs, the Programme Strategy Notes, and the Country Office Annual Reports. In addition, we will also use insights from the last Situational Analysis, from the Programme Review, Gender Programmatic Review, other recent evaluations and relevant studies. Another important source of information is the UNSDCF as well as the Government Programme 2021-2026, the Roadmap for nationalising the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, the Armenia Inter-Agency Refugee Response Plan, and the 2024 positioning exercise.

These documents will be used in different ways:

- As raw data for further analysis to deepen the available data set.
- For recent reviews, evaluations, and studies: As analytical input, especially when similar questions were addressed, since this will avoid duplications in effort.

Positioning exercise

A second source of data to be used is the positioning exercise which is currently ongoing and was already mentioned above. This exercise is a network analysis and has the objective to map and understand the key partnerships and interactions between various actors (government entities, international and local non-governmental organizations, donors, private sector) involved in child advocacy, protection, and policy development in Armenia. Specifically, the exercise aims to identify the most prominent and active organizations that contribute to achieving child-related programming goals and assess how these organizations collaborate.

The methodology for this positioning exercise relies on interviews with 40-45 key informants, both internal and external to UNICEF. These key informants are requested to provide the names of organisations or individuals to whom they turn for different aspects within child and adolescent-related programming, advocacy, or policy development/ implementation. These aspects are data and evidence, technical assistance, fundraising, and emergency response. The final output of the exercise are network maps on each of these aspects as well as a general partnership map combining all issues.

We expect that the network maps will become available between September and November and, if in time for our evaluation, we foresee the following uses:

- As a list of information on the main stakeholders per country to be included in our social media analysis (see below);
- As analytical input to the evaluation, particularly all questions regarding the strategic position of UNICEF.

Key informant interviews

Another source of information will be key informant interviews to be conducted by the evaluation team. These interviews will have the objective to collect insights on the perspective of different stakeholders on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, and sustainability of UNICEF's programme delivery. We plan to conduct 20 qualitative interviews with representatives of national and sub-national government agencies, international and national non-governmental organisations (NGOs), UN agencies, community groups, and UNICEF's Armenia office. As part of our desk review in the inception phase, we did a stakeholder analysis to identify the most relevant stakeholders and UNICEF's partners in the country. We used this analysis to suggest a list of intended See the list of intended interview partners to the CO and obtain their feedback. in Annex 2. Interview partners were sampled using purposive non-probability sampling, attempting to achieve a wide representation of different types of stakeholders. See the final list of interview partners in Annex 2.

We developed interview guidelines appropriate to answer the evaluation questions. We drafted two separate interview guidelines for UNICEF staff and for all other stakeholders. These guidelines are included in Annex 3.

In terms of logistics, we do not plan any air travel. Instead, we intend to conduct interviews remotely using videoconferencing tools with all interviewees who are proficient in English (e.g. with UNICEF staff or representatives of other international organizations). For all other interviewees, with whom interviews are best conducted in the national language, we will hire and train a national consultant. This person will be tasked to do interviews either in person or remotely, if distance is an issue and to submit their interview notes in English to us.

Public online sources

A fourth source of information is publicly accessible data from online sources. These include social media, mainly X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, and Youtube. From social media, we intend to access and analyze text data from the public accounts of children's rights stakeholders, i.e. ministries, public agencies, nongovernmental organizations, UN agencies, or interest and lobby groups. More precisely, we target the social media accounts (Facebook and X) from UNICEF and UNICEF's partners. The partners are chosen based on the mentioned stakeholder analysis and the list of stakeholders initially identified by UNICEF for the positioning exercise. We crawl social media profiles via the platform Apify starting in the year 2018. We restrict to the time period since 2018 because older posts are more likely to be with limited access.

Non-English language posts are identified and translated into English using the service ModernMT. Coding and categorization of posts is performed with a mixed method of distinct Natural Language Processing models (Chat-GPT and either distilbert or Roberta transformers). These models cross-validate the coding and categorization in both languages (English and Armenian), to check for consistency. To express the prediction confidence, we use performance metrics. This means that we manually classify a sample of the dataset, also called "test dataset". We can then determine the capacity of correctly predicting a certain category on this "test dataset".

These may be both stakeholders that UNICEF has a direct link with but also those that are only loose connections. We intend to identify both types of stakeholders from the network analysis in the positioning exercise and harvest data from their public accounts. The objective of this analysis is will be to determine the discussion activity and trends, topics most often covered, or the interaction of stakeholders involved with UNICEF. These are intended to answer evaluation questions around the relevance, effectiveness, coherence and sustainability of UNICEF's work.

Data from organizational systems and publicly available databases

Last but not least, data from internal UNICEF systems (e.g. InSight, E-Tools) as well as some publicly available databases (e.g. Transformative Monitoring for Enhanced Equity (TransMonEE), ILCS, Recommendations from the Committee of the Rights of the Child) are key for the evaluation. We plan to use these for information on:

- Implementation of activities in terms of change strategies;
- Achievement of results at outcome and output level;
- Partnerships;
- Fund utilisation;
- Human resources..

Whenever possible, we will prefer to access data at its source and at the most disaggregated level. We believe that not only does this reduce complexity, since it bypasses possible aggregation logic, but it also provides a sizeable benefit to the depth of the analysis that can be undertaken. For example, in the Evaluation of UNICEF's Response to Support the Influx of Refugees from Ukraine, we were able to determine the extent of nationals being deployed on surge to the respective refugee hosting countries, which would not have been possible by simply looking at aggregate surge records.

The implementation of activities data allows for assessing the extent to which planned initiatives were carried out as intended, identifying any gaps or deviations in execution. The achievement of results data, both at the outcome and output levels, is crucial for evaluating the program's effectiveness in achieving its goals and objectives.

Partnerships data provides insights into the program's collaboration and coordination with various stakeholders, enabling an evaluation of the effectiveness of these partnerships in supporting implementation and achieving collective impact.

The fund utilisation data is essential for assessing the program's resource utilization, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness, allowing for the identification of potential areas for optimization or reallocation of resources.

Human resources data, including staffing levels, skill sets, and capacity, can provide insights into the program's ability to effectively implement and manage activities, helping to identify potential gaps or capacity-building needs.

Finally, comparing and triangulating the different data sources from internal UNICEF systems can provide valuable insights and a more comprehensive understanding of the CP's performance. For instance, cross-referencing budget allocations with the achievement of results can shed light on the cost-effectiveness and resource efficiency of various programme components, while juxtaposing human resource data with implementation data can reveal potential capacity gaps or strengths that influenced the programme's execution.

6.4. Data analysis

The analysis of structured data, such as administrative records from UNICEF's organizational systems or from the TransMonEE database, will primarily involve statistical methods like calculating frequencies, proportions, and correlations. Data cleaning and pre-processing, including handling missing values and dealing with outliers, will be performed to ensure data quality. Descriptive analysis and data visualization techniques, such as bar charts, line graphs, scatter plots or sankey diagrams, will be used to summarize and present the findings from structured data analysis in an appealing way. High quality data visualization is particularly essential to show trends over time.

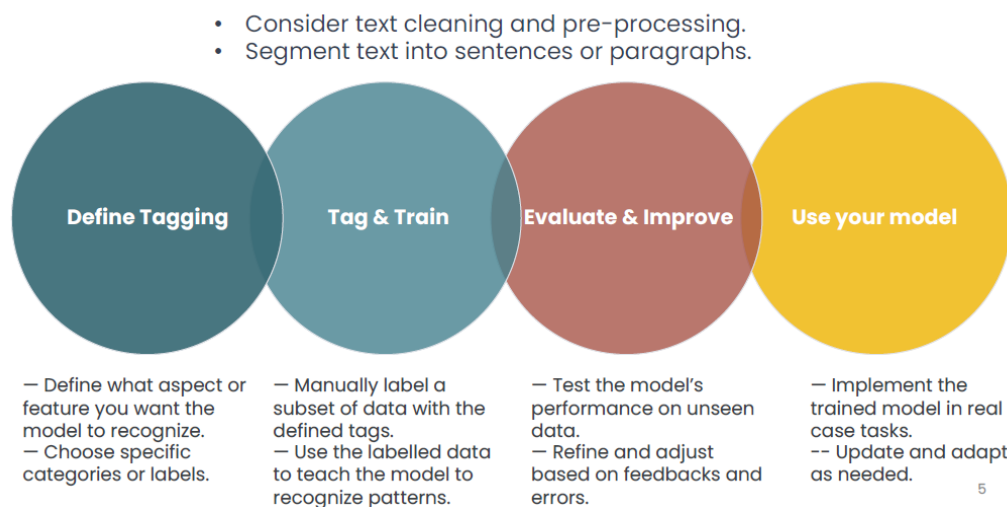
The majority of data sources in this evaluation will, however, be unstructured (i.e. text data), posing greater analytical challenges. To tackle this, the evaluation will employ a combination of content analysis and natural language processing (NLP) to analyze data from documents, social media, key informant interviews, and - if relevant - the positioning exercise.

NLP works by applying algorithms and statistical models to analyze and understand human language data (see

Figure 11). It involves techniques like tokenization, part-of-speech tagging, named-entity recognition, and machine learning models to extract meaning, sentiment, and insights from unstructured text data. NLP offers advantages like processing speed and the ability to extract information that would be difficult to achieve manually. In addition to NLP, more advanced analytical methods such as clustering and dimensionality reduction may be employed to uncover patterns and relationships within the unstructured data. Data visualization techniques, including word clouds, network graphs, but also the more standard bar, line and other charts may be used to present the findings from unstructured data analysis effectively.

Figure 11: Natural language processing

How does NLP work? – General Process



Source: Authors' illustration.

Our analysis will take an equity-focused approach. This means that, when possible, we will disaggregate data by gender, age, disability, and ethnicity of beneficiaries. However, this will be done judiciously and whenever we can provide meaningful insights or contribute substantially to the evaluation's objectives. Our commitment is to remain open to exploring disaggregated data analysis while ensuring that it aligns with the evaluation's scope and priorities.

6.5. Limitations, challenges and mitigation measures

Like all evaluations, this CPE faces several limitations and challenges, which may affect its evaluability. In the following table, we list these issues and describe our strategies to address them.

Table 3: Limitations and mitigation measures

Limitation or challenge	Mitigation measure
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TIMING RELATED	
The CPE is evolving as the development of the new CPD is already under way.	We plan to provide intermediate findings before drafting the evaluation report and we shared the interview guides and list of interview partners with the CO to receive approval.
DATA RELATED	
Some data may turn out to be of poor quality.	We engage in thorough data cleaning and pre-processing to deal with such data quality issues as missing values or outliers.
Data comparability over time may be limited.	To the extent possible, we pre-process the data to allow for comparability. When this is not possible, we make the differences across time explicit.
Data on crucial aspects of programme implementation (e.g. human resources, partnerships with government partners) are not available in the internal systems available to us.	We consulted with the CO to obtain the missing information directly from them, if possible.
Some data and documents are only available for recent years and do not cover the cycle of the last two CPs.	We will transparently describe the availability of information and not draw conclusions for years for which there is no evidence.
Limited representation of the local language on social media and in NLP models can lead to data collection challenges in social media monitoring.	We will focus on specific areas or accounts and use keyword-based or visual analysis methods, along with mentions or citations, to address linguistic limitations.
Some interview partners only speak the native language and no English.	We engage local interviewers fluent in the relevant language and provide targeted training.
SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION	
During the ongoing CP, an emergency (L1) was declared in Armenia.	We added evaluation questions to allow for capturing the response to the emergency.
Some interview partners may not have been present in the country or have had working relationships with UNICEF for the entirety of the time period under consideration.	The interviews will focus on the timeframe of the most recent CP (2021-2025) or the earliest year to which they can speak to minimize potential for recall bias.
We do not plan to consult direct beneficiaries or rights-holders due to privacy and ethical considerations.	Where possible, we will speak to adult representatives of organizations that work directly with beneficiaries and rights-holders (e.g., community representatives, service providers).
Evaluators will not travel to the country to conduct in-person interviews.	We engage local interviewers who – when possible – will conduct in-person interviews. Evaluators will conduct online interviews. All interviews will be conducted in private locations and will not be recorded in order to maintain inter-

To elaborate on the limitation of data not being available for the entire period under evaluation, we anticipate that a substantial share of the information from UNICEF's internal and public databases, documents, and social media will allow us to capture data from before 2021 (i.e. to capture information on the previous CP). For example, we have access to the CPDs, Country Office Annual Reports, and Regional Director letters covering all years since 2016. Also, we can access all studies and assessments that have been carried out or commissioned by UNICEF during the period of interest. However, some additional documentation such as Programme Strategy Notes, Programme Review, Gender Review, are only available to us for one CP. On internal databases, we are aware that e-Tools only covers information since 2020. In our social media listening activities, we restricted the focus to the time period since 2018, as mentioned above. For the key informant interviews, we have chosen to concentrate on the current CP to mitigate recall bias and account for staff turnover. Nonetheless, if interviewees spontaneously mention prior years, we will include that information. The positioning exercise, however, specifically targets the year 2023.

7. Evaluation Team: Roles, Responsibilities, and Expertise

7.1. Team Composition, Tasks, and Expertise

Aiming to ensure a tailored approach to this CPE, responsibilities have been allocated as follows: Mariel McKone Leonard is taking the lead as the Evaluator, overseeing the entire evaluation process, while Arseniy Gurin and Gabriele Tani will focus on data analysis tasks. Project management and coordination is done by Sinem Oezdemir. Beyond this core evaluation team, Christina Sargsyan was hired as a local consultant for the key informant interviews. Table 4 provides an overview of the specific tasks and responsibilities of the team involved in this evaluation.

Table 4: Roles and responsibilities of the Evaluation Team

Team member	Responsibilities and tasks
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Evaluator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take the lead for the Country Programme Evaluation • Elaborate the respective presentations and reports • Develop the evaluation methodology • Be responsible for design and implementation of key informant interviews • Engage stakeholders to comprehend data requirements • Review available data within UNICEF • Closely coordinate with data analysts
Data Analysts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and maintain data architecture • Design and develop reproducible data pipelines • Extract, process, analyze, and visualize data • Conduct exploratory data analysis • Apply NLP techniques to analyze unstructured data • Build and deploy machine learning models for predictive analytics • Perform data quality checks and ensure data integrity • Develop and maintain documentation for data processes and methodologies • Ensure effective communication through data visualization • Conduct (social) media listening data collection
Project Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate team activities • Manage project deliverables ensuring timely submission • Support report writing and presentation layout • Conduct background research • Communicate with CO and RO
Local consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translation of question guides from English to Armenian • Scheduling interviews with selected interview partners • Conducting the interviews • Note taking during the interview • Translation of interview notes to English

We believe that the evaluation team represents the optimal combination of experience and expertise to deliver the evaluation with the highest standards of quality. A summary of the key skills and competencies of the core team members can be found in the skills matrix in Table 5, followed by detailed biographies.

Table 5: Skills matrix of the core Evaluation Team

Skills	Mariel Leonard	Arseniy Gurin	Gabriele Tani	Sinem Özdemir
Experience in development sector	x	x	x	x
Prior work for UNICEF	x	x	x	x
Experience in humanitarian- development nexus	x			
Theory-based evaluations	x			
Expertise on Europe and Central Asia countries	x	x	x	x
Qualitative data collection and analysis	x			
Quantitative data collection and analysis	x	x	x	
Natural language processing		x	x	
Programming skills (Python/R)		x	x	
Experience with Databricks		x	x	
Data pipelines and architecture		x	x	
Management of teams				x
Project management	x			x

Mariel McKone Leonard is a researcher with more than 10 years’ experience conducting mixed methods research with small, rare, and vulnerable populations in sensitive contexts. Her main areas of research are improving representation of minority groups in studies, including methods of sampling and recruiting special populations such as policy experts. In 2022/23, she was part of the team that conducted the Real-Time Evaluation of UNICEF’s Ukraine Refugee Response. She conducted key informant interviews and data analysis, and led outcome harvesting and ripple effects mapping to support internal UNICEF learnings. Most recently, she has led survey design and management for projects at the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW) and the Universities of Maryland (UMD) and Munich (LMU). Mariel has taught research methods at both the bachelors and masters level, including qualitative research design and in-depth interviewing. She received her doctorate in Sociology at the University of Mannheim in Germany.

Arseniy Gurin works as a data analyst, data engineer, and software developer with over 10 years of experience. Over his career, he gained expertise in database management, 27 data architectures, ETL operations, and building data flows for structured and unstructured sources. He has experience in quantitative data analysis, machine learning, data categorization, pattern extraction, prediction, and interactive dashboard design. In 2022/23, he was part of the team that conducted the Real-Time Evaluation of UNICEF’s Ukraine Refugee Response, defining ETL processes, ensuring data quality, and applying NLP to extract infor-

mation. Additionally in 2023, he worked on a UNICEF Kazakhstan project “Inclusive Education Evaluation by using Big Data Sources of Information”, scraping social media data and applying NLP for topic extraction, discussion geography, topic correlation and word mentions. Arseniy holds an MSc in Mathematics from La Sapienza University in Rome.

Gabriele Tani is a data scientist and technical leader with over 10 years of experience in designing and developing solutions from the strategic to operational level. He has experience in defining and integrating new and alternative data sources, as well as designing and/or consolidating and orchestrating data. Gabriele has successfully designed, developed, and deployed distinct end-to-end machine learning systems and has performed advanced analysis while managing analytical teams. In 2022/23, Gabriele was part of the team that conducted the Real-Time Evaluation of UNICEF’s Ukraine Refugee Response. He co-designed the data collection and transformation processes, as well as the data visualization and data analysis, and applied different NLP techniques to extract information from various unstructured data sources. Gabriele holds a MSc in Mathematics from La Sapienza University in Rome and a MSc in Cryptography from Royal Holloway University in London.

Sinem Özdemir has nearly 4 years of professional experience managing technical assistance and evaluation projects. Her expertise includes communication and coordination with project teams, clients, and diverse stakeholders, ensuring the timely delivery of high-quality deliverables within challenging timelines, project planning and scoping, task management, and report writing. Sinem is experienced in managing multi-country projects and programs, as well as multifaceted projects funded by the GCF, IFAD, UNICEF, and the World Bank. Currently, she is coordinating a comprehensive project on research sector modernization reforms in Romania. Furthermore, Sinem has extensive experience in organizing workshops and training in impact evaluation and monitoring and evaluation (M&E), both virtually and in-person. She holds a Master’s degree in Iranian studies from the Universities of Hamburg (Germany) and Naples (Italy).

7.2. Collaborative Roles and Oversight: Evaluation Team, RO, and CO

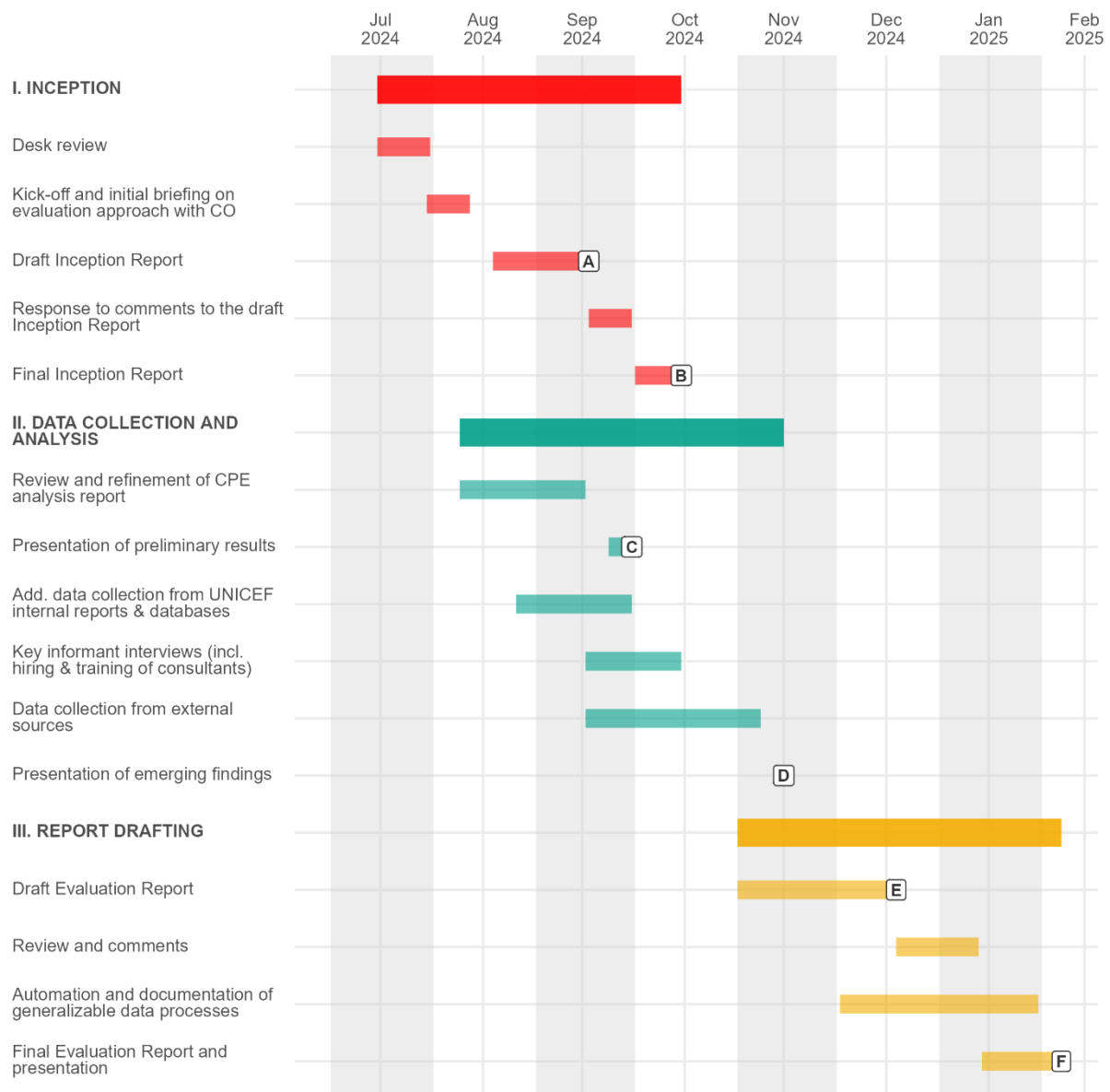
The evaluation team will work closely with the RO, which holds the responsibility for day-to-day oversight and management of the evaluation. The RO is responsible for ensuring that the evaluation adheres to the UNEG Norms and Standards as well as UNICEF Ethical Guidelines. This includes providing oversight to confirm that findings are relevant and that any proposed adaptations are feasible. The quality assurance process key deliverables will involve a multi-step review: beginning with the RO's initial review of the zero draft, followed by feedback from the CO, and finalised by external quality review. The ERG will be involved in this process for the final Evaluation Report. Further discussions are required to finalize the structure and membership of the ERG at the country level. Furthermore, the RO will ensure that all CPE deliverables, including the inception and evaluation reports, meet established quality standards. These deliverables will be shared with the CO for their review and feedback, which will contribute to their refinement and finalization.

At the CO level, the evaluation team will coordinate with the CO focal point, who will serve as the primary contact for all evaluation activities. The focal point will facilitate interactions with CO staff and ERG members where applicable. For data collection, the RO will oversee the process while the CO will collaborate with the evaluation team by organizing and participating in interviews and meetings. The CO will also assist by identifying respondents, sharing contact details, and supporting in-country data collection efforts as required. Throughout the evaluation process, the CO will contribute feedback and insights, ensuring that the evaluation reflects the local context.

8. Work Plan and Timeline

Figure 12 presents the timeline for this evaluation, outlining the key deliverables and their submission dates. This timeline has been tailored to the current context and needs of the CO, ensuring alignment with the CPD development process in Armenia. It reflects the refined timelines established during the inception phase and is accurately presented in the figure below.

Figure 12: Timeline of Country Programme Evaluation



A - Draft Inception Report on Methodological Approach.

B - Final Inception Report on Methodological Approach.

C - Presentation of preliminary results

D - Presentation of emerging findings.

E - Draft Evaluation Report.

F - Final Evaluation Report and presentation.

Annex

Annex 1: Evaluation matrix

Evaluation question	Indicators	Data analysis methods	Data sources
Relevance: To what extent is UNICEF responding to the (changing) needs of the most vulnerable throughout programme implementation?			
<p>Relevance-1 Did UNICEF respond to the needs of the most vulnerable? Did partnerships and implementation strategies support or hinder response?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> UNICEF strategic positioning aligned with needs of vulnerable populations Choice of implementation strategies aligned with needs of vulnerable populations Reflection of diverse needs, particularly vis-à-vis gender and equity, in strategic documentation Alignment of UNICEF's funding with SDGs Number of posts by UNICEF and UNICEF's stakeholders by thematic area 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of position in different kinds of networks Mapping of implementation strategies against needs Desk review and descriptive analysis of internal documents and thematic analysis of KII data Mapping of UNICEF fund utilization for SDGs in comparison with other UN stakeholders Social media analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positioning exercise - RAM 3.0 - CPD and PSN - GCP and GAP - KIIs - UN SDG website by country - Social media
<p>Relevance-2 How did UNICEF decide to which needs it should respond? Are there any needs that are not prioritized by UNICEF?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Congruence between Situational Analysis/UNSDCF and CP Congruence between CRC recommendations and CP Evidence on unaddressed needs 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mapping of needs identified and programme outcomes and outputs Mapping of CRC recommendations against programme outcomes and outputs Thematic analysis of KII data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SitAn - UNSDCF - CPD - Recommendations of the Committee for the Rights of the Child - KIIs

<p>Relevance-3 What are UNICEF’s comparative advantages in advocacy and programmatic work? Are these comparative advantages a result of UNICEF institutional features or are they specific to the Country Office?</p>	<p>1. Congruence of comparative advantages identified in the PSN and those perceived by external stakeholders 2. Sub-national focus of UN agencies 3. Congruence in topics covered in social media posts by UNICEF and other stakeholders</p>	<p>1. Mapping of comparative advantages in PSN and KIIs 2. Mapping of programme interventions at sub-national level 3. Social media analysis</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PSN - KIIs - UN SDG website by country - Social media
<p>Relevance-4 How adaptable is UNICEF to changes in context (e.g., shocks, crises, political changes)? What enabled or restricted UNICEF to adapt to those changes?</p>	<p>1. Time between changes in context and changes in staffing 2. Evidence of updates to CP outputs, key interventions and targets 3. Degree of adaptive capacity</p>	<p>1. Statistical analysis and data visualisation 2. Desk review and descriptive analysis of internal documents as well as assessment of outputs and targets over time 3. Thematic analysis of KII data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human Resource data from Vision (if available) - CPD - Programme Review COARs - RAM 3.0 - KIIs
<p>Efficiency: Are UNICEF’s resources enabling the best delivery of the country programme as per identified (and changing) priorities?</p>			
<p>Efficiency-1 How does UNICEF identify the most cost-effective implementation strategies? How does UNICEF’s positioning affect cost-effectiveness and other measures of efficiency (e.g., economies of scale)?</p>	<p>1. Number of cost-effectiveness studies conducted 2. Potential outreach of different types of partners 3. Evidence on decision-making 4. Evidence on economies of scale</p>	<p>1. Desk review and descriptive analysis of internal documents 2. Assessment of positioning exercise and other partnership data 3. Thematic analysis of KII data 4. Mapping of results and fund utilization</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Studies contained in EISI - KIIs - Positioning exercise - InSight (fund utilisation data)
<p>Efficiency-2 Has UNICEF introduced any novel way of doing things? Did these increase efficiency?</p>	<p>1. Evidence on innovative models and categorisation of such 2. Evidence on increased efficiency</p>	<p>1. Desk review of internal documents and RAM 3.0 2. Thematic analysis of KII data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PSN - COARs - RAM 3.0 - KIIs

<p>Efficiency-3 To what extent were financial resources allocated in alignment with priorities?</p>	<p>1. Funds utilised per outcome and output over time</p>	<p>1. Mapping of fund utilisation data</p>	<p>- Fund utilisation data</p>
<p>Efficiency-4 To what extent were human resources allocated in alignment with priorities?</p>	<p>1. Ratio of program section versus operations section across time 2. Number of program staff across outcomes (or goal areas) 3. Number of vacancies 4. Type of funding for staff 5. Staff turnover 6. Number of emergency officers (ARM) 7. Number and timing of emergency related travel 8. Adequacy of staffing levels, in terms of numbers and skills</p>	<p>1.-7. Statistical analysis and data visualisation 8. Thematic analysis of KII data</p>	<p>- Human resource data (if available) - InSight (Trip Approval Report) - KIIs</p>
<p>Effectiveness: To what extent is UNICEF through its strategies, operations, partnerships and advocacy, managing to effectively achieve results for children?</p>			
<p>Effectiveness-1 What internal and external factors influence UNICEF's effectiveness?</p>	<p>1. Achievement of targets 2. Contributing factors identified 3. Ratio of outcomes, outputs and targets that take gender and equity concerns into account 4. Relevance of gender specific actions set in Gender Action Plan 5. Evolution of relevant TransMonEE and SDG indicators over time</p>	<p>1. Evolution of results indicators over time by outcome and output 2. and 4. Thematic analysis of KII data and desk review 3. Count of gender and equity being mentioned 5. Statistical analysis and data visualisation</p>	<p>- RAM 3.0 - COARs and Regional Director letters - Programme Review - TransMonEE data - KIIs - GCP and GAP - SDG indicators</p>

<p>Effectiveness-2 How have UNICEF's partnerships with influential stakeholders enabled delivery of results for children? Have those partnerships influenced UNICEF's ability to contribute to policy change?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Types of stakeholders connected with UNICEF through formal or informal links 2. Discussion of UNICEF in posts on social media by partner organisations 3. Policy changes influenced by UNICEF 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assessment of partnerships and positioning 2. Social media analysis 3. Thematic analysis of KII data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positioning exercise - E-Tools and eventual other data on partnerships - Social media - KIIs
<p>Effectiveness-3 How have UNICEF's relationships with general public, CSOs , and private sector enabled delivery of results for children?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Types of stakeholders connected with UNICEF through formal or informal links 2. Discussion of UNICEF in posts on social media by partner organisations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assessment of partnerships and positioning 2. Social media analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positioning exercise - E-Tools and eventual other data on partnerships - Social media - KIIs
<p>Effectiveness-4 Has UNICEF introduced any novel models that have been delivered through national systems and scaled up? What has helped/hindered introduction and implementation of these novel models?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evidence on innovative models being scaled up by government 2. Evidence on factors helping or hindering the introduction of innovative models in national systems 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thematic analysis of KII data and social media analysis 2. Desk review and descriptive analysis of internal documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social media - KIIs - COARs and Regional Director letters

Sustainability: To what extent does UNICEF manage to ensure sustained political, financial and institutional commitment in priority areas within the most influential stakeholders?			
Sustainability-1 (How) Is UNICEF leveraging its positioning to ensure sustained public expenditures in prioritized areas?	1. Evidence on influence on public expenditures	1. Thematic analysis of KII data and desk review of internal documents	- COARs and Regional Director letters - KIIs
Sustainability-2 (How) Is UNICEF building strategic relationships to ensure sustained results of supported national programmes and policies?	1. Duration of partnership agreements 2. Types of network links 3. Degree of prospective sustainability of national programmes 4. Frequency of cross-mentions of UNICEF and partners	1. Statistical analysis and data visualisation 2. Assessment of networks 3. Thematic analysis of KII data 4. Social media cross mentioning analysis	- Positioning exercise - E-Tools and eventual other data on partnerships - KIIs
Sustainability-3 To what extent has UNICEF been able to ensure that innovative models are properly resourced over time to be scaled up in the country?	1. Level of funding for innovative models 2. Expenditure on Innovation as Implementation Strategy 3. Evidence on UNICEF activities to scale up innovative models	1.-3. Statistical analysis and data visualisation of internal data as well as desk review and descriptive analysis of internal documents	- RAM 3.0 - Fund utilisation data - COARs
Coherence: To what extent do UNICEF's results complement national government priorities at the central and decentralized level?			
Coherence-1 To what extent do other stakeholders support or undermine UNICEF action?	1. Evidence for support or undermining 2. Extent of stakeholders interacting with UNICEF posts (likes, re-posts)	1. Thematic analysis of KII data and desk review of internal documents 2. Social media analysis	- KIIs - COARs and Regional Director letters - Social media
Coherence-2 To what extent has UNICEF triggered synergies and complementarities with other stakeholders to support its own advocacy and programmatic work?	1. Evidence for complementarities 2. Absence of duplication of efforts 3. Evidence for synergies	1.-2. Thematic analysis of KII data and desk review/descriptive analysis of internal documents	- KIIs - COARs and Regional Director letters

Emergency: To what extent has UNICEF's response to the emergency (1) achieved its objectives; (2) had a broader impact on UNICEF's ability to achieve results for children and families, including positioning and preparedness?			
<p>Emergency-1 To what extent has UNICEF positioned itself as a key actor in the emergency response and along the humanitarian-development nexus?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reflection of nexus perspective in HAC and other strategic documentation 2. Policy / procedural changes influenced by UNICEF 3. Trends in fund utilization on humanitarian-development nexus, particularly regular vs emergency resources 4. Implementation of strategic partnerships for emergency response 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.-2. Thematic analysis of KII data, desk review of emergency documents 3. Analysis of funding data 4. Mapping of partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Refugee Response Plan - Fund utilization data - KIIs - Positioning exercise - HACs - Humanitarian SitReps
<p>Emergency-2 To what extent has emergency preparedness contributed to efficiency, effectiveness and relevance of the response?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evidence on emergency preparedness and planning 2. Perception that institution(s) / country is better prepared for refugee inflows than at beginning of the crisis 3. Perception that systems, processes, procedures have improved 4. Evidence on increased efficiency 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.-4. Thematic analysis of KII data, desk review of COARs, PSN and RAM 3.0, EPP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KIIs - COARs - PSN - RAM 3.0 - EPP
<p>Emergency-3 What are the lessons learned and what can be improved for ongoing or future emergency response?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evidence of identified lessons learned and/or ongoing gaps in response 2. Internal policy / procedural changes by UNICEF 3. Policy / procedural changes influenced by UNICEF 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.-3. Thematic analysis of KII data, desk review of After Action Review, COARs, PSN and RAM 3.0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KIIs - COARs - PSN - RAM 3.0 - After Action Review

Annex 2: List of interview partners

#	Name	Job title	Organisation
1	Artur Martirosyan OR Araksia Svajyan	Deputy Minister	Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sports
2	Lena Nanushyan	Deputy Minister	Ministry of Health
3	Anna Zhamakochyan Tatevik Stepanyan	Deputy Minister	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
4	Lusine Hovhannisyan	Head of Department of Children and Social Protection	Yerevan Municipality
5	Nvard Harutyunyan	Advisor to the Governor	Syunik Province Governor's Office
6	Siddhartha Sankar Datta	Representative	World Health Organization (WHO)
7	TBD		World Food Programme (WFP)
8	Natia Natsvlshvili	Resident Representative	United Nation Development Program (UNDP)
9	Raffi Doudaklian	Country Director	World Vision Armenia
10	Marine Mkrtchyan	Executive Director	Step by Step BF
11	Ara Barseghyan	Deputy Director	National DRR platform
12	Bella Harutyunyan	Business Manager	Enterprise Incubator Foundation/ Gyumri Technology Center
13	Anna Velitsyan	Chairperson	Parenting School NGO
14	Mira Antonayn	National President	Armenian Association of Social Workers
15	Valya Martirosyan	President	Youth Initiative Center
16	Alexxander Hakobyan	Managing Director of Systems Innovation	Teach4Armenia
17	Sona Arushanyan	President	Children and Adolescents Social and Health Support Center NGO
18	Silvia Mestorni	Deputy Representative	UNICEF
19	Heghine Ghukasyan	Emergency Officer	UNICEF
20	Astghik Martirosyan	M&E Specialist	UNICEF

Annex 3: Interview guides

INTERVIEW GUIDE – UNICEF

Country: _____

Date: _____

Interviewer: _____

Interviewee #: _____

Interviewer Script

Introduction

Hello and thank you for meeting with me today. My name is _____. I am an independent consultant working with the team of evaluators assisting the Armenia UNICEF Country Office in completing an evaluation of the ongoing Country Program. This evaluation primarily covers the time period since 2021.

You were invited to participate in this interview to share your perspectives and experiences. The results of this interview will be used to inform UNICEF of the lessons learned from implementing the current Country Program and help for preparing the next Country Program. As always, the final evaluation report will be made available to the public. However, your answers will only be reported in an aggregated way and your individual responses will be kept confidential within the evaluation team and will not be shared with anyone at UNICEF or any third parties.

The interview is expected to take approximately 40-50 minutes. Your participation is fully voluntary. If you feel uncomfortable with any of the questions, please tell me right away. You can skip any questions you would rather not answer. You can stop the interview at any time, without consequences. During the interview, I will take notes to assist in analysis. I will not record the interview. Again, your individual responses will be kept confidential.

Consent for interview

Before we proceed, do you have any questions about the study, your rights and confidentiality? Do you agree to participate in this interview?

IF YES, CONTINUE

IF NO, THANK AND END

Interview Questions

Questions	Probes	Reference to evaluation questions
Icebreaker		
Please tell me about yourself. What is your role at the Country Office?	How long have you been working in this role?	
1. Questions on responding to the needs		
1.1. What were the main needs of children and adolescents in Armenia since 2021?	Which groups or individuals would you consider to be “the most vulnerable”? How have these needs changed as a result of the refugee crisis?	Relevance – 1
1.2. How well, do you think, is UNICEF responding to the needs of the most vulnerable ?	What areas or needs do you think UNICEF is not addressing but should be? How has UNICEF positioned itself as a key actor in the emergency response and along the humanitarian-development nexus?	Relevance – 1 Relevance – 2
1.3. What helps UNICEF to address these needs? What hinders it?		Effectiveness – 2
1.4. How does the CO usually decide which needs to respond to and which ones to leave for other actors to address?	Have any needs assessments or similar studies been conducted?	Relevance – 2
1.5. What do you see as UNICEF’s comparative advantages in responding to needs (in comparison to other actors)?	What have been the main strengths of UNICEF? What have been the main weaknesses of your work?	Relevance – 3
1.6. How does gender/equity feature in your area of work? Is gender/equity a strong focus of CO management?		Relevance – 1 Relevance – 2 Relevance – 3
2. Questions on contribution to changes		
2.1. What are the main achievements you feel UNICEF has made in Armenia?	Can you provide an example of how UNICEF has contributed to policy change? Can you name an example (situation) where UNICEF has	Effectiveness – 1 Effectiveness – 2 Effectiveness – 3

	influenced public expenditure? What role specifically have partnerships played in achieving these results?	Sustainability – 1
2.2. Which internal and external factors have contributed to these achievements?		Effectiveness – 1
2.3. How adaptable has UNICEF been to changes in context in recent years? How has UNICEF adapted to the ongoing refugee crisis?	Changes in context might be shocks, crises, or political changes such as COVID-19, the war in Ukraine. What enabled or restricted UNICEF to adapt to those changes?	Relevance – 4
2.4. What are the lessons learned and what can be improved for ongoing or future emergency response?		Sustainability – 2 Coherence – 2
3. Questions on resources		
3.1. Does UNICEF have enough staff, with the right expertise, in the Country Office, from your perspective, to implement its planned program?	Have there been any challenges on human resourcing? Please describe.	Efficiency – 4
3.2. How does UNICEF determine where to direct funds?	Are there any areas/priorities over/under supported?	Efficiency – 3
3.3. What are the main challenges you face in your area of work?	In particular, challenges related to human/ financial resources and efficiency of processes. What additional support or input would you like to receive from UNICEF corporately?	Efficiency – 3 Efficiency – 4
3.4. How does UNICEF identify the most cost-effective implementation strategies?	Has your office ever conducted a cost-effectiveness study?	Efficiency – 1
3.5. What actions does UNICEF take to ensure that programs implemented are sustainable?		Sustainability – 2
4. Innovation		
4.1. Has there been any kind of innovation in the way you work or in the collaboration with national stakeholders? Can you provide an example?	How has this changed your work? Has the innovation made your work more effective, efficient or sustainable?	Efficiency – 2 Effectiveness – 4 Sustainability – 3
5. Questions on coherence		
5.1. Can you describe how your work aligns with other stakeholders to ensure that efforts are coordinated, and no		Coherence – 1 Coherence – 2

gaps or overlaps occur?		
5.2 How do you ensure that your activities enhance or build upon the efforts of others to achieve shared goals?	Can you provide an example?	Coherence – 1 Coherence – 2

Closing Comments

Those are all the questions I have for you. Thank you for your time. If you have any other comments, feel free to contact me at [_____](#). Have a nice day!

INTERVIEW GUIDE – PARTNERS

Country: _____

Date: _____

Interviewer: _____ Interviewee #: _____

Interviewer Script

Introduction

Hello and thank you for meeting with me today. My name is _____. I am an independent consultant working with the team of evaluators assisting the Armenia UNICEF Country Office in completing an evaluation of the ongoing Country Program. This evaluation primarily covers the time period since 2021.

You were invited to participate in this interview to share your perspectives and experiences with UNICEF's work. The results of this interview will be used to inform UNICEF of the lessons learned from implementing the current Country Program and help for preparing the next Country Program. Because this evaluation is part of an official UNICEF process, the final report will be made available to the public. However, your answers will only be reported in an aggregated way and your individual responses will be kept confidential within the evaluation team and will not be shared with anyone at UNICEF or any third parties.

The interview is expected to take approximately 40-50 minutes. Your participation is fully voluntary. If you feel uncomfortable with any of the questions, please tell me right away. You can skip any questions you would rather not answer. You can stop the interview at any time, without consequences. During the interview, I will take notes to assist in analysis. I will not record the interview. Again, your individual responses will be kept confidential.

Consent for interview

Before we proceed, do you have any questions about the study, your rights and confidentiality? Do you agree to participate in this interview?

IF YES, CONTINUE

IF NO, THANK AND END

Interview Questions

Questions	Probes	Reference to evaluation questions
Icebreaker		
Please tell me about yourself. What is your role in your organisation?		
1. Questions on collaboration		
1.1. In what areas have you collaborated with UNICEF since 2021? In what ways?	How has this collaboration changed as a result of the refugee crisis?	Relevance – 1
1.2. Can you describe the nature of your collaboration? How do you ensure that your activities are aligned to achieve shared goals?	How is your work with UNICEF coordinated? How open and cooperative do you find UNICEF as a partner? Is there anything you would change in the way they work with you?	Coherence – 1 Coherence – 2
1.3. Has your collaboration with UNICEF led to any innovation in the way you work? Can you provide an example?	How has this changed your work? Has the innovation made your work more effective, efficient or sustainable?	Efficiency – 2 Effectiveness – 4 Sustainability – 3
1.4. Does UNICEF ask that you plan for sustainability in activities?	What actions does UNICEF take to ensure that the activities that you implement are sustainable?	Sustainability – 2
1.5. Does UNICEF require that you consider gender or equity in your work?		Relevance – 1 Relevance – 2
2. Questions on responding to needs		
2.1. Beyond your direct collaboration, do you think that UNICEF is answering the main needs of children and adolescents in Armenia?	Do you think that there is sufficient focus on the most vulnerable? What areas or needs do you think UNICEF is not addressing but should be?	Relevance – 1 Relevance – 2 Relevance – 3
2.2. What do you see as UNICEF’s comparative advantages in responding to the needs of children and adolescents (in comparison to other actors)?	What have been the main strengths of UNICEF? What have been the main weaknesses of their work?	Relevance – 3
2.3. In your opinion, how is UNICEF positioned in the national landscape of organisations working on children’s matters?	Has this changed as a result of the refugee crisis?	Relevance – 1 Efficiency -1 Effectiveness – 2 Effectiveness - 3

		Sustainability – 1 Sustainability – 2
3. Questions on contribution to changes		
3.1. What are the main achievements you feel UNICEF has made in your area of work?	Can you provide an example of how UNICEF has contributed to policy change? Can you name an example (situation) where UNICEF has influenced public expenditure?	Effectiveness – 1 Effectiveness – 2 Effectiveness – 3 Sustainability – 1
3.2. Which internal and external factors have contributed to these achievements?		
3.3. How adaptable is UNICEF to changes in context? How has UNICEF adapted to the ongoing refugee crisis?	Changes in context might be shocks, crises, or political changes such as COVID-19, the war in Ukraine. What enabled or restricted UNICEF to adapt to those changes?	Relevance – 4
3.4.a. GOVERNMENT: Are there ways that UNICEF (in comparison to other stakeholders) has helped you to shape longer term government priorities or public spending?		Sustainability – 1
3.4.b. OTHER: Are there ways that UNICEF (in comparison to other stakeholders) has helped you to shape or respond to longer term government priorities or public spending?		Sustainability – 1
4. Questions on sustainability		
4.1. What is your main planning for emergencies in the short and medium term currently? How do you feel UNICEF’s response should change if the crisis continues?		Sustainability – 2
5. Wrap up		
5.1. Is there anything else you wanted to add or emphasise about your partnership/engagement with UNICEF?		

Closing Comments

Those are all the questions I have for you. Thank you for your time. If you have any other comments, feel free to contact me at _____ . Have a nice day!

IF NECESSARY: For any specific questions please contact the evaluation team lead, Susan Steiner, at susan.steiner@rowsquared.com.

Annex 4: Terms of Reference (ToR) CPEs in Europe and Central Asia

Europe and Central Asia Region (ECA)

SHORT-TERM INSTITUTIONAL CONSULTANCY

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Title	<p>2024 Country Programme Evaluations in Europe and Central Asia</p> <p>Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, North Macedonia</p>
Location	Remote with travel when required
Duration	8 Months

INTRODUCTION

Country Programme Evaluations (CPEs) in UNICEF play a key role in identifying lessons which can inform the design of the next Country Programme or adjustments to the current Programme, and identify opportunities to improve UNICEF's performance.¹ The CPEs assess (i) the contribution of the Programme of Cooperation to national development results; (ii) UNICEF's contribution to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSCDF) results; and (iii) UNICEF's strategic positioning in relation to its child rights mandate.

Being strategic evaluations, CPEs are mostly used² to inform the direction of Country Programmes (CPs), which are outlined in the country programme documents that are designed and planned every five years, on average. At national level, CPEs may also inform the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) planning and evaluation processes and, at regional and global levels, they may inform multi-country evaluations, synthesis and strategic evaluations undertaken to assess and/or document UNICEF's performance, management decisions and policy and programme development. CPEs in UNICEF align with UNICEF's 2018 Evaluation Policy with which it has become a requirement for Country Offices (COs) to commission CPEs, at least, once every two programme cycles, and once per programme cycle, if monitoring information or audit point to a significant shift in the programme context, or a significant increase in the level of risk. To guard independence, CPEs are managed from the Regional Office (RO) level in close collaboration with COs and with final quality assurance undertaken by UNICEF's Evaluation Office in New York (Table 1).³

Table 1. An extract from the revised Evaluation Policy on Country Programme Evaluation

UNICEF evaluation coverage norms

<i>Evaluation category</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Contextual considerations</i>	<i>Management arrangements</i>
MANDATORY SCHEDULING			
Country programme evaluations	Minimum once every two programme cycles. May be conducted earlier if circumstances warrant.	Country programme evaluations feed into the pending country programme document and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF).	Managed by the regional evaluation adviser or the multi-country evaluation specialist.

Source: UNICEF Evaluation Policy (September 2023)

Building on the lessons from the past two cycles of CPEs in the ECA region, and developments in the planning processes, the Evaluation Section proposes the following scope and focus for the next round to ensure the CPEs remain relevant, leverage other evidence gather processes, and provide the necessary evidence base to inform the development of the future Country Programme Documents. Based on feedback on the use of past CPEs, the primary focus is on the strategic positioning of UNICEF to deliver results for children within the organization’s mandate of protecting and fulfilling child rights. The ECARO Evaluation Section will also apply a Multi-Country Programme approach to streamline management and benefit from economies of scale.

With these Terms of Reference, the ECA Regional Evaluation team is commissioning country programme evaluations for the following country programmes: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and North Macedonia, which are currently starting a new planning cycle and preparing for their country programme document. Each of these country programmes will have a separate evaluation report.

OBJECT OF THE EVALUATIONS

The object of evaluations will be the implementation of each UNICEF Country Programmes of the selected countries for a period of at least three years (2021-2023) or longer to ensure that outcome-level results are captured in the countries covered. The country programme documents are available on the UNICEF’s Executive Board page (<https://www.unicef.org/executiveboard/country-programme-documents>), it includes the context, priorities, results framework and indicative budgets. The CPs are UNICEF’s contribution to the realization of the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged or vulnerable in a specific country. They reflect the long-term vision of UNICEF to reach out results at scale. CPs are implemented through change strategies (as outlined in the Strategic Plan and adapted by COs), which adapt over time to meet the target population's needs.

The objective of the CP is to accelerate progress towards the realization of the rights of all children in the nine countries. Aligned with the Convention on Rights of the Child (CRC), the Convention on Eliminations of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and reflecting a human rights-based approach, the CP is defined by a strong sector-based approach and an emphasis on upstream systems strengthening. The primary documents that frame the CP are the Country Programme Document (CPD) and the Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) both of which align with key national policy and strategic documents including but not limited to: National Plan of Action to Implement concluding Observation of the UN CRC for each of the country; National Strategies and Programmes. Given that CPDs are developed together with the host governments of the nine countries and other partners, there are many stakeholders involved in the implementation of the CPs. While

governments have primary responsibility for the administration of national development processes and programmes, civil society plays an essential role, particularly in implementation.

The main components of the selected CPs and their respective budgets within the coverage of this cycle of CPEs are as the following:

Table 2. Current CPD components of the selected CPE countries

	Current CPD components	Indicative Budget as in the latest CPD ³ (In thousands of US dollars)	Total
Armenia	Social protection	1,062 (RR) + 1,969 (OR)	3,850 (RR) + 11,018 (OR) = 14,868 (Total)
	Access to quality health system	608 (RR) + 2,009 (OR)	
	Inclusive and quality education	608 (RR) + 3,307 (OR)	
	Child protection, justice for children, parenting	608 (RR) + 1,919 (OR)	
	Programme effectiveness	964 (RR) + 1,814 (OR)	
Azerbaijan	Early childhood care, including health, nutrition, early childhood development, early education, and protection	1,520 (RR) + 3,500 (OR)	4,955 (RR) + 9,000 (OR) = 13,955 (Total)
	Adolescent care, including education, protection, and participation	1,950 (RR) + 3,500 (OR)	
	Child rights monitoring systems	1,330 (RR) + 1,850 (OR)	
	Programme effectiveness	115 (RR) + 150 (OR)	
Bosnia & Herzegovina	Early childhood care, including health, nutrition, early childhood development	730 (RR) + 4,410 (OR)	4,260 (RR) + 26,640 (OR) = 30,900 (Total)
	Inclusive and quality education	730 (RR) + 8,230 (OR)	
	Child protection, justice for children	1,025 (RR) + 7,300 (OR)	
	Social protection and child rights monitoring systems	1,100 (RR) + 5,450 (OR)	
	Programme effectiveness	675 (RR) + 1,250 (OR)	
Georgia	Health and nutrition	900 (RR) + 5,600 (OR)	4,340 (RR) + 24,670 (OR) = 29,010 (Total)
	Inclusive and quality education	640 (RR) + 7,180 (OR)	
	Social protection and enhancing child rights monitoring	850 (RR) + 3,620 (OR)	
	Child protection, justice for children	950 (RR) + 6,870 (OR)	
	Programme effectiveness	1,000 (RR) + 1,400 (OR)	
Kazakhstan	Health and nutrition	1,200 (RR) + 4,000 (OR)	4,300 (RR) + 15,200 (OR) = 19,500 (Total)
	Inclusive and quality education	1,500 (RR) + 4,500 (OR)	
	Child protection and social protection	1,110 (RR) + 5,500 (OR)	
	Programme effectiveness	500 (RR) + 1,200 (OR)	
North Macedonia	Health	950 (RR) + 2,203 (OR)	4,270 (RR) + 11,150 (OR) = 15,420 (Total)
	Inclusive education and participation	1,729 (RR) + 6,174 (OR)	
	Social protection and enhancing child rights monitoring	1,147 (RR) + 2,689 (OR)	

With a total of regular resources (RR) of less than 5 million US dollars for implementation in 5 years, these country offices are considered of small size within UNICEF categorization, which has resulted in expenditures of less than 10 million US dollars each year. Small country offices implement mainly advocacy activities to influence key stakeholders to support the member state to fulfill their commitments towards the rights of children. In some cases, they also implement together with their government demonstrative models that can be brought to scale by the State. Most of the policy influencing is done at the centralized level, however, several interventions are implemented with special focus on some of the geographical areas and demographic groups which will vary from country to country. Furthermore, UNICEF country office need to adjust to unforeseen circumstances caused by external shocks or internal situations. The adaptability of UNICEF offices is critical to ensure that identified need as well as emerging needs are attained, even in complex scenarios.

The current assignment will start in May 2024– a year before the completion of the current CPDs. The timing is important in order to ensure that its results feed into the design of the new CPDs.

EVALUATION CONTEXT

Armenia: Armenia has experienced significant socio-political and economic shocks in recent years. These events have included the 2018 Velvet Revolution, the 2020 twin shocks of the COVID-19 pandemic and the conflict with Azerbaijan. Operating in a turbulent and uncertain geo-political context, the country struggles with low investment rates, weak attraction of foreign direct investment, limited human capital, connectivity constraints both within Armenia and with other countries, and limited diversity in its export base and destinations. The immediate challenge involves addressing the urgent humanitarian needs of the displaced population, including providing shelter, food, healthcare, and psychological support. Additionally, the country faces substantial uncertainty arising from geopolitical circumstances. Balancing the immediate needs of the displaced population with long-term development amidst uncertainty is a considerable challenge (World Bank, 2024). UNICEF addressed challenges through a 'humanitarian and development nexus,' providing financial, technical, and in-kind support. The country office works under a multifaceted approach, balancing emergency response with long-term development to enhance the well-being of children in Armenia.

Azerbaijan: Amid economic growth supported by stable oil production and a modest acceleration in domestic demand, the country faced challenges from rising global fossil fuel prices affecting essential commodities. The notable increases in the 2019 budget allocations for education (up by 13 percent) and health care (by 44.5 percent) are important in terms of improving human capital. But further efforts are needed to align budget spending with development needs, including through strengthening medium-term budgeting and the public investment management system (World Bank, 2024). Despite advancements in child health, concerns persisted, including learning gaps and declining immunization coverage post-COVID-19. The return of internally displaced people to Karabakh saw thousands of individuals returning in 2023, but the region faced threats from landmines, particularly affecting women and children.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: The political system in BiH is complex, reflecting the provisions of the country's constitution developed to end ethnic conflict, as well as subsequent changes to the system introduced under the guidance of the international community through the Office of the High Representative. In July 2015, the Council of Ministers of BiH, Government of Republika Srpska (RS), and Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) adopted a joint program of structural reforms known as the reform agenda. This reform agenda presents a rare window of opportunity for structural reforms in BiH, underpinned by a broad national consensus on the country's critical challenges and priorities and the sustained support of key development partners (World Bank, 2024). These complexities have exacerbated delays in government formation after the 2022 elections, and

hindered effective responses to external shocks, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ukraine war, and high inflation. Declines in economic growth affect poverty, affecting a significant portion of the population, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions. The country has initiated EU accession negotiations which has marked a crucial political development.

Georgia: Georgia has made much progress over the past decade. Georgia has a solid foundation to continue growing fast, including a favorable business environment, but it also faces some structural challenges (World Bank 2024). The application for EU candidacy initiated in 2022 is critical for advancing child rights, occurring amid the ongoing war in Ukraine, which has led to a significant influx of Ukrainian children. Despite a slight reduction in child poverty, it remains a pressing concern. Findings from the Child Wellbeing in Georgia Survey reveal that 37.8% of children experience material deprivation, with notable disparities in urban/rural areas and between genders. The government, committed to child welfare, enacts strategies outlined in the National Human Rights Strategy and the Code on the Rights of the Child, addressing multifaceted challenges faced by children in Georgia.

Kazakhstan: Since the 2000s, Kazakhstan has seen impressive economic growth driven by the first generation of market-oriented reforms, abundant mineral resources extraction, and strong Foreign Direct Investment. Sustained economic growth has transformed the country into an upper middle-income economy, commensurately raising living standards and reducing poverty. This progress, however, masks vulnerabilities and unevenness in the country's development model. Slowing economic growth, growing inequality and elite capture, and weak institutions reflect the flaws of the resource-based and state-led growth model and raise the risk that Kazakhstan could become stuck in the "middle-income trap." (World Bank 2024). The country has activated a national plan to accelerate progress toward Sustainable Development Goals and ratified the Paris Agreement, committing to carbon neutrality by 2060. Economic growth is stable but rising poverty rates, particularly in the Turkestan region, pose challenges. Kazakhstan addressed child poverty, extending child benefit payments, amending social assistance criteria, and introducing the 'National Fund for Children.' The country prioritized digital transformation, adopting a 'Digital Family Card' and a comprehensive plan for online child safety.

North Macedonia: The main stated priorities of the government are to: (a) manage the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic; (b) overcome the economic and energy crisis; and (c) pass the constitutional amendments required to continue the EU accession process, in line with the so-called "French Proposal" that triggered the beginning of negotiations with the EU on July 19, 2022 (World Bank 2023). The country faces economic challenges due to the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, downturn in key trade partners' markets, and rising food and energy prices. In 2022, the food and energy crisis, aggravated by the pandemic, pushed a significant number of children below the relative poverty line.

By the time of implementation of the CPEs, a [Programme Review](#) (PR) will be conducted for Armenia (as a Strategic Moment of Reflection), Bosnia & Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and North Macedonia. PRs are an internal exercise to support adaptive programming, and result in refined TOCs based on emerging evidence, changes in context, and progress toward results thus far. PRs should be considered an input to the CPE and the revised TOCs should be utilized in the assessment of the CP.

The CPEs will benefit from, and intended to complement the analysis of the [Gender Programmatic Reviews](#) (GPRs). The GPR process helps COs identify strategic areas to introduce new and/or strengthen existing gender-responsive programming and provides programme- and operational- related recommendations for the CO to implement. Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kazakhstan and North Macedonia have completed reviews.

RATIONALE, PURPOSE AND USE OF EVALUATION

Rationale: The key rationale for conducting CPEs and doing so at this stage of CP cycles is defined in UNICEF's 2023 Evaluation Policy. According to the Policy, it is a requirement for COs to commission CPEs, at least once every two programme cycles. Consequently, CPEs are included in the Costed Evaluation Plans (CEPs) of all the COs to be conducted in 2024 with the view of them feeding into the development of new CPDs for the next five years. The selected COs have identified the CPEs as an important priority to conduct in this programme cycle and agreed on the proposal of this ToR as a strategic point of reflection and external view to design and plan for their next CPD.

CPEs have become an integral part of Country Programme management and play a learning function to ensure that CO staff address strategic-level issues. CPEs are instrumental in facilitating strategic reflection on how to best prioritize UNICEF efforts in each country and in the region, as a whole, to deliver results for children.

The common purposes of the Country Programme Evaluation are to:

- Strengthen accountability of UNICEF to national stakeholders by providing an independent assessment of how selected strategies and UNICEF's positioning have contributed to the results for children by specified outcome areas, especially for the most vulnerable;
- Foster organizational learning about what works and does not work, especially in areas where the country programme has taken a leadership position within the country context setting and needs of the most vulnerable;
- Inform programme design and support managerial decision-taking at country office level in preparation of the next the country programme;
- Draw lessons from the previous CPD implementation in order to make the best use of UNICEF's change strategies in each country and in the region, while considering current circumstances;
- Recommendations are to be provided which must be specific enough that necessary actions can be determined in response.

Use: The evaluation may be used by a broad range of stakeholders of which some have a direct stake in the evaluation because they are involved in implementation of the CP or programmatic frameworks, plans or strategies towards which the CP contributes. These stakeholders are referred to as Primary Stakeholders. Other stakeholders, i.e., Secondary Stakeholders, refer to rights holders and duty bearers who benefit from the contributions of the CP, and organizations with which UNICEF does not have any formal partnership but that work with similar programmes and on child rights issues for which lessons and good practices drawn from the CPE may be relevant. Primary stakeholders include but may not limited to:

State Bodies. UNICEF's main Government partners that UNICEF collaborates with relevant state bodies on the coordination and detailed contents of each CP component in each of the nine countries. The line ministries and state agencies may include: Prime Minister's Office; Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Protection, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Justice; different Departments on Youth and Minors; Pre-school and School Education, Teacher Training, Family Support; General Prosecutor's Office; Judges Training Institute, Supreme Court; Committee on Youth Affairs and Sport; Republican Centre of Additional Education; Committee/Agency on Statistics, etc. The government stakeholders will use the findings of MCPE for helping UNICEF design new CPDs.

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). UNICEF COs are likely to have collaborated with CSOs, primarily, as implementing partners and in relation to piloting of CP activities. CSOs are the main vehicle in implementing the CPDs and will undoubtedly use the findings in their direct work to improve the services they provide and ensure that the voice of children is heard.

The academia: Through the CP implementation period, UNICEF COs collaborate with a range of academic institutions. Academia will use the findings of CPEs to inform their evidence generation activities.

Donors. UNICEF's multilateral and bilateral donors – without which the CP would not be possible – have a direct stake in the evaluation findings as these will account for UNICEF's performance. Donors include the European Commission (EU); the Department for International Development (DFID), UK; the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI); the Government of Japan; Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation; the Swiss Committee for UNICEF; the UK Committee for UNICEF; the US Fund for UNICEF; and USAID, among others. Donors will use the findings of CPEs for learning purposes and informing their own programming.

UN agencies and international finance institutions. The UN system comprises of UN agencies resident in country and contributing from abroad²⁴. The current UNSDCF involved inputs from the WHO; the UNDP; the UNFPA; the UNODC; the UNAIDS; the UNESCO; the ILO; the FAO; the UN Women. In addition, UNICEF partners with Bi-lateral donors (USAID, DFID, SIDA, among others), the World Bank, and other IFIs. Similar to UN partners will use the findings of the CPEs for learning purposes and informing their own programming.

Private sector. When possible, UNICEF engages with the private sector to support its implementation of interventions, advocacy for children's rights and for resource mobilization.

The private sector may use the findings of the CPE for learning and to inform future strategic partnerships.

UNICEF stakeholders. Finally, stakeholders inside UNICEF who have a particular interest in the CPE include: Staff in UNICEF's COs; the Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (ECARO), and senior management in UNICEF who can draw upon the evaluation findings for regional and corporate learning and accountability purposes.

OBJECTIVE OF THE EVALUATIONS

The overall aim of the CPEs is to assess how well the CPs — in terms of the application of strategies and implementation – have contributed to the achievement of UNICEF's strategic goals and outcomes as well as strategically positioned UNICEF within the country context and among national partners. Strategic positioning refers to UNICEF's ability, through its country programme, to positively influence national agendas, leverage relationships, operate in areas of comparative strengths, and take up a leadership role to advance its strategic goals and children's rights in the country and mandate. This means interrogating key stakeholders working on programmatic outcomes and assessing UNICEF's ability to develop and implement adaptive programme strategies vis-à-vis its strategic position that are most appropriate in the country context to advance strategic goals and its mandate. The incorporation of external perspective is key and complementary to Programme Review (PR), country inputs in the Report Assessment Matrix (RAM), Country Strategic Indicators (CSI), and Country Annual Reports that are internal processes for the organization, giving the opportunity to the external evaluators to do a reality check of UNICEF's own reporting and perception.

Aligned with corporate policy requirements, these formative CPEs serve both accountability and learning purposes as mentioned above. The CPE will look back and assess the relevance, coherence and effectiveness achieved throughout implementation of the CPs in the nine countries to identify

²⁴ Resident: UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, FAO, WHO, UNHCR, IOM, UNODC, UNFPA; Non-resident: ILO, UNAIDS, OHCHR, UN Women, UNOPS, UNESCO, UNECE; Regional Center: UNRCCA; Coordination mechanisms to support UN RC: OCHA, DSS.

good practices, and draw lessons and forward-looking recommendations that can inform the 2026-31 CP planning process, which will commence in September 2024. The CPE has three objectives, which are to:

- Provide an independent assessment of the strategies adopted by the country programme with regards to outcome areas, and how well these have contributed to the achievement of CP expected results;
- Provide an assessment of UNICEF's positioning within the Government, national partners, and the private sector, given its ability to respond to national and sub-national needs; and,
- Draw lessons from the CPD 2021-25 and even before implementation in order to make the best use of UNICEF's change strategies in each country, in this group of countries, and in the region as a whole, while considering current circumstances.

Drawing on this evidence, the CPEs should identify a set of forward-looking and actionable recommendations for the next programme cycle.²⁵

SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

Programmatic coverage: The evaluation will look at the country programme as a whole. No specific outcomes areas of strategic will be identified or consider. The CPE will analyze the strategic decisions at the country level based on the context. This will allow strategic analysis and better align to the primary users of the evaluation. The CPE will no substitute thematic evaluations that the country office may be already planned. Evidence and recommendations about this strategic approach are of particular relevance for the strategic direction, management and positioning of the new country programmes (for each country), and should complement Programme Reviews and existing evaluation evidence.

While the evaluation covers two Strategic Plan periods (2018-2021 and 2022-2025)²⁶, consideration for the most recent UNICEF's nine change strategies as per UNICEF Strategic Plan 2022-2025 should be given emphasis. These include:

1. Advocacy and communications
2. Community engagement, social and behaviour change
3. Data, research, evaluation and knowledge management
4. Digital transformation
5. Gender-equality programming for transformative results
6. Innovation
7. Partnership and engagement: public and private
8. Risk-informed humanitarian and development nexus programming
9. System strengthening to leave no one behind

Geographic and temporal scope: The principal focus will be on the present country programme from 2021 to present. However, the analysis will include previous results pre-dating this period, as it will illuminate issues in the current programme and current result areas. COs are also welcomed to have a focus on a specific period of time when the CP was implemented or before (e.g., change in Government's highest leadership, impact of programming from the Ukraine crisis, etc.) The final choice of

²⁵ Considering the current circumstances and variables that keep changing overtime, the evaluation exercise will include recommendations that can be applicable in the uncertain and changing context towards the design and implementation of the next CPD.

²⁶ https://www.unicef.org/publications/files/UNICEF_Strategic_Plan_2018-2021.pdf

<https://www.unicef.org/media/115646/file/Strategic%20Plan%202022-2025%20publication%20English.pdf>

the period to be evaluated will be defined during the inception stage depending on the focus areas that the CO would choose to explore.

The scope of the evaluation will be national, with potential exemplifications with specific interventions at the sub-national level.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation questions are formulated as per [OECD-DAC evaluation criteria](#) with some adjustment to UNICEF’s change strategies and will explore relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and coherence per UNICEF’s guidance on Country Programme Evaluations. Additionally, equity and gender equality are also examined as part of CPE. COs can include additional sub-questions during the inception phase to respond to areas of specific strategic interest and align to programme areas. The evaluation questions pertain to each country programme individually.

Table 3. Evaluation criteria, overarching questions, and follow up questions.

Relevance
<p>1. To what extent is UNICEF responding to the (changing) needs of the most vulnerable throughout programme implementation?</p> <p>a. To what extent did UNICEF positioning and implementation strategies enable the CO to respond to those needs?</p> <p>b. What were the comparative advantages used by UNICEF in advocacy and programmatic work in relation to other stakeholders in the country?</p> <p>c. To what extent was UNICEF management able to timely adapt to changes in the operating environment caused by internal and external shocks, crises, or major socio-economic and political changes?</p>
Efficiency
<p>2. Are UNICEF’s resources enabling the best delivery of the country programme as per identified (and changing) priorities?</p> <p>a. To what extent UNICEF positioning in the country is taken into consideration to identify implementation of change strategies?</p> <p>b. What efficiency measures did UNICEF use to enable it to be more effective and efficient in addressing the challenges and mitigating risks in the evolving country context? Were these measures sufficient? Why or why not? This includes strategic allocation of financial resources and staffing.</p>
Effectiveness
<p>3. To what extent is UNICEF through its strategies, operations, partnerships and advocacy managing to effectively achieve results for children?</p> <p>a. To what extent is UNICEF positioned itself among the most influencing stakeholder to achieve results for children and policy change?</p> <p>b. What external and internal enabling/restrictive factors affected its effectiveness?</p> <p>c. To what extent is UNICEF effectively introducing and implementing innovative models to be delivered at scale through national systems?</p>
Sustainability
<p>4. To what extent UNICEF manages to ensure sustained political, financial and institutional commitment in priority areas within the most influential stakeholders?</p>

- a. To what extent does UNICEF leverage its positioning to successfully influence sustained public expenditure in prioritized areas? This includes financially sustainable innovative models scaled up in the country.
- b. To what extent does UNICEF build strategic partnerships to ensure sustained results of UNICEF's supported national programmes and policies?
- c. To what extent the results achieved contributed to system strengthening at national and subnational level and sub-national models with adequately supported scale up strategy?

Coherence

5. To what extent do UNICEF's results complement national government priorities at the central and decentralized level?

- a. How well does UNICEF collaborate with other stakeholders? Is there effective coordination?

Throughout the responses, the team will be analyzing all with a gender and equity cross-cutting perspective, specifically it would be looking into the extent to which gender and equity were integrated in the implementation of UNICEF interventions.

The evaluation team will respond to each of these questions with three approaches: a) identifying how adaptive UNICEF has been to unforeseen circumstances/external shocks; b) identifying the levers and limiting internal and external factors that affect UNICEF implementation; and c) identifying specific examples that showcase what has worked or has not worked for advocacy and programmatic work.

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The approach and methodology presented is guided by the UNICEF's revised Evaluation Policy,²⁷ the Evaluation Norms and Standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG),²⁸ UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluations and Data Collection and Analysis²⁹ and UNICEF's reporting standards. The proposed approach presents a way forward to design and implement a multi-country programme evaluation (M-CPE) for the six countries. The proposed approach will have the common evaluative elements which are shared by the COs and the elements which will be optional for each CO to add. It is assumed that this design will be effective to strike a balance between the interests of each CO and RO's interest in learning across the region.

The CPEs will take the following general approach:

- Use as much as possible existing information already produced by the CO, including internal databases, reports, repositories of evidence, etc.
- Allow for maximum ownership by CO staff and place the least possible burden on UNICEF staff. Strike a balance between CO ownership and multi-country evaluation arrangements allowing some standardization of the aspects of the purpose, scope, evaluation questions, an overall methodology and team composition with a certain individualization to meet the varying interests of COs.
- Align to CP planning processes, in coordination with the Planning team, to ensure the evaluation feeds into the overall CPD design.

²⁷ 4 UNICEF 2018 Evaluation Policy <https://undocs.org/E/ICEF/2018/14>

²⁸ UNEG Norms: <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/21>, UNEG Standards: <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/22>

²⁹ https://www.unicef.org/supply/files/ATTACHMENT_IV-UNICEF_Procedure_for_Ethical_Standards.PDF

- Engage country, sub-regional and regional key partners throughout the evaluation process.
- Work in a way that will allow sharing good practices and lessons learned across and within countries. All of this toward the ultimate goal of improving UNICEF's the implementation of change strategies and accountability in all country contexts.
- Maximize the use of ongoing and recent evaluations, Programme Reviews, and other related evidence generation, with a view to reducing duplication (as well as evaluative burden) and to deepening the available data set.
- Identify some key trends in the region that can inform other country programmes and promotes cross-fertilization
- Facilitate the identification of regional and sub-regional trends while the focus will be on the specific countries
- Ensure that current context and forward-looking analyses are formulated based on information and evidence available for a forward-looking recommendations and way forward.

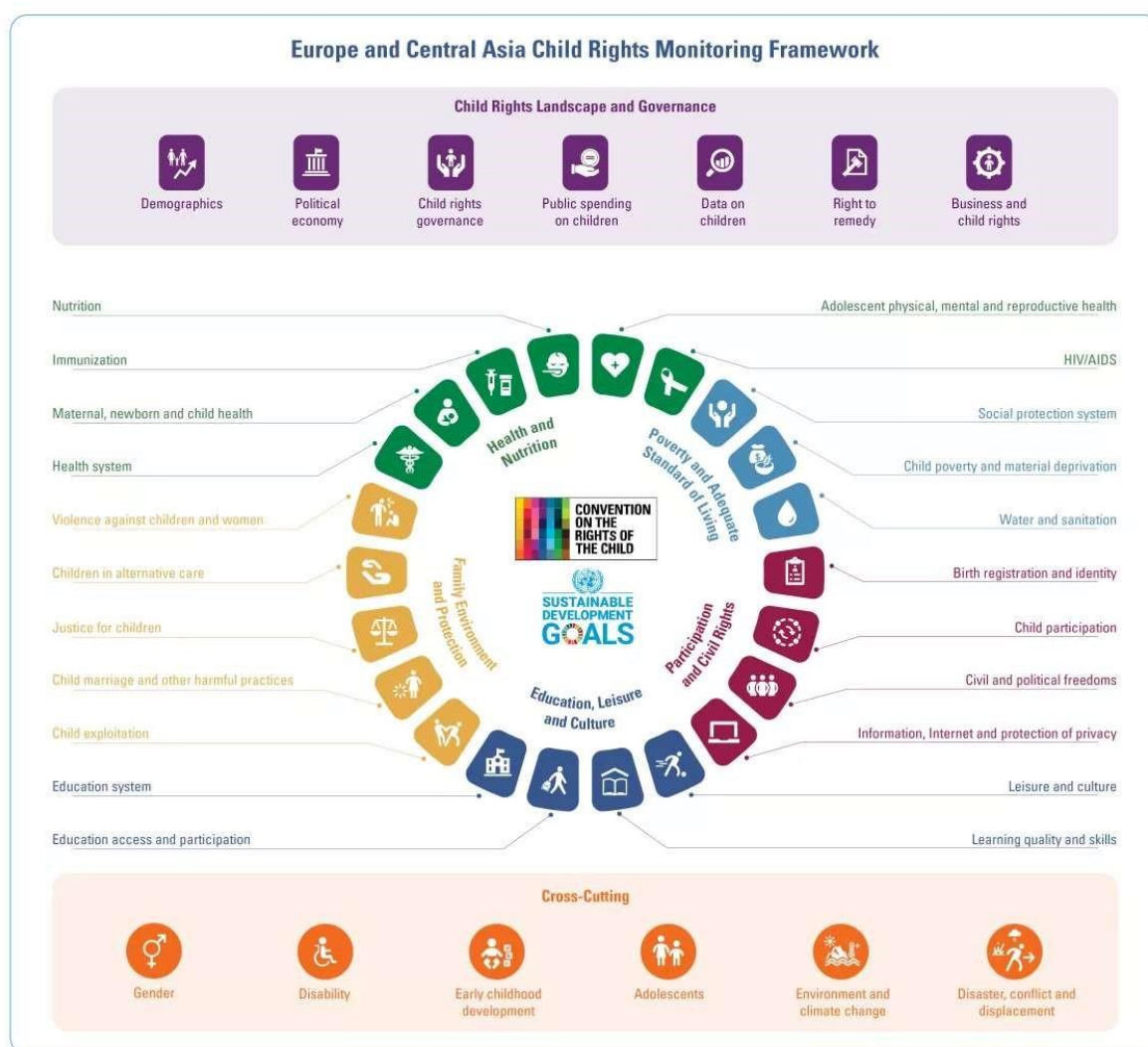
Bidders are required to present their best ideas as part of the technical proposal, and can propose an overarching conceptual framework or specific conceptual models to examine the different issues. Ultimately, the methodology will be agreed upon by the evaluation manager, and the evaluation team. It will be based on the final questions and whether various attributes of UNICEF CPs and evaluation process make it feasible to use different methods.³⁰ Taken these considerations into account, the overall evaluative framework proposes a Theory-based Evaluation (TBE) with potentially both quantitative and qualitative methods and data collection and analysis techniques.

Bidders should display the ability to identify, conceptualize, and manage a range of methods. The following is intended to offer useful information on actual or potential resources and limits:

1. A positioning exercise (network analysis), implemented by another firm, will be fed into the evaluation process. A specialized company on network analysis will provide all relevant information to evaluation team. This analysis aims at understanding UNICEF's strategic position in country is the crux to interrogation within this evaluation. As such, the analytical framework applied in the evaluation will need to link UNICEF's strategic position to results.
2. UNICEF can provide data from its administrative information systems, including communication data, that are used for planning, monitoring, reporting and performance management. These can be used to map and analyse achievement of results, implementation of activities, budget allocation and expenditures, partnerships and gender integration. These data can be particularly valuable to map out and analyse partnerships across the programme period and programmes. Gender marking and tagging of outputs, activities and expenditure is also happening, which can help address the gender evaluation questions. The access, usefulness and comparability over time of such data needs to be assessed during the inception phase.
3. UNICEF will also provide documentation to be reviewed and systematically analyzed that are relevant to the evaluation issues. Document review is not to be considered as a mere informative exercise during the inception phase but as a core method to contribute to answering the evaluation questions. Document identification needs to take place during inception and will continue throughout the evaluation. The methodology should be aware of and prepared to take advantage of the accumulated and in-process evidence generated through research, studies, and evaluations conducted within the UNICEF and relevant partners. It is suggested that the methodology includes Natural Language Processing to systematize issues in the country related to the child rights in the specific country.

³⁰ Possible application of: Befani, B. & O'Donnell, M. (2016) Choosing Appropriate Evaluation Methods: A Tool for Assessment and Selection.

Illustration 1: UNICEF ECA Child rights monitoring framework



Source: UNICEF ECARO

4. When applicable, consultation with community influencers/representatives or/and community service providers needs to be foreseen in order to represent a local perspective of the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, coherence, and equity of programme delivery. This perspective can be valuable to better understand, among others, how well the programming is operationalized at local level across different programmes and contexts; how convergent programming and equitable access to services are experienced locally; how effective UNICEF’s approaches are to reach the most vulnerable; and, what can be learned from gender integration at local level. Sampling will be required for data collection at this level, a preliminary approach for which the bidder needs to present in the proposal.

5. The proposed evaluation methodology should reflect a human rights-based and equity-focused approach with data being disaggregated by sex, ethnicity, age, disability, etc., and it should pay diligent attention to ethical issues. The bidders are also required to propose preliminary plans for primary data collection in each country with some level of standardization across the selected countries.

6. It is expected that the evaluation team conducts around 20 key informant interviews per country with crucial stakeholders, including government counterparts, implementing partners. The bidders can propose to conduct a survey to a wider number of key stakeholders. It may be necessary to arrange translation services for the interviews. The proposal should include capacity to conduct interviews in local language, if not additional costs may need to be considered.

7. The final methodological proposal and final report should include the integration of at least the positioning exercise results, the information from UNICEF databases and internal systems, desk review of different documents from UNICEF and outside UNICEF, community service providers/influencers when applicable, and the key informant interviews systematization.

8. The evaluation team will deliver one report per country of 20 pages max. (without annexes) and a separate executive summary of 3 pages max per country. Each deliverable should be in English proofread and edited.

M-CPE PROCESS

Management Approach: Given the number of the CPEs happening concurrently, the proposal is to have selected companies to cover a number on countries. The bidders will choose to implement either evaluation for Group A, Group B or both. ECA Regional Office will manage the evaluations, in close engagement of COs. This will allow for better oversight, quality assurance and not overburdening evaluation teams with the multiplicity of countries. It also allows for greater learning across countries of similar contexts. No summary report of comparative analysis is expected. Each country office will receive a separate inception and final report.

- Group A: Armenia + Azerbaijan + Georgia + Kazakhstan
- Group B: Bosnia & Herzegovina + North Macedonia

Evaluation phases:

The following phases will be part of each of the Country Programme Evaluation:

Inception Phase

Desk Review: The evaluation team will conduct a desk review with inputs from the internal documentation and databases as well as from the positioning exercise to understand the UNICEF evidence, self-reported results, financial and human resources data, and internal documentation. Additional analysis of country context will need to be undertaken coupled with identification of key informant interviews that will need to be conducted. An electronic library will be available as backup comprising relevant documentation. In addition, contextual information about the country will be updated on an ongoing basis during the evaluation process.

Initial Briefings: In addition to the desk review, brief introductory remote interviews with staff from UNICEF's Regional Office and the CO will inform the detailed planning of the evaluation methodology. The evaluation team will also engage with the consultants doing the network analysis to support the development of the overall evaluation framework and data collection tools. Once the initial desk review is completed, there will be a joint and separate call(s) with wider CPE stakeholders to introduce the evaluation and the team to the entire CO staff and key evaluation stakeholders, including members of a national Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) established as a sounding board for the evaluation to foster transparency and participation and to review key evaluation deliverables.

An Inception Report (IR) An inception report will be submitted that demonstrates impartiality, and that aligns with UNICEF’s quality standards²⁶. The IR will be subject to quality assurance, a review conducted by internal evaluation stakeholders and the ERG, an ethical review – should proposed data gathering involve vulnerable groups, sensitive subjects and/or use of confidential data. The approval of the IR marks the completion of the Inception Phase.

Based on the desk review, the IR will provide a contextual description and focus; justifications of proposed changes to the evaluation ToRs; and a detailed methodology (including sampling strategies for all primary data collection activities; and analytical evaluative methods at the country and regional level, a clear framework for bringing together this different data inputs to respond to the evaluation questions); refined theoretical framework; a description of the quality assurance mechanism of the evaluation team. The IR will also outline evaluation team strategies for management of data gaps, or data reliability issues, and it will include ethical considerations relating to primary data generation and use, as per UNICEF guidelines. Attached to the IR will be an evaluation matrix outlining evaluation questions, sub-questions, judgement criteria/indicators, data sources and instruments/methods; the Theory of Change; a work plan with a timeline; and an overview of the division of labor between the evaluation team members. IR could add the evaluation team’s assumptions of “ideal evidence” to test their theories/hypotheses of what evidence would conclusively prove (or strengthen considerably) and what evidence would conclusively disprove (or weaken considerably) their theories.

Data Collection and Analysis Phase

Following the inception phase, the evaluation will conduct:

- Hybrid (remote and in-person) data collection of in-country data collection of Key Informant Interviews (dependent on the inception report) for a maximum for days per country. Preference will be given to those proposals that involve less air travel time consistently with UNICEF initiative to reduce carbon emissions. It estimated to cover roughly 20 interviewees per country. Key informant interviews to include stakeholders (regional, national, subnational), including donors, government partners, private sector, civil society organizations, etc. Consider additional costs for translation services in case the company does not have the capacity to conduct the interview in local language.
- UNICEF databases and documents information will be used to understand UNICEF selfreporting and will provide the data warehouse to analyse existing UNICEF evidence, including, but not limited to: RAM, VISION, HR, Comms, CPD, financial data.
- The positioning exercise, network analysis will be used to understand the network landscape of children’s issues in the country. This analysis will be available during this phase.

Under the evaluation framework developed as a part of the inception report, the evaluation team is expected to systematically synthesize all incoming data in response to the agreed upon evaluation questions. It is expected that the evaluation team will prepare and deliver a presentation of Preliminary Findings before major report writing. The presentation on Preliminary Findings will be crucial to feed into the new CPD planning process and is expected around August.

Report Drafting Phase

Evaluation report (ER): The evaluation team will prepare a draft evaluation report that will be subject to a review undertaken by CO staff, members of the ERG and the evaluation manager; an external quality assurance that requires a satisfactory rating. Following the first review of the draft report and the initial quality assurance, the evaluation team will incorporate the comments provided as appropriate and prepare a final report. Approval of the ER as a product will be subject to quality assurance by the ECARO evaluation team. Once a final draft report has been approved, the evaluation Team Leader will present the evaluation findings and recommendations to each CO staff, the ERG and, if rele-

vant, other national stakeholders. The Team Leader will, furthermore, present the evaluation findings to relevant stakeholders from UNICEF's RO and, if required, selected headquarter staff. The regional report as well as each of the four country offices reports will comply with UNICEF's reporting standards and be no longer than 20-30 pages excluding annexes, each. Upon completions of the evaluation report, it will be rated in UNICEF's Global Evaluation and Research Oversight System (GEROS)²⁸, and it will be published on UNICEF's global website.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Considering UNICEF's strategic agenda to harness innovation and deepen and widen the evidence base to drive and sustain global progress towards the realization of children's rights, ensuring ethical conduct in evidence generation is imperative. This is necessary both in its own right and as a significant contributor to ensuring quality and accountability in the evidence generation process, especially when it involves children. The evaluation team remain in strict adherence with UNEG ethical guidelines and code of conduct. The team leader will be in charge of leading the entire process and be responsible for timely and quality deliverables of the entire process as well as of the evaluation outputs.

Evaluation methodology should be based on UNEG Ethical considerations and respond to UNEG ethical guidance to evaluation as guiding principle to ensure quality of evaluation process (<http://www.uneval.org/search/index.jsp?q=ETHICAL+GUIDELINES>) as well as on Standard Operations Procedures (SOP) for Quality Assurance and Ethical Standards in UNICEF-supported Research, Studies and Evaluations (RSEs) towards Measurable Results for Children in the CEE/CIS Region and UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis. UNICEF will use its existing LTA for external ethical approval to get clearance.

The evaluation process should adhere to the United Nations evaluation norms and standards and Ethical Guidelines for evaluation available at:

- http://www.uneval.org/normsandstandards/index.jsp?doc_cat_source_id=4.
- <http://www.uneval.org/search/index.jsp?q=ETHICAL+GUIDELINES>
- <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/library>

The evaluation process should adhere UNICEF. Core Commitment for Children in Humanitarian Action (http://www.unicef.org/publications/index_21835.html).

The evaluation should be consistent with The Procedure for Ethical Standards in UNICEF Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis and is complemented by, and builds on, the pre-existing Strategic Guidance Note on Institutionalizing Ethical Practice for UNICEF Research and the Evaluations Technical Note No. 1, Children Participating in Research, Monitoring And Evaluation (M&E) — Ethics and Your Responsibilities as a Manager, UNICEF Evaluation Office, 2002.

Reference documents:

- [UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis CF/PD/DRP/2015-001\(UPES\)](#)
- UNICEF Evaluation Office "UNICEF-Adapted UNEG Evaluation Reports Standards", July 2010
- UNICEF Evaluation Office "Guidance on equity-focused evaluations - Strengthening equitable results for children", September 2011
- UNICEF Evaluation Office "Internal guidance for management response to evaluations – Enhancing critical engagement for the strategic use of evaluations" December 2009
- UNEG "Guidance Document - Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations" August 2014

Evaluation team members should identify any potential ethical issues and approaches, as well as the processes for ethical review and oversight of the evaluation process in their proposal. At this stage, it is not anticipated that M-CPE will engage children under 18 and other vulnerable groups of the popu-

lation in data collection. However, should bidders propose otherwise, all M-CPE deliverables will be subject to ethical approvals.

LIMITATIONS

Potential limitations include:

- Some components might not be feasible in some restricted contexts.
- Lack of systematic documentation of the design and implementation of some programme interventions may limit the evaluation.
- Due to ongoing structural reforms in some of the governments, a high staff turnover has been observed in recent years, which does influence availability of institutional memory.
- Not all key informants might be available or reachable at the time of evaluation.

WORKPLAN AND DELIVERABLES

A tentative time frame for the evaluation is provided below. The evaluation is expected to be completed within eight months upon signing the contract.²⁹ This might be subject to change depending on the prevailing situation on ground at the time of the evaluation.

Table 4. Deliverables and Estimated Timeline

Phase	Estimated end date	Deliverable	Estimated days allocated Team leader (for 2 countries)	Estimated Analyst and other team members (for 2 countries)
Inception Phase			20	20
Desk review	May 2024			
Interviews with UNICEF staff	May 2024			
Initial briefing / online presentation of 2 hours (1 presentation for all countries)	June 2024	PPT and delivery of Presentation		
Draft inception report (1 per country)	June 2024	Draft Inception reports (1 per country)		
Response to comments to the draft inception report	June 2024	Response matrix to comments/feedback (1 per country)		
Final inception report	June 2024	Final Inception Reports with methodology, data collection tools, evaluation matrix, detailed implementation plan, roadmap (1 per country)		
Data Collection and Analysis Phase			30-40	40-50

Data collection from positioning exercise	July 2024			
Data collection from UNICEF internal reports and databases	July 2024			
Key Informant Interviews	July- August 2024	KII systematized – confidentiality to evaluation manager		
Presentation of Emerging findings remotely – 2 hours	August 2024	PPT and delivery of Presentation (1 per country)		
Report drafting phase			25	10
Draft Evaluation Report	September 2024	Draft Evaluation report (1 per country)		
Reviews and Comments	October 2024	Response matrix to comments/feedback (1 per country)		
Final Evaluation report edited and quality assured	November 2024	Final Evaluation Report (1 per country)		
Final presentation remotely – 2 hours	November 2024	PPT and delivery of Presentation (1 per country)		
Total number of days			75-85	70-80

Inception Report in English. Electronic version of the inception report for each country to be submitted within two months after signing a contract and initial briefing with the Evaluation Manager. These reports should be 30 to 35 pages in length and should be in line with UN standards for IRs. The IR should outline detailed scope, evaluation framework; methodology; sampling, field visit timing and modality, data collection methods, timeline for activities and submission of deliverables. A draft will be shared in advance for comments and approved by the ERG of each CO. The final inception report will be presented by the Evaluation Team to the CO and ERG and quality assured by the Regional Evaluation Advisor and Internal ECARO Evaluation Team. It is expected that the Inception reports presented are similar as a framework, with nuances for each country in relation to the country specific context and stakeholders. This will ensure some economies of scale in the process.

Sample: Inception Report – Content.

Note: This is a sample, and can be adapted to the needs of this exercise

1. Presentation of the context and object of evaluation
2. Purpose, objectives and scope of the evaluation
3. Theory of change or construction of the theory of change (if absent)
4. Evaluation framework (evaluation criteria and questions), with an evaluation matrix (disaggregating each evaluation criterion, with evaluation questions, indicators, information sources and methods of gathering information)
5. A complete methodology with:
 - an explanation and rationale of the methodological design and analytical framework;
 - sample and list of people to interview and sites to visit;
 - data collection tools (questionnaire, interview guidelines, etc.);

- limitations and mitigation measures;
 - ethical considerations;
 - data analysis (how the data will be analysed, what technique and approach will be used, software, etc.); forward-looking methodology for recommendations;
 - dissemination of the evaluation;
6. Work plan and description of the role and responsibilities of each team member.
 7. Deliverables and quality assurance

After the data collection, analysis of secondary data and other evidence, **one workshop for the ECARO Evaluation Team for all countries** will be conducted to ensure coherence and adherence to the evaluation process.

Preliminary Findings Presentation. To ensure that the CPEs feed into the initial CPD planning process, it is essential that that findings report is presented in August 2024, but guidance from the COs will be needed for exact timing. If appropriate, guidance from the CO will focus the presentation on the most salient areas relevant to inform planning discussions. The preliminary finding presentation is one per country.

Evaluation Report in English. Electronic versions of the first drafts (1 per country) should be submitted, the draft reports should be in line with UNICEF-adapted UNEG Evaluation Report Standards and be a maximum of 30 pages in length each (excluding annexes) answering all the evaluation questions. An additional executive summary per country of no more than 3 pages will accompany each of the reports which will include a brief description of the context and current situation, the evaluation's purpose, its methodology and its main findings, conclusions, and recommendations. It should fairly and clearly represent the views of the different actors/stakeholders. It should clearly give the conclusions and forward-looking recommendations in a way that is substantiated by evidence.

The drafts will be shared with the ERG of each country to seek their comments. The draft reports will be quality assured by the Evaluation Manager. The final drafts will be quality assured by external QA institution, if needed. All supporting evidence will be shared with the ECARO's Evaluation Team.

The Evaluation Team should propose a timeline to submit the deliverables in their implementation plan (in proposals). Necessary and adequate time (at least two weeks) should be allocated for review and quality assurance processes of the deliverables by the Regional Evaluation Advisor and External Institution, as required.

All reports should follow the structure and detailed outlines discussed and agreed with UNICEF.

MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The RO will be responsible for the day-to-day oversight and management of the evaluation and for management of the evaluation budget. A form of stakeholder advisory group (e.g., Evaluation Reference Group (ERG)) will be required both at the country level. Further discussion is needed on the form and membership of such a group at the country level. UNICEF Regional Evaluation Team will work closely with the external evaluation team headed by a CPE team leader and supported with other team members including local experts.¹¹

Each CO will have a focal point (CRM/M&E/Evaluation focal point) to be the first line of contact on behalf of the CO who will work with the CO staff and ERG for each country. The RO will assure the quality of the evaluation and guarantee its alignment with UNEG Norms and Standards and Ethical Guidelines and provide quality assurance checking that the findings and conclusions are relevant and proposed adaptations are actionable. All major deliverables will be reviewed firstly by RO (zero draft) and then by the ERG and CO. The CO will be responsible for supporting data collection and

providing feedback on key deliverables. The CPE processes will be collaborative, transparent and effective to the extent possible.

Table 5. RO and CO roles against milestones

Key milestones	RO	CO
Terms of Reference	To draft ToR, QA, advertise for a tender and/or select an LTA holder	To provide comments; organise consultation within the CO and identify CO's own interest areas, provide details of the aspect of CPE which are adjustable to local contexts
Selection of external company	To identify an evaluation company which will be working together with a local company/consultant as per evaluation company needs	
Budgets and human resources	To manage CPE budget, ensure Adviser have availability to undertake this assignment	CO transfer their financial contribution to the RO account ³¹ ; make sure CRM/M&E/Evaluation focal point is available to work with RO on CPE and that programme staff are available for interviews and reviewing CPE outputs as required
Preparing a library of all programme documents:	To identify a space for library, to provide a list of necessary materials for desk review	To share materials as requested
Setting up an ERG	To call for meetings, facilitate the commenting process	To identify members of ERGs and set up the CO level ERG, call for meetings, facilitate the commenting process
Data collection (for all components of CPE)	To manage and oversee the process to ensure that it is timely and as per the inception plan.	To make themselves available for interviews, workshops, meetings; to identify respondents for data collection, provide their details for
		remote data collection; to lead in country data collection as needed.
CPE outputs (inception and evaluation report)	To make sure they are of good quality, share with CO for comments	To provide comments
Dissemination	To make sure that CPE has management responses for each CO, to produce additional communication materials; to conduct internal and external-looking dissemination events	To contribute to and lead some of the dissemination events
Management Response	To make sure evaluation reports provide actionable recommendations	To develop MR based on the recommendations and follow up on action plan

UNICEF as a commissioner takes the accountability of the evaluation and ECARO Evaluation Adviser is designated as supervisor for this evaluation. Support for this evaluation will be provided by the ECARO Evaluation team which will perform a managerial function for this evaluation (Evaluation Manager).

The Evaluation Manager will have the following responsibilities:

- Lead the management of the evaluation process throughout the evaluation (design, implementation and dissemination and coordination of it follow up);
- Convene the ERG meetings; Facilitate the participation of those involved in the evaluation design;
- Coordinate the selection of the Evaluation Team;
- Safeguard the independence of the exercise and ensure the evaluation products meet quality standards;
- Connect the Evaluation Team with the wider programme units, senior management and key evaluation stakeholders, and ensure a fully inclusive and transparent approach to the evaluation;
- Facilitate the Evaluation Team's access to all information and documentation relevant to the intervention, as well as to key actors and informants who should participate information-gathering methods;
- Provide the evaluators with overall guidance as well as with administrative support;
- Oversee progress and conduct of the evaluation, the quality of the process and the products;
- Manage/support relationship between CO, partners, etc
- Approve the deliverables and evaluate the team's work in consultation with ERG;
- Take responsibility for disseminating and learning across evaluations on the various programme areas
- Ensure that all deliverables are submitted to external QA review conducted by an external institution; and,
- Disseminate the results of the evaluation.

The RO and CO ERGs will:

- Review and provide comments and feedback on the quality of the evaluation process as well as on the evaluation products (comments and suggestions on the TOR, draft reports, final report of the evaluation); and
- Facilitate the communication/presentation of results to CO and relevant partners at the regional and country level.

The Evaluation Team will report to the Evaluation Manager and conduct the evaluation by fulfilling the contractual arrangements in line with the TOR, UNEG/OECD norms and standards and Ethical Guidelines; this includes developing an evaluation (implementation) plan as part of the inception report, drafting and finalizing the final and synthesis reports and other deliverables, and briefing the commissioner on the progress and key findings and recommendations, as needed. The Evaluation Team should also adhere to UNICEF's Evaluation Policy, UNEG's ethical guidelines for UN evaluations, and UNICEF Reporting Standards. Evaluation team members will sign a no conflict-of-interest attestation. The Evaluation Team must demonstrate personal and professional integrity during the whole process of the evaluation. The Evaluation Team must respect the right of institutions and individuals to provide information in confidence and ensure that sensitive data cannot be traced to its source. Further, the team must respect ethics of research while working with children including using age-appropriate consent forms, ageappropriate data collection, and principle of do no harm. Furthermore, the team and its members must take care that those involved in the evaluation have an opportunity to examine the statements attributed to them. The evaluation process must be sensitive to beliefs, manners, and customs of the social and cultural environment in which they will work. Especially, the team must be sensitive to and address issues of protection, discrimination and gender inequality. Furthermore, the team members are not expected to assess the personal performance of individuals and must balance an assessment of management functions with due consideration of this principle.

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS, SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE OR EXPERIENCE

General Competency Requirements

The evaluation team will be gender balanced and consist of one team leader and two/three team members. All team members will be professionals with a relevant higher academic/post-graduate degree and, as a team, they should have expertise in the sectors relevant to UNICEF. All team members should have knowledge of UNICEF's mandate and experience of working closely with Government partners and/or UN agencies. Relevant experience in the countries selected is considered an asset for the team members. The team should be at least composed by 2 members:

- At least, one of the evaluation team members should have an in-depth understanding of the implementation strategies used by UNICEF, especially capacity building, policy dialogue and advocacy.
- At least, one team member should be familiar with of the socio-economic, political and institutional environment in the selected countries.
- At least one team member is familiar with natural language processing, sense making with unstructured data, Python, and/or R

The Team Leader

The Team Leader must have documented professional experience in conducting rigorous independent evaluations that meet professional evaluation standards - and more than 10 years of professional experience. The Team Leader should, furthermore, have a strong development background with a profound understanding of development and Human Rights-Based programming. It is also a requirement that the Team Leader has expertise in strategic planning and have evaluation experience from the Europe and Central Asian Region or another middle-income country context. Evaluation or programming experience in humanitarian-development nexus context is a must. In addition, he/she must have expertise relating to one or more of the sectors in which UNICEF works (outlined below under team members). As the leader of the evaluation, the candidate will demonstrate previous experience in managing a multidisciplinary team and delivering quality evaluation outputs.

Evaluation Analyst

The team analyst should have relevant higher academic/post-graduate degrees and a minimum of seven years of relevant professional experience including research or/and evaluation. The analyst should have experience with network analysis or analyzing positioning of institutions. The analyst should also have knowledge of natural language processing, Python and R.

Other team members

Other team members may be included as needed by the firm.

The ideal evaluation team will collectively cover the areas listed above and have experience in capacity development approaches related to children in middle income contexts.

PROPOSED PAYMENT MODALITY

Payments will be made in four tranches aligned to the evaluation deliverables as outlines in Table 6 below.

TABLE 6: PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Inception Report: Upon approval of the Inception Report	20%
Data Collection: Upon the end of data collection and presentation of initial findings to CO staff and ERG	30%
First Draft Report: Upon approval of the first draft of the evaluation report	30%
Final Report + executive summary: Upon approval of the final evaluation report and executive summary	20%

DURATION OF SERVICE

The evaluation is expected to be completed within eight months upon signing the contract. This might be subject to change depending on the prevailing situation on ground at the time of the evaluation.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Proposer(s) must submit a technical and a financial price proposal (in separate documents) that will be split between technical and commercial (price proposal) scores (a 80/20 split).

Award Criteria: Cumulative Analysis.

The evaluation and award criteria that will be used for this tender/ Request for Proposal (RFP) is Cumulative Analysis evaluation (point system with weight attribution). The weighting ratio between the technical and financial proposals will be 80:20. The respective importance between technical and financial scores will be weighted as 80% and 20%.

- Weightage for Technical Proposal = 80%
- Weightage for Financial Proposal = 20%
- Total Score = 100%

A) The technical proposal (80 points) should include the following information:

- Cover letter
- Presentation of the firm/research institution/consulting group and experiences
- Understanding of the ToRs and Evaluation needs
- Team composition (incl. identification of team leader), with complete CVs . Team is expected to be composed by a team lead / senior evaluator and at least one analyst.
- Matching the team skills with the required skills
- Detailed Timeline/Chronogram and level of effort by each team member (role of each team member)
- Sample(s) or link(s) of previous Evaluation(s) by the team members

- The following documents shall be included in the technical proposals of the bidders:

A. A complete copy of your latest audited financial statements with comparative figures for the last 2 years, preferably signed by your company's accounting firm/ certified external auditor. The financial statements are to include, but not limited to, the following:

1. Balance sheet (mandatory)
2. Income statement/ Profit and Loss Statement (mandatory)
3. Statement of cash flows (if available)
4. Statement of changes in shareholders' equity (if available)
5. The report from the external auditor (if available)
6. Notes to the financial statements (if available)

B. A copy of your company's certificate of legal registration (mandatory)

C. A copy of your Official list of authorized signatures (mandatory)

D. Your company's UN Global Marketplace (UNGM) registration number. (mandatory)
You are kindly requested to register for, at the very latest, Basic and Level 1 stages. For registration and instructions on how to, kindly refer to the attachment or the UNGM site:

<https://www.ungm.org/Account/Registration>

The technical proposal will be assessed with the following criteria:

Technical criteria	Description	Maximum Points
Completeness of technical requirements (5 points)	Overall conformity of the proposal, including appropriate referencing and supporting documents (description of institution and key personnel, understanding of ToRs, matching team skills with required skills, proposed methodology, detailed timeline, references and written sample)	5
Qualifications of team (50 points)	Overall conformity with requirement of the Team leader / Senior Evaluator	30
	Overall conformity with requirement of the Analyst and other team members	20
Quality of technical proposal (25 points)	Understanding of the ToRs (match between the proposed approach and requested scope of evaluation)	10
	Quality of the methodology and methods proposed, innovative design, rationale for the methodology, Realistic work plan and level of efforts of team, Understanding of ethical considerations and integration of such in the methodology	15
Maximum Score for technical criteria		80
Minimum Score for technical compliance		60

Total Maximum points for the technical proposal is 80 points. Only proposals which receive a minimum of 60 points will be considered further.

An offer is considered technically acceptable (and therefore eligible for opening of financial offers), when it obtains 60 points out of 80 during the course of the technical evaluation. The final selection of the contractor will be based on a combination of the technical and financial proposals with a weighting of 80% for the technical proposal and 20% for the financial proposal. In the case of cumulative analysis, the proposals scoring below 80% of the available technical points will be considered non-compliant and will be rejected and not further considered

The price proposals should include a detailed breakdown of all listed tasks and deliverables.

B) The financial proposal (20 points) should include the following information:

*must be submitted in a separate sealed envelope/ in a separate email (the subject of the email should clearly state that it includes financial proposal)

**please use the standard format (financial proposal template) provided

* Proposals must be made in accordance with the instructions described in the ToR.

The total number of points allocated for the price component is 20. The maximum number of points will be allotted to the lowest price proposal that is opened and compared among those invited consultancy company(s)/institutions which obtain the threshold points in the evaluation of the technical component.

All other price proposals will receive points in inverse proportion to the lowest price, e.g.

$$\text{Score for price proposal X} = \frac{\text{Max. score for price proposal} * \text{Price of the lowest priced proposal}}{\text{Price of proposal X}}$$

Evaluation weighting criteria: Each proposal will be assessed first on its technical merits and subsequently on its price. In making the final decision, UNICEF considers both technical and financial aspects. UNICEF first reviews the technical aspects of the offer, followed by review of the financial offers of the technically compliant consultancy. The proposal obtaining the highest overall score after adding the scores for the technical and financial proposals together, that offer the best value for money will be recommended for award of the contract.

Cumulative Analysis will be used to evaluate and award proposals: technical (max. 80 points) and financial (Max. 20 points).

Institutional arrangements / Copy Right

Reservations:

UNICEF reserves the right to withhold all or a portion of payment if performance is unsatisfactory, if work/outputs is/are incomplete, not delivered or for failure to meet deadlines. The products will remain the copyright of UNICEF. Any future use of the data should be acknowledged to the actual source. The company may not use the data for its own research purposes, nor license the data to be used by others, without the written consent of all parties listed above.

Confidentiality, intellectual property and other proprietary rights are governed by Article-5, Annex-A General Terms and Conditions for Services of the RFPS document. Please see below the excerpt for ease of reference:

QUOTE:

5. Intellectual Property and Other Proprietary Rights; Data Protection; Confidentiality

Intellectual Property and Other Proprietary Rights

5.1 Unless otherwise expressly provided for in the Contract:

(a) Subject to paragraph (b) of this Article 5.1, UNICEF will be entitled to all intellectual property and other proprietary rights including but not limited to patents, copyrights and trademarks, with regard to products, processes, inventions, ideas, know-how, documents, data and other materials (“Contract Materials”) that (i) the Contractor develops for UNICEF under the Contract and which bear a direct relation to the Contract or (ii) are produced, prepared or collected in consequence of, or during the course of, the performance of the Contract. The term “Contract Materials” includes, but is not limited to, all maps, drawings, photographs, plans, reports, recommendations, estimates, documents developed or received by, and all other data compiled by or received by, the Contractor under the Contract. The Contractor acknowledges and agrees that Contract Materials constitute works made for hire for UNICEF. Contract Materials will be treated as UNICEF’s Confidential Information and will be delivered only to authorized UNICEF officials on expiry or termination of the Contract.

(b) UNICEF will not be entitled to, and will not claim any ownership interest in, any intellectual property or other proprietary rights of the Contractor that pre-existed the performance by the Contractor of its obligations under the Contract, or that the Contractor may develop or acquire, or may have developed or acquired, independently of the performance of its obligations under the Contract. The Contractor grants to UNICEF a perpetual, non-exclusive, royalty-free license to use such intellectual property or other proprietary rights solely for the purposes of and in accordance with the requirements of the Contract.

(c) At UNICEF's request, the Contractor will take all necessary steps, execute all necessary documents and generally assist in securing such proprietary rights and transferring them (or, in the case, intellectual property referred to in paragraph (b) above, licensing) them to UNICEF in compliance with the requirements of the applicable law and of the Contract.

Confidentiality

5.2 Confidential Information that is considered proprietary by either Party or that is delivered or disclosed by one Party (“Discloser”) to the other Party (“Recipient”) during the course

of performance of the Contract or in connection with the subject matter of the Contract will be held in confidence by the Recipient. The Recipient will use the same care and discretion to avoid disclosure of the Discloser's Confidential Information as the Recipient uses for its own Confidential Information and will use the Discloser's Confidential Information solely for the purpose for which it was disclosed to the Recipient. The Recipient will not disclose the Discloser's Confidential Information to any other party:

(a) except to those of its Affiliates, employees, officials, representatives, agents, and subcontractors who have a need to know such Confidential Information for purposes of performing obligations under the Contract; or

(b) unless the Confidential Information (i) is obtained by the Recipient from a third party without restriction; (ii) is disclosed by the Discloser to a third party without any obligation of confidentiality; (iii) is known by the Recipient prior to disclosure by the Discloser; or (iv) at any time is developed by the Recipient completely independently of any disclosures under the Contract.

5.3 If the Contractor receives a request for disclosure of UNICEF's Confidential Information pursuant to any judicial or law enforcement process, before any such disclosure is made, the Contractor (a) will give UNICEF sufficient notice of such request in order to allow UNICEF to have a reasonable opportunity to secure the intervention of the relevant national government to establish protective measures or take such other action as may be appropriate and (b) will so advise the relevant authority that requested disclosure. UNICEF may disclose the Contractor's Confidential Information to the extent required pursuant to resolutions or regulations of its governing bodies.

5.4 The Contractor may not communicate at any time to any other person, Government or authority external to UNICEF, any information known to it by reason of its association with UNICEF that has not been made public, except with the prior written authorization of UNICEF; nor will the Contractor at any time use such information to private advantage.

UNQUOTE

LIST OF PREVIOUSLY CONDUCTED AND ONGOING RESEARCH, STUDIES AND EVALUATIONS (2019 to date)

Type	Title	Year	Phase
Study	Climate Landscape Analysis for Children in Armenia	2018	Completed
Study	Situation Analysis on the Status of Children's and Women's Rights in Armenia 2018	2019	Implementation
Evaluation	Evaluation of the Project "Establishment of Early Learning Model in Tumanyan Community of Armenia"	2019	Completed
Evaluation	Evaluation of National Policy and Programmes for Children with Disabilities in Armenia	2020	Implementation
Evaluation	Multi-Country Evaluation of Home-Visiting for Young Child Health and Wellbeing in ECA region: Armenia Country Case Study	2020	Completed
Study	Knowledge, Attitudes, Practice and Behaviour (KAPB) Study on Climate Change and Adolescent Participation in Armenia	2021	Completed
Study	How the TV Series Can Change Gender Norms: Viewers' insights, Pretest of messages and Broadcast Episodes with concurrent monitoring	2021	Completed
Study	Education Sector Analysis for Armenia	2022	Completed
Evaluation	Evaluability Assessment of the National Strategic Programme on Child Protection in Armenia	2023	Management Response
Study	Programme Review – UNICEF Armenia Country Office	2023	Completed
Evaluation	Formative and Summative Evaluation of the Childcare and Deinstitutionalisation Reforms in Armenia from 2009 to 2022	2023	Implementation
Study	Gender Programmatic Review	2024	Completed