

# Evaluation of Integrated Approach to Programming in UNICEF Lebanon

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# Evaluation of Integrated Approach to Programming in UNICEF Lebanon

Final Report

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This Evaluation was commissioned by the UNICEF Lebanon Country Office for the approach to integrated programming in Lebanon since 2018. The primary users of the evaluation are UNICEF management and programme teams in Lebanon who shall directly utilize the evaluation findings to adjust programme designs, implementation, improve its quality and to guide the future direction of the programmes. Secondary users include the UNICEF Implementing partners that deliver services and programmes. Findings shall be disseminated broadly in UNICEF to facilitate learning.

The Evaluation was carried out by Cosette Maiky, PhD with active support from UNICEF LCO's in facilitating the Evaluation process.

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# CONTENTS

Acknowledgement .....	iii
TABLES AND FIGURES .....	vi
ACRONYMS .....	vii
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	i
Introduction.....	1
Country Context since 2018.....	1
UNICEF LCO’s Approach to Integrated Programming.....	2
Object of the Evaluation .....	6
Purpose of the Evaluation .....	6
Objectives of the Evaluation.....	7
Scope of the Evaluation.....	7
Users and Use of the Evaluation .....	7
Evaluation Questions .....	8
Methodology of the Evaluation .....	8
Methodological Design.....	8
Sampling Selection and Sample Size .....	9
Methods .....	10
Key Informant Interviews (KIs).....	10
Focus Group Discussion (FGD) .....	10
Online Survey .....	11
Data Collection Tools and Processes .....	11
Data Analysis .....	11
Constraints, Adjustments, and Mitigations .....	13
Gender and Equity Perspectives .....	13
Evaluation Norms and Ethical Considerations .....	14
Quality Control .....	15
Findings.....	16
Specific Patterns of Perceptions among Respondents.....	16
Triangulated Findings per Selected OECD Criteria .....	18

Relevance .....	18
Coherence .....	21
Effectiveness .....	23
Efficiency .....	26
Sustainability .....	32
Lessons Learned .....	33
Conclusions and Recommendations .....	35
Annexes .....	40
Annex I Terms of Reference .....	41
Annex II Theory of Change .....	1
Annex III Evaluation Matrix .....	2
Annex IV List of Documents Reviewed .....	2
Annex V List of People Interviewed .....	4
Annex VI Data Collection Tools and Processes .....	5
Annex VII IRB Approval Letter .....	15
Annex VIII Bio of the Evaluator .....	16

# TABLES AND FIGURES

## List of Tables.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents to Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Discussions.....	9
Table 2. The evaluation rating scale.....	12
Table 3. Synopsis of specific patterns of perceptions per respondent category .....	17
Table 4. Main conclusions and corresponding recommendations .....	35

## List of Figures.

Figure 1. Integrated programmes implemented/currently being implemented .....	5
Figure 2. Intervention logic for the integrated programming approach in UNICEF Lebanon .....	6
Figure 3. Integration and business processes in the country office. ....	32
Figure 4. Integrated programmes currently implemented and implementation modalities .....	43
Figure 5. Intervention logic for integrated programming approach in UNICEF Lebanon. ....	44
Figure 6. roll out of integrated programming approach in the country office. ....	45

# ACRONYMS

3RF	Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework
BPA	Business Process Analysis
CCA	Context-sensitive Contribution Analysis
CCCs	Core Commitments for Children
CLLLC	Community Lifelong Learning Centers- CLLLC
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CP	Child Protection
CQR	Consensual Qualitative Research
ECARO	Europe and Central Asia Office
EQ	Evaluation Question
ESAR	Eastern and Southern Africa Region
ESCWA	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
HACT	Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers
ICWBP	Integrated Child Wellbeing Programme
KII	Key Informant Interview
LCO	Lebanon Country Office
LCRP	Lebanon Crisis Response Plan
MTR	Mid-Term Review
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
OECD-DAC	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development-Development Assistance Committee
OOSC	Out of School Children
OPM	Oxford Policy Management
PRC	Partnership Review Committee
RIMS	Referrals Information Management System
RO	Regional Office
SBBP	School-Based Bridging Programme

SDC	Social Development Center
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
YAD	Youth and Adolescents Programme
YWBP	Youth Wellbeing Package

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2018, UNICEF Lebanon concluded in its Mid-Term Review (MTR) that to reach increasingly vulnerable children, “strengthened focus on programmatic integration of services” was necessary. It was on the basis of this programmatic recommendation that the office set out to design a number of programmatic interventions that sought to bring existing programmes closer together for more integrated and holistic services for the children they served.

The overall purpose of this evaluation was to provide an impartial and independent evaluation of the extent to which integrated programming approach has been implemented by UNICEF in Lebanon and whether it shall achieve intended objectives. The evaluation also examined which factors have proved critical in helping or hindering it and draw lessons for future programming.

The primary users of the evaluation are UNICEF management and programme teams in Lebanon who shall directly utilize the evaluation findings to adjust programme designs, implementation, improve its quality and to guide the future direction of the programmes. Secondary users include the UNICEF Implementing partners that deliver services and programmes.

This evaluation covered all the UNICEF Lebanon programme components, from 2018 to date (both at the national and local levels). As per the set terms of Reference (ToR), the evaluation took into consideration the five Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development-Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) criteria: Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Sustainability.

The evaluator used a mixed method approach to answer the evaluation questions, with multiple methods, both qualitative and quantitative, and several data sources to ensure sufficient data triangulation. Based on a non-experimental design and drawing from both ‘theory-based’ and ‘case-based’ approaches, this evaluation was formative and highly action-oriented participatory. For evaluation rating purposes, a 5- A 5-point Likert rating scale was used to rate the project against each of the selected Evaluation criteria: 5 for *highly satisfactory* (The approach had several significant positive factors with no defaults or weaknesses), 4 for *satisfactory* (The approach had positive factors with minor defaults or weaknesses), 3 for *partially satisfactory* (The approach had moderate to notable defaults or weaknesses), 2 for *unsatisfactory* (The approach had negative factors with major defaults or weaknesses), and 1 for *highly unsatisfactory* (The approach had negative factors with severe defaults or weaknesses).

The sampling strategy was based on ongoing discussions with UNICEF staff concerning the design and rollout of the approach and selected interventions. A purposive sampling approach was adopted to conduct the Focus Group Discussion and the Online Survey. Similarly, a purposive snowball sampling method was adopted for Key Informant Interviews. The selection of respondents was done in consultation between the UNICEF team and the evaluator, taking into consideration the criteria set in the framework for the evaluation. In total, thirty-three respondents participated in the qualitative part of the evaluation, and 93 respondents in the online survey.

The Evaluation upheld ethical standards in conducting interviews, collecting, managing, analyzing, and disseminating data which draw on the UN Ethical Guidelines (UNEG) for Evaluation<sup>1</sup> (2008), the UNEG Norms and Standards<sup>2</sup> (2017) and the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines<sup>3</sup> (2019). All the necessary measures were undertaken to ensure objectivity and independence of Evaluation.

Along with the illustration of specific patterns of perceptions among respondents, the findings section portrays the main results of the evaluation of the approach to integrated programming along the selected OECD evaluation criteria, namely Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Sustainability.

The overall rating of the approach to integrated programming as embedded in programmes, policies, and processes as per the selected evaluation criteria was ***Partially Satisfactory***.

Since 2018, the approach to integrated programming that is embedded in programmes, policies and processes, showed: 1) a strong alignment with UNICEF's mandate and global commitments, the country priorities and beneficiaries' needs, 2) evidence of learning and evolution, with identified areas of improvement, 3) the urgency of consultations to establish a "common understanding of integration" and a full-fledged approach to integration" and "a common reporting framework", and 4) that there is a need for more systematic upstream and downstream decisions and actions at the institutional level, towards the systemization and automation of processes that support both internal coherence and results achievement.

## Relevance

The relevance of the approach was rated as ***Partially Satisfactory***.

The overall alignment of the approach to integrated programming with the country context was mostly perceived as "strong". The alignment of the approach with national priorities was remarkably commended by both UNICEF and implementing partners' staff. Both central and field level UNICEF respondents were highly aware of the sectoral aspects of the Country Programme Documents for 2016-2021 and 2023-25. Despite the highly sectoral features of UNICEF's business model, majority of UNICEF and implementing partners staff commended the "trans-disciplinarity" of the considered integrated programmes.

## Coherence

The coherence of the approach was rated as ***Partially Satisfactory***.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/download/548>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/download/2787>

<sup>3</sup> [http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/documents/PDF/UNDP\\_Evaluation\\_Guidelines.pdf](http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/documents/PDF/UNDP_Evaluation_Guidelines.pdf)

The most reported commonalities in the understanding of integration among UNICEF staff and implementing partners, they were: “the multi-sectoral approach”, “the need for a continuum of coordination”, and “the complexity and multi-dimensionality of needs”.

#### Effectiveness

The effectiveness of the approach was rated as *Partially Satisfactory*.

Even in the lack of a “formalized approach to integration” with a full conceptual framework, the selected implementation modalities have significantly contributed to the structuration of implementation of the different programmes across the country, while weaknesses, threats, challenges, and opportunities for improvement were assessed and identified. The triangulation of results generated specific themes (strategic innovation, additionality, and incremental changes towards transformational change), which in turn, came well-aligned with both the online survey, and the review of documentation. Effectiveness was particularly evident under the “convergence of sectors on the same area of catchment”, or through “the complementarity of sectors/interventions towards common goals that they cannot achieve on their own”.

#### Efficiency

The efficiency of the approach was rated as *Partially Satisfactory*. We looked at the demonstrated effects of specific policies, processes or practices that were put in place helped us understand several ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions. These were considered, each within its respective theory and context, which underlines the limitations of generalizability beyond a particular programme.

#### Sustainability

The sustainability of the approach was rated as *Partially Satisfactory*. Both qualitative and quantitative results showed that the integrated programmes addressed institutional engagement of stakeholders in the design and implementation (particularly through coordination efforts), although neither consistently nor systematically. Moreover, results revealed that individual learning was not a sufficient condition for establishing systematic organizational learning. The extent to which knowledge resources and interventions are expected to be sustained after a programme closes varies by programme and largely relies on its nature and timeline, the geographic area and map of actors, and partner funding. The conclusions and the recommendations were detailed at the end of the report in line with main findings per evaluation criteria. These can be summarized as follows:

#### Relevance

**Conclusion 1:** Integrated programmes were designed and executed while missing an overarching approach to integration.

**Recommendation 1:** Select an adequate design for a holistic approach to “full” or “partial” integration (which are not mutually exclusive).

**Conclusion 2:** The adopted approach to integration showed strong synergies, but there is a scope for stronger integration should a holistic approach to integration be adopted and operationalized.

**Recommendation 2:** UNICEF LCO and implementing partners should work to further catalyze and demonstrate the value addition of a programmatic approach to integration.

#### Coherence

**Conclusion 3:** Project-level and program-level reporting still have to demonstrate the value addition of taking a programmatic approach to integration. While improvements are noted in the design of reporting and M&E systems, important challenges remain.

**Recommendation 3:** Further to inclusive and open consultations, UNICEF LCO and partners should develop a common results frameworks and integration-specific cross-sectoral indicators that derive from the overarching theory of change that would be the cornerstone of the adopted strategy to integration. UNICEF should also support partners in articulating and adapting Theories of Change (which should be reflected in the partnership agreement document with their intended contribution to the desired results to allow the assessment of progress along the implementation of the strategy.

#### Effectiveness

**Conclusion 4:** In the absence of a defined approach to integration, there was no clear documentation of the role the LCO was supposed to assume in this regard. Ensuring a clarity of roles between UNICEF and implementing partners is critical, including coordination, integration and reporting. The value-added potential of the strategy is there but must be measured against stand-alone programme achievements. Current program-level reporting must be improved through monitoring and reporting requirements in project cycle practices.

**Recommendation 4:** To make ongoing efforts in program-level and project reporting effective, the intended approach to integrated programming should include a clarification of roles for it to be able to holistically deliver on the promise of the whole being more than the sum of its parts.

#### Efficiency

**Conclusion 5:** UNICEF managed to put in place sufficiently adequate structures, human and financial resources for the effective implementation of integrated programmes. Substantial process improvements are needed for the institutionalization of a full-fledged approach to integration.

**Recommendation 5:** UNICEF should solidly institutionalize organizational structures to support the effective design and implementation of a full-fledged approach to integrated programming (either through the reinforcement of existing processes that facilitate it or the creation of new ones).

#### Sustainability

**Conclusion 6:** It is still early to report on many individual, institutional and system-level benefits, and results vary across programmes.

**Recommendation 6:** Initiate awareness raising efforts to sensitize the different stakeholders on the importance of a “common research agenda” that sets the ground for assessing the costs and benefits of a holistic approach to integration, exploring if outcomes from integration last longer than single sector approaches, identifying best practices and influencing policy-level decision-making.

# INTRODUCTION

## Country Context since 2018

Since 2018, the reality of daily life for most people in Lebanon has significantly changed with severe economic and political crises affecting people's ability to access and afford most basic needs. The socioeconomic crises that surfaced were mainly driven by the devaluation of the Lebanese currency, the exponential increase in unemployment and poverty, the inflation, the limited access to foreign exchange and imports, and decreased foreign remittances. While the entire country has felt the economic hardship, the already poor and vulnerable Lebanese and non-Lebanese populations have been particularly affected<sup>4</sup>.

The conflict in Syria has considerably impacted Lebanon's social and economic growth and exacerbated pre-existing development constraints in the country. In 2018, seven years into the Syrian conflict, the Government of Lebanon estimated that the country hosted 1.5 million Syrians who have fled the conflict in Syria (including 997,905 registered as refugees with UNHCR), along with 34,000 Palestine Refugees from Syria, 35,000 Lebanese returnees, and a pre-existing population of more than 277,985 Palestine Refugees in Lebanon<sup>5</sup>, with nearly half of the Lebanese, Syrian and Palestinian populations affected by the crisis being children and adolescents. Public services became significantly overburdened and overstretched, with demand exceeding the capacity of institutions and infrastructure to meet needs.

The economic growth in the country fell to zero in 2019 after being stuck between 1-2% for several years<sup>6</sup>. A scarcity in dollars has led to pressure on the Lebanese pound. Unemployment rate for those under 35 had hit 37%<sup>7</sup>. In early September 2019 ratings agency Fitch "downgraded Lebanon's long-term foreign currency issuer default rating", which prompted local officials to declare a state of economic emergency<sup>8</sup>. Protestors peacefully hit the streets in late September in reaction to the deteriorating living conditions<sup>9</sup>. In October, protests broke out all over the country forcing the prime minister to resign. Throughout the uprising, and up until the May 2020 protests, security forces have been using excessive force. Live ammunition was used against protesters<sup>10</sup>. Soon after, banks began limiting withdrawals due to a nationwide shortage of dollars, while the Lebanese pound lost about

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<sup>4</sup> [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/LCRP\\_2021FINAL\\_v1.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/LCRP_2021FINAL_v1.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/lebanon-crisis-response-plan-2017-2020-2018-update>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-lebanon-protests-causes-explainer/explainer-why-is-lebanon-in-an-economic-and-political-mess-idUSKBN1XG260/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/assessing-impact-economic-and-covid-19-crises-lebanon-june-2020/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.dw.com/en/lebanon-faces-race-against-time-to-avoid-financial-collapse/a-50655866/>

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/11/lebanon-protests-explained/>

two-thirds of its value on the black market<sup>11</sup>. On the fourth of August 2020, the Beirut port blast ripped a city to shreds and reopened old wounds for a fragile population already facing civil unrest, an ongoing socioeconomic crisis, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Described as one of the largest non-nuclear explosions in global history, it sent shock waves through the capital killing more than 220 people, wounding over 7,000, leaving more than 300,000 homeless, in addition to devastating property damage and loss<sup>12</sup>.

By the end of 2020, the people of Lebanon were more vulnerable than ever before, with more than 1 million people living below the poverty line and 1.5 million refugees<sup>13</sup>. The exchange rate continued to deteriorate sharply in 2021, keeping inflation rates in triple digits. The share of the Lebanese population under the national poverty line is estimated to have risen by 9.1 percentage points (pp) by end-2021<sup>14</sup>. According to the policy brief “Multidimensional Poverty in Lebanon: Painful Reality and Uncertain Prospects”<sup>15</sup> issued by the UN-ESCWA in September 2021, poverty in the country has drastically augmented over 2021: Taking into account dimensions other than income, such as access to health, education and public utilities, increases the rate to 82% of the population living in multidimensional poverty.

In August 2022, UNICEF Lebanon launched its semi-annual report, through which it monitors the reality of children in Lebanon in light of the economic crisis and its social repercussions<sup>16</sup>. According to the report, the successive devastating economic and financial crises in Lebanon since 2019 have plunged children into what UNICEF described as “multidimensional poverty”; a spiral that negatively affected their health, well-being and education, destroyed their dreams and destabilized family relationships. The escalating tensions, reinforced by the sharp division of opinions and attitudes within the community itself and between it and other communities, according to the report, led to an increase in violence in homes and schools, which made neighborhoods and streets unsafe, and prevented children from exercising their right to play.

## UNICEF LCO’s Approach to Integrated Programming

Integrated approaches in the various development and humanitarian sectors are not new. They emerged in the sixties of the past century, while the systems theory was being introduced into the theories and practice, towards more robust linkages between the design and the delivery of programmes and projects across the various sectors. Gradually, often designed simplistically,

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/10/world/middleeast/lebanon-economic-crisis.html/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/01/25/lebanon-victims-families-despair-blast-suspects-freed>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.who.int/emergencies/funding/appeals/lebanon-explosion-2020/>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/lebanon/publication/economic-update-april-2022>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.unescwa.org/news/escwa-warns-three-quarters-lebanon’s-residents-plunge-poverty/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/lebanon/media/9056/file/Deprived%20Childhood%20EN.pdf>

multisectoral integrated projects soon became more focused and shifted towards more collaborative interventions with promising prospects and long-lasting effects (Ahner-McHaffie et al. 2018). According to Bierbaum et al. (2018, 4), “addressing the interconnected and interacting environmental and social challenges requires systems thinking; this is fundamental to better integration. Integrated approaches and systems thinking are also the only way to deal with new and complex risks. Integrated approaches can also untangle complexity, so that root causes can be identified and managed through focused interventions”<sup>17</sup>.

The United Nations resolution for the 2030 Agenda emphasizes the importance of interlinkages and the integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) across economic, social, and environmental dimensions<sup>18</sup>.

In 2021, the UNICEF Strategic Plan for 2022–2025 charted a course towards “inclusive recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, and the realization of a children’s rights. Remarkably, it comprised an explicit reference to the “integrated approach”: “UNICEF will continue to generate and consolidate evidence in support of an integrated approach, and engage strategically with Governments, United Nations entities, the private sector, young people and other partners to strengthen policies, programmes and services, the staff capacities of systems, national standards and service quality”<sup>19</sup>. Prior to this remarkable milestone, UNICEF ESAR published the working paper “Key considerations for integrated approaches to programming”<sup>20</sup> that was commissioned to better understand and document the successes and challenges around integrated programming in the region, in order to take stock of country-level approaches and practices, and to identify key principles and considerations for strengthening integrated programming across the sectors. The paper concludes to the fact that the essential factors for multi-sectoral, integrated programming are very well aligned with those for good programming, although many challenges may arise as the issues that lend themselves to multi-sectoral approaches are often complex and multi-causal in nature. The key considerations that distilled from the published paper included “strong leadership; defining a common understanding of a problem and its solutions; having strong governance and accountability mechanisms in place; engaging and including a range of partners including governments, development and community partners; and clear indicators to monitor progress”.

In Lebanon, although the Country Programme Document (CPD) 2016-2021 (extended to 2022) was organized into traditional sectoral outcomes to allow alignment with government line ministries, promoting integration through a life-cycle approach with a focus on 0–5 years, primary school ages (6–14), and adolescence and youth (15–24), sections were encouraged to work together towards achieving common outcomes. Sectoral programmes were expected to identify opportunities for

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17 Bierbaum, R., et al. 2018. “Integration: To Solve Complex Environmental Problems.” Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel to the Global Environment Facility, GEF, Washington, DC.

18 FHI360 created “The Integrated Development Evidence Map” as a web-based resource for organizing research and evidence for integrated development programming. The map included over 500 impact evaluations of programmes that applied multisector approaches. According to reflected trends, the most common intervention sector trends appearing in 10 or more studies are health and education (115 studies, followed by economic development, education, health and nutrition (75 studies), and education and nutrition (50 studies). However, although there are many studies included in the map involving integration, the lack of a consistent definition of “integration” used across studies makes it challenging to compare methods or synthesize results (<http://fhi360integrationevidence.com/site/>)

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

20 UNICEF ESAR 2018. Working Paper: Key Considerations for Integrated Approaches to Programming.

integration through common gateways for service delivery, strong referral mechanisms, and monitoring systems. In addition, with-in programme, integration was expected to ensure children are reached with a comprehensive package of service that responds to their needs, profiles and age group. The CPD 2023-2025 presented to the Executive Board in February 2023<sup>21</sup>, remained aligned with its predecessor with no explicit reference to the adoption of neither a full nor a partial approach to integration.

In 2018, UNICEF Lebanon concluded in its Mid-term review that “to reach these increasingly vulnerable children, strengthened focus on programmatic integration of services” was necessary. It was on the basis of this programmatic recommendation that the office set out to design a number of programmatic interventions that sought to bring existing programmes closer together for more integrated and holistic services for the children they served.

With a focus on high-risk, poor, out-of-learning boys, girls, adolescents and youth, this approach was assumed to provide children and youth with access to a non-formal education programme, (as a possible pathway to formal schooling or vocational training), child protection and/or gender-based violence-related services, skills development and employability programmes, as well as social assistance. This was expected to lead to reduced household poverty, reduced protection and health risks, empowered right-holders to demand services and accountability, improved basic literacy, numeracy and learning outcomes, life skills, functional competencies, vocational learning and, eventually, employability. Regarding geographical coverage of the integrated child-centered programmes, it was primarily designed to target the most deprived areas of the country - prioritizing key municipalities selected based on child vulnerability indicators (with an emphasis on specific indicators depending on the program being implemented) and accessibility of critical complementary services. Its ambition was to identify and serve the most disadvantaged children and youth, considering the specific barriers that girls and boys face - including those excluded from formal schooling and out of learning entirely, often for reasons such as disability, child marriage, child pregnancy, child labour or worst forms of child labour.

To oversee the roll out in the country office, focal points for programmes integration and roving officers were identified, and several coordination meetings were held. Implementing partners meetings, including area-based meetings were regularly held, to act as fora for dissemination and knowledge sharing, including the Referrals Information Management System (RIMS) training. Area based meetings were expected to bring partners together and facilitate mapping of services and referrals encouraging partners coordination and collaboration through area-based taskforces. Additional measures also included the inclusion of referral indicators within the CP and EDU partners project documents (this was further complemented with indicators added in Activity Info to track referrals), and the design and implementation of pilot integrated initiatives with a few partners (i.e., CP/GBV safe spaces with the YAD).

The roll out of integrating programming in UNICEF included several activities that cumulatively were expected to facilitate successful implementation of the approach. Mapping of most vulnerable cadasters based on child vulnerability indicators (with an emphasis on specific indicators depending

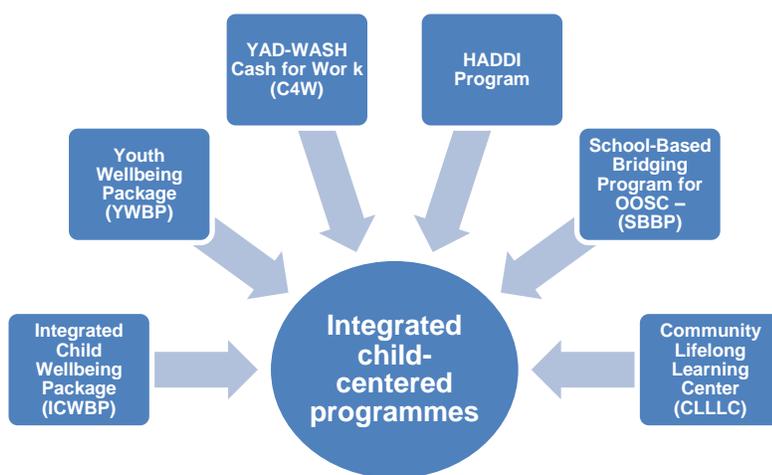
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<sup>21</sup> [https://www.unicef.org/executiveboard/media/14997/file/2023-PL10-Lebanon\\_CPD-EN-ODS.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/executiveboard/media/14997/file/2023-PL10-Lebanon_CPD-EN-ODS.pdf)

on the program being implemented) and accessibility of critical complementary services was conducted.

Under a five-step approach modified from a six-step approach suggested by UNICEF WCARO <sup>22</sup>, several other activities were conducted, and included: 1) determining the most vulnerable localities/communities, 2) mapping existing services at the locality/community levels, 3) mapping partners and their capacities, 4) developing integrated partnerships, and 5) developing cross-sectoral tools for M&E.

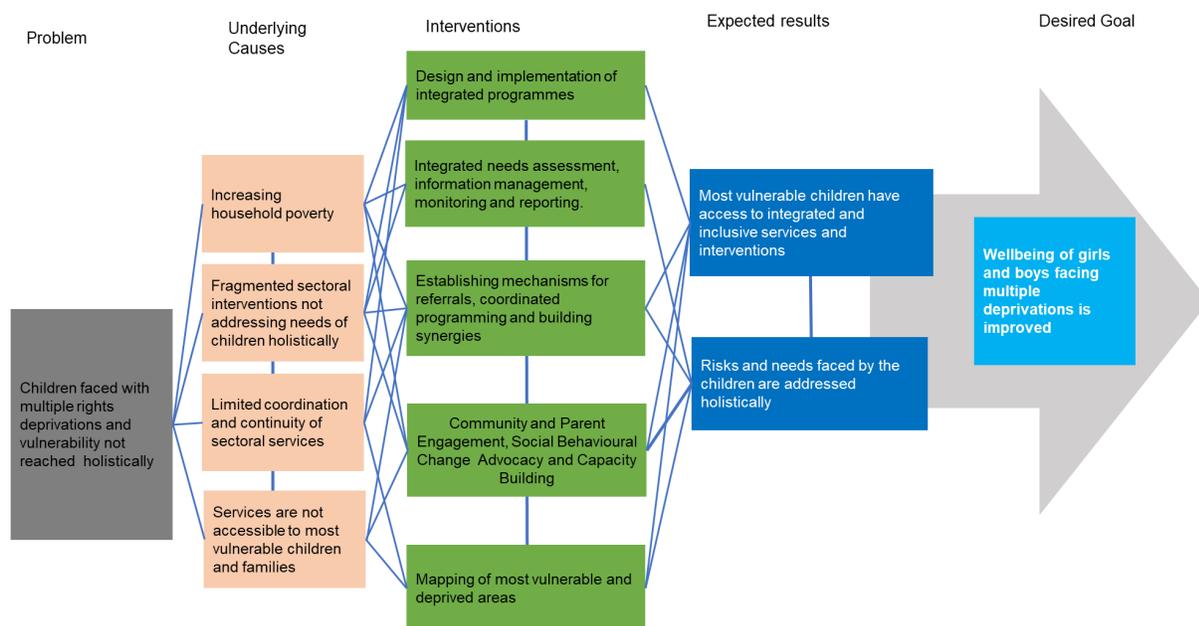
Programmatic interventions that sought to improve the well-being of children facing multiple deprivations by providing holistic services and sensitization packages to vulnerable (both refugees and Lebanese families) were designed and implemented (figure 1 below). The “Integrated Children Wellbeing Package” (ICWBP) emerged as one of the programmatic initiatives in this regard, followed by several other versions of the package, all with the same objective of improving the well-being of children facing multiple deprivations by providing a holistic service and sensitization package to vulnerable families - refugee and Lebanese designed to reduce household poverty, reduce protection and health risks, empower them as right-holders demanding services and accountability, improve basic literacy, numeracy and learning outcomes, life skills, functional competencies, vocational learning and, eventually, employability.



**Figure 1. Integrated programmes implemented/currently being implemented**

In order to provide an updated basis on which the evaluation’s activities can be built, and as part of the reconstruction process, backwards mapping was conducted by with UNICEF M&E specialist to reconstruct how the approach was originally conceived and adapted during implementation. This reconstruction exercise began by understanding how the logic and context within which each of the components was originally conceived.

<sup>22</sup> The Five-Step approach is modified from a six-step approach suggested by UNICEF WCARO - Integrated Programming: From Theory to Practice, September 2019



**Figure 2. Intervention logic for the integrated programming approach in UNICEF Lebanon**

## OBJECT OF THE EVALUATION

Integrated programming is the geographic and sectoral convergence of UNICEF and partners' interventions on the most vulnerable communities for greater impact. It is an approach to creating safer and more resilient communities through the design and implementation of programmes that respond holistically to a children's needs, priorities, risks, and vulnerabilities. According to a Study on Integrated Programming in UNICEF Humanitarian Action<sup>23</sup>, three facets of integration exist in the organization, all dependent on programming context. The three facets are: 1) Contribution (sectors contribute to achieving each other's goals, especially the CCCs), 2) Convergence (sector interventions converge on the same geographic locations), 3) Outcome (sector interventions are combined to achieve an outcome that they could not achieve individually). The evaluation therefore focuses on the integration and how it was implemented in UNICEF Lebanon programmes, not a specific integrated project or initiative.

## PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The overall purpose of this evaluation was to provide an impartial and independent evaluation of the extent to which integrated programming approach has been implemented by UNICEF in

<sup>23</sup> Study on Integrated Programming in UNICEF Humanitarian Action

Lebanon and whether it has achieved intended objectives. The evaluation also examined which factors have proved critical in helping or hindering it and draw lessons for future programming. Based on identified lessons and best practices that should be continued/taken to scale or disseminated either within the programmes or more widely at the institutional level, UNICEF Lebanon seeks to improve programme integration in implementation of the country programme 2023 -2025.

The evaluation work covered all UNICEF Lebanon programme components, from 2018 to 2022, both at the national and local scales.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation specifically aimed at:

- Analyzing the relevance, effectiveness, coherence, efficiency, and sustainability of integration to the selected programmes of UNICEF, by looking at facilitating and hindering factors, key entry points, missed opportunities, and governance arrangements.
- Identifying any good practice within and outside integrated programming, lessons learnt regarding what worked and did not work, and potential areas for improvement for better design and implementation of integrated programmes.
- Making specific recommendations on how to strengthen integration across the length and breadth of UNICEF programmes in Lebanon.

## SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

This evaluation covered all the UNICEF Lebanon programme components, from 2018 to end of 2022. The evaluation took into consideration the five Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development-Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) criteria: Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Sustainability.

## USERS AND USE OF THE EVALUATION

Primary users of the evaluation are UNICEF management and programme teams in Lebanon who shall directly utilize the evaluation findings to adjust programme designs, implementation, improve its quality and to guide the future direction of the programmes. Secondary users include the UNICEF

Implementing partners that deliver services and programmes. Findings shall be disseminated broadly in UNICEF to facilitate learning.

## EVALUATION QUESTIONS

1. As per the set terms of Reference (ToR, see Annex I), the Evaluation was based on a number of Evaluation Questions (EQs) covering five Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development-Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) evaluation criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and sustainability.
2. The selected questions were presented in an evaluation matrix that explains how each evaluation question was assessed during the field work that took place from mid-November 2022 to mid-January 2023, through which indicators, and with which methods and sources (see Annex III). Human rights, gender and equity were also mainstreamed in all the criteria selected and in line with the UNEG guidelines on gender and human rights.
3. The development of the evaluation verticals in the matrix (alignment; design; coherence and consistency; achievements and fallout effects; challenges, weaknesses, good practices and lessons learned; financial and policy sustainability) was informed by both the ToR and the existing sources of information that were made available to the evaluator (see list in Annex IV).  
The examination of each part of the concerned business processes that were designed and put in place to roll out the approach has also helped identifying what is working well in the current processes, what needs to be improved and how any necessary improvements can best be made. This approach was particularly helpful to holistically understand what some of the capacity constraints are, as well as the gaps, enablers and barriers.

## METHODOLOGY OF THE EVALUATION

### Methodological Design

1. Based on a non-experimental design and drawing from both 'theory-based' and 'case-based' approaches, this evaluation was formative and highly action-oriented participatory.
2. The evaluator used a mixed method approach to answer the evaluation questions, with multiple methods, both qualitative and quantitative, and several data sources to ensure sufficient data triangulation.
3. The methodology was designed based on a preliminary document review and consultations with selected UNICEF staff (n = 5), which greatly helped build a methodological design adapted to the evaluated object, the availability of information and the limitations found, as well as select the data collection tools that satisfy the need for information and allow to fill information gaps (See Evaluation Matrix in Annex III).

## Sampling Selection and Sample Size

1. The sampling strategy was based on ongoing discussions with UNICEF staff concerning the design and rollout of the approach and selected interventions. A purposive sampling approach was adopted to conduct the Focus Group Discussion and the Online Survey. Similarly, a purposive snowball sampling method was adopted for Key Informant Interviews.
2. The selection of respondents was done in consultation between the UNICEF team and the evaluator, taking into consideration the criteria set in the framework for the evaluation, such as a fair spread of meetings and interviews over the duration of the assignment, the profiles of persons and institutions met/interviewed ensuring a fair representation of the various target groups (UNICEF vs. implementing partners), as well as thematic/sectoral relevance as necessary.

Thirty-three respondents participated in the qualitative part of the evaluation. The distribution of respondents in the qualitative part of the evaluation is detailed in Table 1 below (for more information, see Annex V).

**Table 1. Distribution of respondents to Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Discussions**

Institution	Functional Level(s)	Location	Gender
UNICEF	Senior Management (Deputy Representative, Chiefs of sections), n = 9	Beirut	2 females 7 males
	Managers (Supply & Logistics, Partnerships, Programme), n = 3	Beirut	2 females 1 male
	Specialists (M&E, Partnerships, Programme), n = 7	Beirut	4 females 3 males
	Officers (Programme, Roving, M&E/Research), n = 6	Beirut/Field	5 females 1 male
Implementing Partners	Senior management, n = 2 Officers (Programme, Field, Finance), n = 2	Beirut	3 females 1 male

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Functional Level(s)</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Gender</b>
	Senior management, n = 2 Officers (Programme, Field), n = 2	Field (North/Bekaa)	2 females 2 males
Total number of Respondents to the KIIs and FGD			33

## Methods

### Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

Key informant interviews were informed by semi-structured questionnaires that were relevant to the person(s) being interviewed. Each interview with a key technical respondent lasted no longer than 60 minutes depending on the depth and significance of the interview to the evaluation and the responses of the interviewee. At the outset of the discussions, the evaluator introduced herself and the purpose of the discussion. Once this has been established, participants were asked if they have any further inquiries and to consent to partaking in the discussion. Participants were also informed that the discussion was purely for evaluation purposes and had no bearing on participants in terms of future assistance, nor can the moderator affect this process. All discussions took place without the presence of UNICEF staff. Due to sensitivities, recorders were not used. All participants were informed that their identities will remain anonymous and that discussions will not be shared with anyone.

### Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

The FGD sampling strategy sought to reflect the approach to integrated programming on the ground. It was particularly helpful to holistically understand what some of the capacity constraints are, as well as the gaps, enablers and barriers. The FGD consisted of a 60-minute session. At the outset of the discussions, the evaluator introduced herself and the purpose of the discussion. Once this has been established, participants were asked if they have any further inquiries and to consent to partaking in the discussion. Participants were also informed that the discussion is purely for evaluation purposes and has no bearing on participants.

Due to sensitivities, recorders were not used. All participants were informed that their identities will remain anonymous and that discussions will be used after data de-identification.

## Online Survey

A brief and voluntary survey was designed and disseminated to a purposive sample of UNICEF staff members, implementing partners and focal points in the field. The survey allowed to record feedback against key evaluation questions in a manner that supports the quantification and cross-verification of qualitative information. The survey was designed consistently with the described above evaluation criteria. It was sent out to the selected population via email with a directive to fill and complete the surveys by a specified date. Ninety-three (93) respondents participated in the online survey (62 staff members, 31 implementing partners).

## Data Collection Tools and Processes

The main data collection tools and processes (see Annex VI for details) consisted of:

- a. An *introductory email* to informants explaining the main evaluation idea and the key themes to be discussed. Upon consent, they were asked to specify their preferred day, time and location for the interview.
- b. An *informed consent form* that was explained by the evaluator prior to any interview.
- c. An extensive review of *Documents and literature* with a direct bearing on the issues of relevance collected in all available formats.
- d. Information collected through *Key Informant Interviews* with local stakeholders. The questionnaire was designed in accordance with the developed evaluation matrix.
- e. Information collected through *a Focus Group Discussion* with local stakeholders. The questionnaire was designed in accordance with the developed evaluation matrix.
- f. and an *online survey* for UNICEF staff and implementing partner staff. The questionnaire was designed in accordance with the evaluation matrix.

## Data Analysis

1. For the review of documents and literature, the evaluator extracted data using a standardized template, developed for the scope of the present evaluation, to extract information from included/referenced studies. The developed template was designed around themes derived from selected context analysis and integrated programming available tools.
2. The evaluator essentially relied on Consensual Qualitative Research (CQR), which is highly recommended when there is a need to focus on words over numbers, on the significance of context, and the incorporation of different opinions. It is particularly well-suited to research that necessitates detailed accounts of inner experiences, attitudes, and convictions<sup>24</sup>. The main limitation of this kind of design or methodology is the generalizability (difficulty of measuring effects whether causality or correlation,

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<sup>24</sup> Hill, C. E. (Ed.). (2012). Consensual qualitative research: A practical resource for investigating social science phenomena. American Psychological Association.

- qualitative research is not statistically representative, in this kind of methods, risks that results are influenced by the evaluator’s personal biases are greater, etc....). Moreover, it is recognized that the human and social phenomena are not fixed and stable as long as they are related to the human being, given that the conditions of the latter are constantly changing from one case to another, from time to time, as well as from place to place, so it is logical that these phenomena become complicated as long as they remain unstable. Likewise, their similarity will often lead to the difficulty of determining the position on these phenomena, and judging them, which often leads to results that may be very negative or very positive, so they cannot be relied upon in classifying and controlling phenomena, especially since they are affected by complex human behavior. In addition, the fact that human and social phenomena change relatively quickly, reduces the chance of repeating the experiment in completely similar circumstances, with reference, of course, to the difficulties of experimental control, and the difficulty of isolating the overlapping variables of the social and human phenomena.
3. The evaluator has also considered, when feasible, the analysis of business operation processes. It is a detailed, multi-step examination of each part of a process to identify what is working well in current processes, what needs to be improved and how any necessary improvements can best be made.
  4. For the quantitative part, results were automatically generated through the survey monkey platform and integrated in the *Findings* section. As for the qualitative part, interviews (KIs and FGD) were transcribed and translated (from Arabic to English when needed, with full account of cross-cultural differences). Afterwards, the narratives were thematically analyzed to identify significant and recurrent themes and codes, while cross-mapping these across the different categories of respondents.
  5. As shown in Table 3, a 5-point Likert rating scale was used to rate the project against each of the selected Evaluation criteria (5 for *highly satisfactory*, 4 for *satisfactory*, 3 for *partially satisfactory*, 2 for *unsatisfactory* and 1 for *highly unsatisfactory*).

**Table 2. The evaluation rating scale**

<b>Label (point)</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>
Highly Satisfactory (5)	The approach had several significant positive factors with no defaults or weaknesses
Satisfactory (4)	The approach had positive factors with minor defaults or weaknesses
Partially satisfactory (3)	The approach had moderate to notable defaults or weaknesses
Unsatisfactory (2)	The approach had negative factors with major defaults or weaknesses
Highly unsatisfactory (1)	The approach had negative factors with severe defaults or weaknesses

# CONSTRAINTS, ADJUSTMENTS, AND MITIGATIONS

1. The nature/limitations of the selected evaluation methods:
  - a. Concerning the generalizability of results, the evaluation's results remain context-bound, and the significance of the evidence limited to the considered lifespan,
  - b. The non-factorial design of integrated programming did not evidently allow estimates of effects of component interventions/interactions (thus, challenge of assessing potential synergistic effects),
  - c. The challenge of separating the effects of project management from intervention activities,
  - d. The challenge of consistently unravelling the effect of colocation, collaboration, and coordination.
2. **Security related issues.** The end-of-year holidays and the volatile security situation in the country during the field phase (roadblocks, protests, shootings) caused some delays in the agenda of meetings and interviews. Moreover, two scoping visits were anticipated in the data collection processes during the inception phase. The evaluator and UNICEF Evaluation team discussed the feasibility of these visits and their trade-offs in the prevailing circumstances and agreed upon replacing them with virtual meetings that were duly arranged by UNICEF Field offices.

## GENDER AND EQUITY PERSPECTIVES

1. The evaluation explicitly addressed, to the possible extent, concerns related to gender, equity, and human rights in a number of ways.
2. The evaluation, especially the sampling strategy (gender balanced sample) and data collection processes (gender-sensitive tools and techniques), were designed in a way to account for gender concerns. In addition, the evaluator is a female expert.
3. The same approach to sampling and data collection was extended to account for equity and diversity, to the possible extent. As deemed relevant, findings were either aggregated or disaggregated per type of respondents to better ensure representativeness of the different stakeholders engaged in the evaluation process.

# EVALUATION NORMS AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The evaluation was carried out in accordance with the ethical principles and standards defined by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG)<sup>25</sup>, more specifically:

- a. **Independence and impartiality:** The evaluator maintained the independence of judgement and ensured that the evaluation findings and recommendations are independently presented.
- b. **Adherence to the context and issue sensitivity/Do No Harm:** The complex situation in Lebanon has most likely had significant implications for both the design and implementation of the integrated approach to programming. Considerable attention was given to the formulation of evaluation questions and survey instruments to prevent lines of inquiry that could potentially strain relations or jeopardize future UNICEF operations or outcomes.
- c. **Gender, age, and diversity mainstreaming:** Although collecting disaggregated data can be challenging and impacted by cultural norms sometimes, in addition to purposive/snowball sampling, the evaluator used diverse range of data sources (with particular emphasis on *probing* in interviews), to ensure as much as possible inclusive participation and gathering feedback from both men and women to present a holistic picture of perceptions amongst the selected sample.
- d. **Data protection and anonymity:** The evaluator committed to protecting the confidentiality and anonymity of participants names and contact data. The research tools intentionally did not request neither participants' names nor contact information. Furthermore, all electronic data were duly backed up and shall be deleted from the server after finalization of the assignment.
- e. Owing to the envisaged participation of human subjects in the evaluation, the evaluator sought the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approvals prior to the data collection phase. On November 26, 2022, the HML<sup>26</sup> IRB issued the approval letter (HML IRB Review #649LEBA22, see Annex VII).

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<sup>25</sup> The key documents are:

- UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation (2016): Available from [www.uneval.org/document/detail/1914](http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/1914);

- Ethical Guidelines for UN Evaluations (2008): Available from [www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/102](http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/102)

- Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN system (2008): Available from [www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100](http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100)

- Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation – Towards UNEG Guidance (2011): Available from [www.uneval.org/document/detail/980](http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/980)

- Ethical Research Involving Children, 2013: <http://childethics.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/ERIC-compendium-approved-digital-web.pdf>

<sup>26</sup> Health Media Lab (HML), Inc. is authorized by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Human Research Protections (IRB #1211, IORG #850, FWA #1102).

## QUALITY CONTROL

To ensure independence of the evaluation, the Evaluation Specialist of UNICEF Lebanon was the overall manager of the evaluation. In collaboration with M&E/Research Officers, he ensured the evaluation quality control, the compliance of the evaluation work and deliverables with UNICEF norms and standards as well with quality standards. Also, He was the UNICEF focal point for the evaluation team and responsible for the validation of deliverables. For this, several iterations took place with established reference groups that included UNICEF senior management staff, as well as programme staff from programme sections).

# FINDINGS

The purpose of this section is to provide an overview of the triangulation of findings against the key evaluation questions. Along with the illustration of specific patterns of perceptions among respondents, this section portrays the main findings of the evaluation of the approach to integrated programming along the selected OECD evaluation criteria, namely relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability.

## Specific Patterns of Perceptions among Respondents

Based on the selected mixed method approach, the evaluator concurrently conducted the quantitative and qualitative elements in the same phase of the evaluation process, weighed the methods equally, analyzed the two components independently, and interpreted the convergence and divergence of both qualitative and quantitative results.

The output of interviews was in the form of a near-verbatim write up that can accommodate verbatim quotes. As for the feedback of respondents to the online survey, findings were incorporated under the matching headings as relevant.

The level of convergence was strikingly solid along the evaluation verticals. In the sections below, reference is made, when indicative and feasible, to odds and outliers depicted in the datasets.

The specific patterns of perceptions that emerged according to the category of respondents are shown in Table 4.

**Table 3. Synopsis of specific patterns of perceptions per respondent category**

Type of respondent	Specific patterns of perceptions
UNICEF Central Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic perceptions of "integrated programming" and its critical necessity in the Lebanese context</li> <li>• Nuanced visions of integrated programming and identified process-level benefits from respective sectoral perspectives</li> <li>• Evident understanding/demarcation between management and intervention level responsibilities</li> </ul>
UNICEF Field Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High levels of consciousness and self-awareness</li> <li>• Critical understanding of the "operationalization of integration" in a holistic manner</li> <li>• Evident abilities to identify challenges faced in the field</li> <li>• Evident abilities to identify lessons learnt based on field practice</li> <li>• Remarkable reports on the impact of individual champions</li> </ul>
Implementing partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reported lack of consistent/common understanding of "integrated programming"</li> <li>• Reported lack of consistent guidance from LCO on the definition of integration</li> <li>• Reported lack of consistent guidance from LCO on the measurement/evaluation of integration</li> <li>• Identified benefits of "integration": cost savings, organizational development, diversification of action &amp; expertise, and expansion of geographic and population scope</li> <li>• Concerns over competition</li> <li>• Concerns over funding restrictions and unmatched timelines</li> <li>• Concerns over the establishment and management of partnerships</li> </ul>

## Triangulated Findings per Selected OECD Criteria

The overall rating of the approach to integrated programming as embedded in programmes, policies and processes as per the selected evaluation criteria is ***Partially Satisfactory***.

Since 2018, the approach to integrated programming revealed evidenced learning and evolution with identified areas of improvement in the organizational design of the approach, its governance structure, as well as its internal processes.

The detailed findings are organized below around the five selected OECD evaluation criteria.

### Relevance

The relevance of the approach was rated as ***Partially Satisfactory***.

*EQ1. To what extent is UNICEF Lebanon's approach to integrated programming fit-for-purpose considering country context, programme's scope (types of programming across humanitarian and development) and implementation modalities? How relevant are different programme integration facets currently in use considering the overall humanitarian context/the very much vertical sectoral type of approach?*

**Alignment with overall strategic documents.** Both central and field level UNICEF respondents were highly aware of the sectoral aspects of the Country Programme Documents for 2016-2021 and 2023-25. While the CPD (2016-2021) was organized into traditional sectoral outcomes to allow alignment with government line ministries, promoting integration through a life-cycle approach with a focus on 0–5 years, primary school ages (6–14), and adolescence and youth (15–24), sections were encouraged to work together towards achieving common outcomes. Sectoral programmes were expected to identify opportunities for integration through common gateways for service delivery, strong referral mechanisms, and monitoring systems. In addition, within programme, integration was expected to ensure children are reached with a comprehensive package of service that responds to their needs, profiles and age group. The CPD 2023-2025 remained aligned with its predecessor with no explicit reference to the adoption of neither a “full” nor a “partial” approach to integration.

**Alignment with the country context/national priorities.** The triangulation of data for relevance analysis showed that the overall alignment of the approach to integrated programming with the country context (highly volatile, constantly changing, as perceived by interviewees) was sufficiently “strong”.

The alignment of the approach with national priorities - as seen by the majority of respondents, rather than published in national level official reports<sup>27</sup> - was remarkably reflected in the following collated statements: *“Assessments and situational analysis ensured that the relevant thematic and geographic areas are selected to address the drivers of children vulnerability”, “UNICEF staff always went beyond their duty to ensure adequacy and appropriateness of interventions by all means... they accounted for the cultural, social and political sensitivities of the country, but also they really understood well the psychology of key people, the ones who can really trigger action and change”*. This assumption was further validated with the team when it came to selected intervention approaches: *“...well this did not happen by chance... way before 2018, we realized the criticality of integration in a context like Lebanon... first, we had spread the word...from individuals to communities, then to the society”*. This was further validated through the online survey, as 87% of respondents confirmed this alignment.

Further to the evaluator’s probing about the ‘replicability’ of the LCO’s experience, whether in the same context or a similar one, most of the respondents advised that it is imperative to account for fundamental features of interacting or interdependent components that form a complex whole.

*EQ2. To what extent are UNICEF programmes internally coherent in terms of objectives, theories of change and M&E systems to facilitate integration?*

**Cross-sectoral synergies that facilitate integration.** Despite the highly sectoral features of UNICEF’s business model, majority of UNICEF and implementing partners staff commended the “transdisciplinarity” of the considered integrated programmes. More specifically, the Integrated Child Wellbeing package (ICWBP) was seen as “highly transdisciplinary with remarkable levels of stewardship and compliance... which would facilitate sustainable benefits both at the individual (staff) and departmental (section) levels in the future should they be replicated”. According to anecdotal evidence, many narratives related how this particular programme could be considered as a “model” to improve integration across two or more sectors and at multiple levels, as it relied on and resulted in more efficient communication, particularly with implementing partners, thereby, generating “a higher degree of awareness that can be built upon in the future”.

**Design of structures and roles that are supporting to integration.** To oversee the roll out of integrated programmes in the country office, National officers were recruited to provide roving professional technical assistance and support to UNICEF Lebanon field areas for programme/project

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<sup>27</sup> According to the study “Analysis of Lebanon’s system for service delivery for children’s wellbeing – final report” carried out by Oxford Policy Management (OPM) and published in 2020, “At national level, the discourse on integrated services is mainly driven by the UN and by NGOs. There is weak cross-ministerial as well as sectoral coordination, as well as lengthy political processes that stall decision making. The majority of public policy is sector-based, where coordination with other sectors is expected but not mandatory for other ministries. Nevertheless, the research identified some public policies whose implementation could represent an opportunity for furthering the agenda on integrated services”.

design, planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and administration of programme/project activities, including data analysis, progress reporting, knowledge networking and capacity building, in support of achievement of planned objectives of the work plan, aligned with each of the respective programme's goals and strategy under the direct supervision of Section Chiefs. Focal points for programmes integration were identified and several coordination meetings were held. Implementing partners meetings, including area-based meetings were regularly held, to act as forums for dissemination and knowledge sharing, including RIMS (Referrals Information Management System) training. Area based meetings were expected to bring partners together and facilitate mapping of services and referrals encouraging partners coordination and collaboration through area-based taskforces.

When relating the lessons they learned in their field practice, ex-roving officers were clearly able to articulate many challenges they faced when they assumed their role, to name a few: 1) "the elasticity" of the designed ToRs from a human resources perspective, 2) the lack of management and technical support to "shape the newly created jobs", 3) the "blurred" assignment of roles and responsibilities between roving officers and field officers, 4) the ambiguities of information seeking/sharing, especially cross-sectoral ones, 5) the lack of guidance on how to operationalize an approach to integrated programming in a holistic manner, 5) the lack of a program-level results framework with common outcome-level indicators mainstreamed into the different programmes, and 6) the slow progress in systemic and behavioral change, notwithstanding other external macro-level odds and constraints that could hinder the "shift in mindsets" (continuity and multi-sectoral consistency are needed for these changes to occur, and those take time to materialize). This assumption was validated in the online survey as 84.95% of respondents confirmed it.

According to narratives, these reported challenges created impactful bottlenecks that were overcome only "because of personal attributes and long-term staff relationships that helped buffering the rising tensions" as described by an ex-roving officer.

#### **Documentation/reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation.**

- **Under the integrated programmes.** Majority of respondents did not relate any significant concerns when asked about the documentation of results or the monitoring and evaluation processes under the different integrated programmes. According to the majority, more work is required to "unpack" the integrated programmes ToCs and their assumptions to better operationalize them at disaggregated levels.
- **Integration-specific reporting.** Considering the diversity of approaches taken by the different integrated programmes (described under *Effectiveness* below), there were no agreed-upon methodology and/or integration-specific indicators to quantify cross-over benefits and attribute system-level benefits generated either directly or indirectly through the policy, institutional, operational, implementation or knowledge work; all of which requiring a clear overall and holistic theory of change, a task "intrinsically difficult" as an interviewee pointed out. This finding was further validated through the online survey, as only 4% of respondents confirmed that "UNICEF and partners were able to report results at the level of outcomes, which provides a solid basis for a systematic rollout in the future", while 29% had no opinion on this assumption and 67% rejected it.

## Coherence

The coherence of the approach was rated as *Partially Satisfactory*.

*EQ3. To what extent is there a commonly shared understanding of integrated programming across UNICEF Lebanon and its implementing partners? What specificities and complementarities can be identified?*

While there is considerable literature describing the characteristics of integrated approaches to programming in the various development sectors, there are no recognized or standardized guidelines so far on how to define or evaluate how integration contributes to addressing complex problems of vulnerability with interlinked components.

Same as for *Relevance*, findings under *Coherence* came consistently with the OPM study published in 2020, as the report concluded to the fact that “From the municipal level to the national level, there is no single or common understanding of what integration of service delivery actually means. At national level, informants used concepts such as collaboration across sectors and coordination among partners; information and data sharing; opening up existing service provisions to non-nationals (i.e., Syrians). At local level, the two most commonly used concepts to describe integration were collaboration across partners and referral of cases based on a common mapping of services. Nevertheless, there was some unanimity across actors and administrative levels about the purposes of (better) integrated services: these included the reduction of overlaps in service provision, ensuring better service user coverage of and better response to needs, and improved cost-effectiveness, transparency, and accountability”.

Understanding of “integrated programming”.

Without “suggesting” definitions in any of the data collection tools, the evaluator essentially relied on probing to assess how interviewees perceived and understood integrated programming. In the different categories of respondents, integrated programming meant different things to the different interlocutors.

*Specificities.* The answers reported by UNICEF staff (both at central and field levels) were highly consistent with the organization’s definition “Integrated programming is the geographic and sectoral convergence of UNICEF and partner’s interventions on most vulnerable communities for greater impact” (which figured in most of the documents that were made available to the evaluator), with a particular recurrence of the “Convergence” and “Outcome” levels. The answers of both categories reflected impressive levels of consciousness and strong beliefs, as most respondents were able to confidently portray their own analytical views on integration.

As for the implementing partners staff, KIs were an opportunity for the evaluator to assess their understanding of “integrated programming” and how convergent it was with the UNICEF definition. Interlocutors embedded their understanding as follows: 1) based on their management and

programmatic experience and expertise (which widens differences and individual bias, hence complicates the establishment of a bottom-line understanding), 2) based on what was “orally conveyed in coordination platforms and meetings, without any holistic framework or guiding documents”, and 3) a “trend” that emerged based on the exacerbation of needs while resources are becoming more and more scarce.

*Commonalities.* When asked to assess the common understanding of “integration” among the various stakeholders in the online survey, 52.69% of respondents rejected the assumption that such a common understanding exists, while only 22.58% confirmed it. Considering how UNICEF and implementing partners understood “integration”, the most reported commonalities in the qualitative part of the evaluation were: “the multi-sectoral approach”, “the need for a continuum of coordination”, and “the complexity and multi-dimensionality of needs”. As for how both categories understood “an approach to integrated programming”, the majority acknowledged that “a formalized approach to integration – which lacked in the present case - is needed to holistically address not only the constantly changing needs, but also the direct and indirect root causes of child vulnerability...and this can only be achieved when you grasp the complexities and risks imposed in such a volatile and fragile environment” as reported by a staff member. Elsewhere, another staff member saw that “it is highly recommended to establish coherence based on the ability of an entity/body/structure to coordinate, only once they agree on a bottom-line understanding of integration... to harmonize common objectives, components, activities, and reporting indicators so as to evolve towards learning, testing and scaling-up... this entity should have the vision first, then the know-how and the authority to design a strategy and put it in practice...we cannot stay stuck at the planning/brainstorming level forever”.

*EQ4. To what extent have UNICEF programmes been specifically designed and implemented to promote integration?*

**Specificity of programme design and implementation towards integration.** Through triangulated data, we looked at both sectoral programmes (education, health, child protection, etc.) and cross-sectoral ones (such as social policy) beyond integrated programming, as we considered them as sub-systems or components of the environment in which they operate to improve the living conditions of the most vulnerable children in Lebanon. Coherence analysis revealed that they are embedded in a set of common features and principles that can facilitate integration, notwithstanding their specificities. More specifically, we looked at the “drivers of integration” reflected in how UNICEF people perceive, both at the individual and collective levels, the multiple and complex origins behind children vulnerability in Lebanon. Those were highly consistent with both the existing literature and UNICEF’s assessment products that were made available for the purpose of this evaluation. The identified social verticals (poverty, exclusion, displacement, lack of basic public services...), political verticals (poor governance, corruption, engagement of local and international actors, ...) and economic verticals (increased poverty, currency devaluation, increased unemployment, funding challenges...) were by no means exhaustive (with a clear interconnectedness and interplay).

As a response to these drivers, both sectoral and cross-sectoral programmes, although disparate, had common operating principles and modalities. While definitions, conceptual frameworks, work

plans and implementation models emerge in each of the sectors (or more than one at once) based on the immediate environment, they are by default shaped based on globally accepted models which address the basic needs of vulnerable children (health, nutrition, survival, protection, etc.). They are also founded on shared principles, to name a few: 1) they are child-centered (thus, reduced fragmentation), multi-stakeholder, and all aim at reducing costs and improving multi-level results (impact and sustainability). However, mainstreaming integration within UNICEF's current business model requires strong coordination and collaboration across sectors, which brings with it a series of programme managerial challenges, addressed under each of the evaluation criteria in the present report.

When we narrowed down to look at designed and implemented integrated programmes, data triangulation showed that both achieved and current integrated programmes were designed based on: 1) an established identification of important cross-sectoral linkages (horizontal) and national vs. local action levels (vertical), that were used in the design and implementation phases of what was described as "partial integration", and 2) a "satisfactory" engagement of the relevant stakeholders in design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. That said, while the potential benefits of integration were obvious and generously illustrated in the collected narratives, fostering "full integration" in practice has proven difficult. Many agreed that the major causes of the identified shortcomings were:

- 1) the lack of a "formalized approach" with a full conceptual framework to integrated programming (only 20.43% of respondents to the online survey confirmed the existence of such a framework, while 29% had no opinion on it, and 50.57% rejected its existence),
- 2) territoriality and competition both among sectors and decision-makers, in the absence of "a senior/political decision to opt of systemic "integration" as a new paradigm (both individual and departmental resistance to change),
- 3) difficulties of "mainstreaming integration" across sectors and achieving and/or maintaining the required level of coordination, planning/designing, implementation, and reporting/monitoring, as described by one respondent: "the adoption of integration without the renunciation of other programming conventional paradigms may result in the formation of parallel structures that coexist with older but stronger ones that focus on business as usual".

## **Effectiveness**

The effectiveness of the approach was rated as ***Partially Satisfactory***.

*EQ4. To what extent has UNICEF's approach and established mechanisms to integrated programming been effective? What are the greatest strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to effective programme integration?*

The documentation that was made available to the evaluator sufficiently revealed the different modalities of delivery through different gateways in each of the integrated programmes. The selected modalities aimed at helping the structuration of implementation of the different programmes across the country. They included: 1) the area-based approach that includes area-based

coordination structures, and the twinning approach, 2) the implementation at the Social Development Center (SDC) level, 3) the Drop-in Center, the Community-Based Centers (CBCs), and 5) the school-based approach (in process).

**Positive perceptions of effectiveness.** The analysis of collated narratives generated a number of themes, which in turn, came well-aligned with both the online survey, and the review of documentation. These came as follows:

*A strategic innovation.* Integrated programmes were considered by several UNICEF and implementing partners staff as “a strategic innovation” of the LCO, an innovation that draws on the organization’s institutional comparative advantages. Majority of respondents highly commended UNICEF’s ability to address multiple commitments through a single project or program (noticeably the ICWBP) as a primary comparative advantage compared to other multilateral and bilateral donors (except for the established experience of USAID on integrated programming related by several interviewees). According to one interviewee “what has been delivered in an integrated manner so far, has greatly helped the LCO transcend sectoral silos and develop focused work plans”. Another comparative advantage of the implemented integrated programmes was “the ability of the LCO to convene stakeholders, even under the most challenging circumstances, thanks to their ability to building partnerships and securing broad technical resources in areas relevant to the programmes”, according to one of the respondents.

*Additionality.* In the broad sense of the term, “additionality” covered all the narratives’ features that referred to the properties of a desired (or achieved) specific intervention being additional by “adding something new to the context”<sup>28</sup>. According to most of the interviewees (both staff and implementing partners), institutional additionality is featured prominently through the integrated programmes. Most of the documented answers believed that such programmes could strengthen partners (both public institutions and implementing partners) to deliver and measure impact on integrated action. However, as detailed under the respective headings above and below, this would be contingent on the macro-level operating context enablers and barriers (governance, political/security situation, availability of funds...).

*Incremental changes towards transformational change.* Almost all of the documented narratives referred to “small” and “incremental” changes that were made towards integrated programming as an end result since 2018. These changes could be only categorized as “incremental” rather than “transformational” because, according to respondents: 1) they were likely to happen because of individual champions perseverance and strong beliefs, attitudes and behaviors, which did not necessarily, and consistently reach the sectoral/departmental levels, 2) they happened because they did not “threaten” the positioning of sectors or the power of established power structures, and 3) By default, transformational change can only occur with a drastic shift in the business culture and

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28 Narrowing down these statements to “additionality” was strongly aligned with the technical definition “The requirement by which, under the Kyoto Protocol and sound voluntary market standards, carbon credits will be awarded only to project activities where emissions reductions are “additional to those that otherwise would occur”, i.e. additional reductions compared to the “baseline scenario” (“Challenges for a business case for high-biodiversity REDD Projects and Schemes.”- A Report for the Secretariat of the CBD, February 2009, Version1.2)

mindsets, that can only result from a “radically different” and “solid” strategy and established processes that should be enacted over a period of time, and impact eventually measured afterwards.

**Identified weaknesses.** According to the narratives of both UNICEF and implementing partners interviewees, the following internal weaknesses were the most commonly identified: 1) the imperatives of UNICEF’s business model and its organizational structure, 2) the missing full conceptualization of an approach to “integrated programming” at the design phase. Addressing the underlying causes of this identified weakness was significantly challenging, mainly because of the nature of the selected evaluation methods and their limitations, but also due to the turnover rate and the change in roles and responsibilities from 2018 to date. Plus, it is recognized that the human and social phenomena are not fixed and stable as long as they are related to the human being, given that the conditions of the latter are constantly changing from one case to another, from time to time, as well as from place to place, so it is logical that these phenomena become complicated as long as they remain unstable. Hence, the most plausible assumption that was retained in this regard was “in the absence of a solid in-house standardized guidance on how to promote integration, the improvised/adopted policies, practices and processes were dictated by the realities in the *time* and *place*... Adjustments highly relied on the LCO’s past experience on integrated programmes on one hand, and the flexibility of programmes on the other”, 3) funding imperatives, and 3) the lack of integration-specific indicators to quantify cross-over benefits.

**Identified threats/challenges.** According to the narratives of both UNICEF and implementing partners interviewees, the following threats/challenges were the most commonly identified: 1) the “fragility” and “volatility” of the context, and all the resulting macro-level factors that can “bust” priorities and/or “counter” the action of the intended approach to integration (i.e., social and developments/changes in government administration and unforeseen fluctuations priorities). The content of prevailing narratives on this issue was further validated through the online survey, as 77.42% of respondents confirmed the validity of this assumption, 2) the potential resistance to change. According to most of the respondents, some people might be resistant as they might feel that integration “might make them lose their worth or force”. This would eventually translate through behaviors or attitudes that strive to keep the present state of affairs (Such resistance/reluctance may influence the roll-out by deferring or backing off its starting, impeding its execution or preventing it), 3) the fatigue/burnout of staff engaged in integrated programming “in addition to so many other things” as described by many respondents, 4) the complexities of implementation arrangements with implementing partners (including joint execution in one area), and 5) the overcoming sectoral mandates or coordinating among actors and public institutions - the crux of the integrated approach.

**Identified opportunities.** According to the narratives of both UNICEF and implementing partners interviewees, the following opportunities were the most commonly identified: 1) despite the lack of common understanding of integrated programming, the striking majority of respondents was convinced of the essentiality of an approach to achieve desired outcomes within a “common framework”, 2) the cumulative experience gained by staff and organizations engaged in integrated

programming since 2018, 3) the existing partnerships and coordination seeds, and 4) the relentless exacerbation of needs/vulnerability.

*EQ5. What challenges have implementing partners faced in the roll out of integrated programming approach?*

According to the narratives of both UNICEF and implementing partners interviewees, the following challenges were the most commonly identified: 1) the fluctuations in how implementing partners “perceive” integration, 2) the difference in partners’ capacities (not all of them are equally cooperative in engaging in program coordination, given limited institutional capacities and incentives), 3) the institutional effort assumed by one person, and subsequent risks (i.e. frustration, burnout, lack of institutional memory, high turnover rate), 4) the challenges of operational support through platforms and institutions (related to their actual functionality, conflicting stakeholder interests, financial and institutional sustainability, and assessment of concrete contributions to program objectives), 5) the lack of recognized guidelines to showcase how integration contributes to addressing complex problems with interlinked components, and 6) the funding and project proposal imperatives (especially when it comes to very short cycles).

Which facet of integration has proved to be effective in the Lebanon context?

According to collated answers, effectiveness was particularly evident under the “convergence of sectors on the same area of catchment” (which was confirmed by 74.19% of respondents to the online survey), or through “the complementarity of sectors/interventions towards common goals that they cannot achieve on their own” (which was confirmed by 57% of respondents to the online survey). When it came to the assumption of sectors contributing to achieving each other's goals, 54.84% of respondents to the online survey could neither agree nor disagree, while only 20.43% confirmed it, 24.73% rejected it.

## **Efficiency**

The efficiency of the approach was rated as ***Partially Satisfactory***.

To what extent does UNICEF Lebanon have adequate structures, human and financial resources for effective programme integration? What management and coordination structure and mechanisms have been established/adopted/re-engineered within UNICEF LCO to implement the integrated approach? What worked and what needs to be strengthened? What could be done differently?

In 2018, UNICEF Lebanon concluded in its mid-term review that to reach increasingly vulnerable children, “strengthened focus on programmatic integration of services” was necessary. Without a holistic, full-fledged and documented “approach” to integration at the time of initiation, it was on the basis of the MTR programmatic recommendation that the LCO set out to design a number of programmatic interventions that sought to bring existing programmes closer together for more integrated and holistic services for the children they served.

As we considered in the present evaluation the approach to integration as embedded in policies, processes, and practices, the designed and achieved integrated programmes were an opportunity to observe the internal business processes that were designed, along with their respective governance structures to reflect the requirements that the given programme intended to meet and, consequently, support the development of required deliverables. Looking at the demonstrated effects of specific policies, processes or practices that were put in place helped us understand several 'how' and 'why' questions. These were considered, each within its respective theory and context, which underlines the limitations of generalizability beyond a particular programme.

The perception of interviewed UNICEF staff on policies, processes and practices which may have "hindered" or "promoted" integration added another layer of evidence to what resulted from the review of selected documents that were made available to the evaluator upon request. When asked to assess the assumption that "*UNICEF designed and put in place consistent, enabling and systematic internal policies and business processes for planning and implementing integrated programmes*", 41.93% confirmed it, while 31.18% did not have a specific answer, and 26.89% rejected it.

As deemed applicable in the interviews, the evaluator used probing to understand the different organizational and sectoral attempts at the policy, process and practice levels to address integration since 2018<sup>29</sup>.

**Programme governance.** Notwithstanding a significant level of inter-sectoral "permeability", the development of the governance structures in the integrated programmes was mostly perceived by respondents in the qualitative part of the evaluation as "highly structural and sectoralized" despite the marked efforts for integration and transdisciplinarity. Both quantitative and qualitative data revealed Both LCO staff members and implementing partners reported largely positive perceptions of the role of information sharing processes enacted for integrated programming purposes since 2018. Reported processes were in four directions and included: 1) downward ones (integrated programmes shared centrally produced resources (PowerPoint presentations, training materials, briefings with tailored inputs, good practices, evaluation reports). 2) upward ones (integrated programmes shared their good practices, lessons and developed tools with upper management, 3) sideways ones (integrated programmes involved exchanges and sharing between sectoral and cross-sectoral programmes), and 4) outward ones (integrated programmes included extending information sharing beyond UNICEF, i.e., implementing partners and local communities engaged in learning events). However, in the absence of a conceptual framework and a full-fledged approach to integrated programming, majority of UNICEF respondents acknowledged the need to "automate and systemize such processes - among others - "as reported.

That said, majority of UNICEF staff respondents also recognized that through the past and present relevant evaluation exercises, enough evidence was built to admit that both "full" and "partial"

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<sup>29</sup> Both the sectoral ones, and the ones that transcend the boundaries of established institutional responsibilities of individual departments and programmes.

integration approaches may be beneficial to the wellbeing of vulnerable children, especially when compared to non-integrated single sector approaches. According to the majority of responses, “full” and “partial” are not “mutually exclusive”, and “the decision on which way to go is highly contingent on the management informed decision in this regard”, as portrayed by a respondent, and “the adoption of integration without the renunciation of other implementation paradigms may result in the formation of parallel structures that coexist with older but stronger ones that focus on business as usual” according to another statement. A decision that should according to narratives, be premised first and foremost on open and institutional communication and collaboration that are embedded in a cultural and ecological context where no element can be considered independently. Based on the narratives, only a “customized” and “context-sensitive” approach in such a highly complex environment – will help to adapt policies and practices to deliver a holistic approach to integrated programming.

**Budget allocation.** According to the situational analysis published by UNICEF in 2021 “The situation of children and young people in the Lebanese crisis, Development Pathways”<sup>30</sup>: “post-COVID-19, UNICEF has started globally facing a contraction in its funding along with stricter funding allocations, which directed the organization towards more strategic and systems-strengthening approaches to achieve its priorities”. Within the Lebanese context, “the LCO, with the concentration of humanitarian funding it had, needs to go beyond engaging with donor-aided strategies such as the LCRP 2017–21 and the 2020 Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework (3RF) and identify entry points for engaging in longer- term reform processes in the country”.

Neither primary nor secondary data gave enough credence to recognize systematic internal budget allocation processes put in place that “facilitate” or “hinder” integration in the LCO. Whether through the review of documentation or the bulk of interviews with both UNICEF and implementing partners staff, it was obvious that funding integration programmes was one of the biggest challenges faced by stakeholders. The current situation of funding/budget allocation was described as “far from perfect” for the following reasons: 1) the nature of project-based/results-based time-bound funding (“very short cycles” considering the “desired changes”), 2) the “fragility” and “volatility” of the context and the constant change/exacerbation of needs, 3) UNICEF’s business model and its established sectoral leaderships, 4) the constraints of earmarked funding and donors’ priorities (Majority of grants are heavily earmarked and projectized), and 5)

The LCO’s resource plan should take into consideration actual income and expenditure to develop provisional estimates for the years to come (based on an established approach to integrated programming), while mitigating any potential risks that may emerge from global crises through regular review of fundraising strategies. The office should also continue to monitor the effectiveness of the adopted strategies and make the appropriate adjustments as financial variables change.

**Proposal development.** Neither through the review of documentation (i.e., Donor Proposal SOPs, PD template), nor the qualitative datasets on processes and timeline for donor proposals and submissions within the LCO, there was specific reference to systematic “integration” or “integrated

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<sup>30</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/lebanon/reports/situation-children-and-young-people-lebanese-crisis-2020>

programming". When asked to validate the assumption that "UNICEF implemented an integrated, horizontal, peer-based approach to programme and project formulation, enabling discussion and incorporation of the broader developmental and socioeconomic issues and key factors that have a bearing on the success, ownership, sustainability, and larger impact of the programmes", respondents' answers were almost equally distributed between those who agreed, those who rejected and those who could neither agree nor reject it. According to interviewed implementing partners, it was mostly because of the established coordination structures that they heard of "integrated programming" at least once from UNICEF staff, as a motive or drive for developing proposals, although neither consistently nor systematically.

**Partnerships.** Neither through the review of documentation (i.e., PRC SOPs, PRC checklists), nor through the qualitative datasets on processes and timeline for donor proposals and submissions within the LCO, there was specific reference to systematic "integration" or "integrated programming". Consistently with resource mobilization processes, many implementing partners reporting having heard about "integration" or "integrated programming" during the discussions between programme staff and implementing partners. The most commonly reported issues under partnerships by both UNICEF and implementing partners staff were: 1) the lack of a holistic approach to integration driven by a "mother" theory of change, which should be in turn reflected in the partnership agreement, with enough indication about the contribution of the partner to the intended changes, with appropriate measurement tools, 2) the lack of technical guidance (advice, support or tools) on how to design, implement or report on integration, and 3) the ambiguity that arises when an implementing partner signs off agreements with more than one sector (which incurs more requirements that are not necessarily met in a systematic way, particularly on the quantification of results, the contribution of UNICEF and implementing partners, the attribution of results, accountability measures that include monitoring, etc.).

#### Implementation.

- a. **Overall implementation.** Most UNICEF and implementing staff interviewees saw the implementation processes of the integrated programmes as "relatively efficient", especially given the complications of the COVID-19 global pandemic, which started just as many programmes were in active design (49.46% of respondents to the online survey confirmed this assumption). However, according to anecdotal reports, most partners adapted to remote preparation, including communication via email, videoconference, and phone, adjusting project workplans and stakeholder engagement plans, and evaluating the need for design modification with decreased cofinancing. In addition, according to implementing partners staff, the LCO and field offices provided satisfactory technical, management and HR support, particularly throughout implementation. Some delays were associated with routine internal governance decisions. In addition, UNICEF teams developed and applied quality control tools which proved efficiency at the time of use (regular site visits, progress reports...) to maintain oversight on implementation and expenditure, although neither consistently nor systematically.

Despite the lack of a full-fledged approach to integration, both primary and secondary data about the implemented integrated programmes revealed that several steps were designed and put in place to support partners in optimizing the operationalization of these programmes. For example, this included for the ICWBP at the design/planning level: Tagging of program and referral targets in education and child protection project documents with specific responsibilities regarding referrals across sectors, service mapping, and the establishment of an integration database with all the services per locality (to facilitate referrals across services), reporting through logframe indicators and/or partners' quarterly reports, and RIMS roll out and training. While at the rollout/implementation level, it included: coordination structures have been created at field level, integration monitoring tools were developed for UNICEF staff, the flexibility and agility of programme services that were delivered through the remote modality, and the joint efforts with education partners to mainstream psychosocial support sessions during remote learning.

There is no clear guidance on how integration should be embedded in business processes in the country office (figure 3 below). This seems to be linked to lack of integrated results in country programme, as well as to lack of comprehensive guidance on how integration should be implemented.

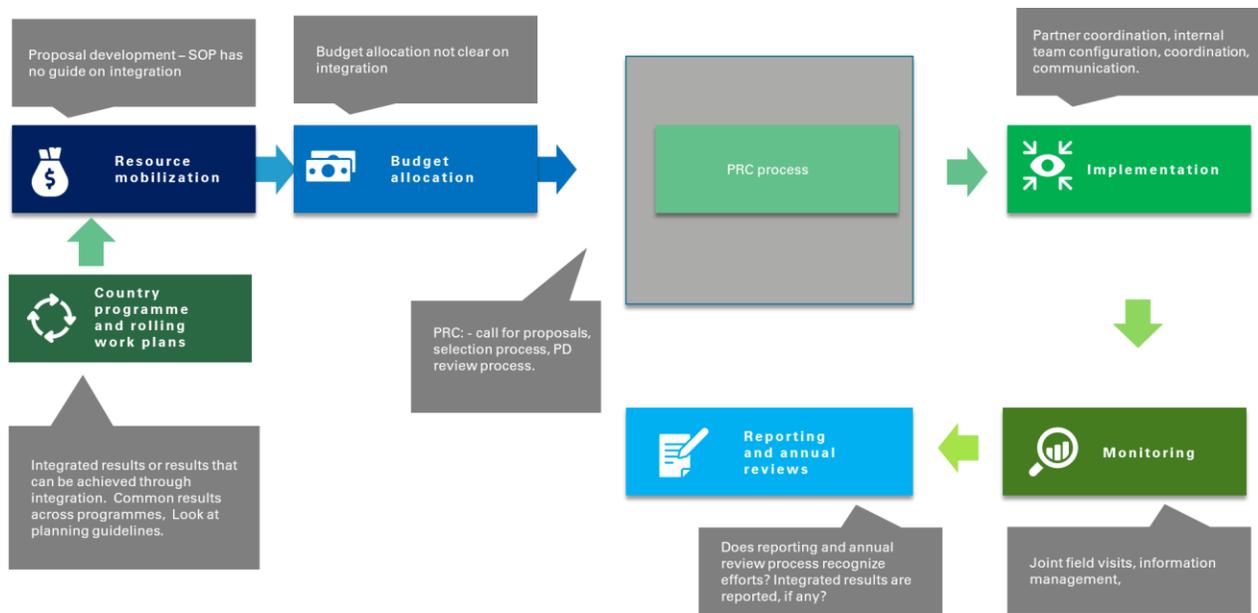
- b. **Programme staffing.** Staffing seemed to be “adequate and the skill mix seems right to meet the intended results”. As work mostly included elements of soft assistance (e.g., standards development, training, policy advocacy) it makes the application of conventional efficiency indicators to these areas not feasible (i.e., procurement of assets, comparative analysis to alternatives...). Both UNICEF and implementing partners staff have shown to be resilient to the rapid and drastic changes by managing to keep the same response pace. While this observation can be of great significance by means of change, it remains limited to the particular context of the evaluation exercise and the limited generalizability (due to the qualitative nature of a considerable part of results), and hence, needs further investigation.
- c. **Coordination.** According to both UNICEF and implementing partners staff, coordination processes established and activated since 2018, and the role of “individual champions” have played a great role in the achievement of desired results (monitoring and ensuring coherence among interventions and sectors and facilitating collaborative engagement with partners to advance change in mindsets). According to majority of respondents, this has built up on “constantly assessed lessons learned” that ensured a regular re-consideration and re-adjustment of roles and responsibilities (programme governance). Also, these established “light-touch coordination processes” through the routine sectoral meetings, facilitated, although neither consistently nor systematically, a “deeper engagement of stakeholders around the constantly increasing needs and vulnerabilities with clearer pictures on roles, responsibilities and leadership”, which was really well perceived by partners, as many expressed their willingness to participate and provide inputs in similar future processes to build up a holistic approach to integration. This picture was validated through the distribution of answers on this assumption in the online survey, as 77.42% of respondents confirmed it.

- d. **Accountability.** The accountability prospects were particularly obvious in the qualitative datasets. According to most UNICEF respondents, the integrated programmes allowed for participating staff to have “a stake” in the programme and “shape” their contribution towards the desired objectives. Whether programme staff or ex-rolling officers, most respondents reported several types of accountability mechanisms that were designed and included in the different programmes, to various extents (i.e. inclusion of indicators in individual performance processes, definition of reporting lines, M&E tool which involves communities and partner, activating the RIMS, the Child Protection Information Management System, GBV Information Management System, the Management Information System for social assistance and youth-level monitoring, third-party monitoring, the Activity Info<sup>31</sup>, the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT)<sup>32</sup>, ATM monitoring and safety monitoring, related to accessing cash grants, HADDI Operational surveys and monitoring, grievance and redress mechanism, and call center in place to collect and resolve complaints, answer questions and provide updates).
- e. **Communication.** Whether among UNICEF respondents or implementing partners, it was obvious the LCO staff engaged in the implementation of integrated programmes were sufficiently open and transparent in the communication of uncertainties and risks in an understandable way, however, from their own – personal – perspective. Even if communication on integration was not framed neither consistently nor systematically according to respondents, it facilitated learning on the part of partners to a good extent, as they came “in a user-friendly and highly interactive and user-friendly manner” according to one respondent.

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<sup>31</sup> a software for data collection and reporting which works online, to report on activities geographically dispersed and implemented by multiple organizations.

<sup>32</sup> Which establishes common principles and processes for managing cash transfers among UN agencies that have adopted the approach across all countries and operational context, ensuring capacity assessment, cash transfers and report, assurance activities and capacity development in financial management for UNICEF's implementing partners.



**Figure 3. Integration and business processes in the country office.**

*EQ6. Are there more cost-effective ways of achieving programme integration?*

Efficiency posed the question whether, given the budget, the specified outputs could have been achieved at a lower cost. There was near consensus amongst respondents that the integrated programming has been achieved since 2018 with little waste and duplication, given its “very innovative and creative” aspects. The Evaluator did not have any comparative data (baseline data or counterfactual evidence) to make a fair cost-efficiency judgment.

## Sustainability

The sustainability of the approach was rated as ***Partially Satisfactory***.

*EQ7. To what extent is integrated programming institutionalized in UNICEF Lebanon and considered in programming and operational activities? What steps could be taken to strengthen structures and systems to support integration? What capacity needs to be developed to ensure the sustainability of integrated programming efforts and benefits?*

In the qualitative part of the evaluation, both UNICEF and implementing partners respondents reported: 1) that the integrated programmes addressed institutional engagement of stakeholders in the design and implementation (particularly through coordination efforts), although neither consistently nor systematically. This assumption was confirmed through the online survey as 51.6% of respondents confirmed this assumption, 2) largely positive perceptions of the role of knowledge sharing processes (i.e., digital youth trainings), and more specifically, “individual learning processes”. However, the triangulation of results revealed that individual learning was not a

sufficient condition for establishing systematic organizational learning. Both UNICEF and implementing partners staff acknowledged that the strong teams that were enacted in the implementation of integrated programmes were able to enact, to a large extent, the interplay between individuals and systems (organizations). Most of the time, according to anecdotal evidence, staff from different levels with different functions were called upon to share their personal expertise, knowledge, and skills they managed to cumulate throughout their experience on integration with UNICEF since 2018. However, there was not enough evidence on institutional efforts to build a systematic transactive memory, where knowledge on integration is gathered, stored, and shared based on these 'salient' acquisitions based on individual exposure to integration. The extent to which knowledge resources and interventions are expected to be sustained after a programme closes varies by programme and largely relies on its nature and timeline, the geographic area and map of actors, and partner funding. Interviewed partners agreed that sustaining those after closure would be valuable, 3) the lack of a long-term vision in the absence of clear exit strategies as portrayed by many respondents, both from UNICEF and partner organizations: "What would happens when the funds end and everyone leaves the center, who takes care of those children?", and 4) their concerns on the "viability" of a formalized approach to full integrated programming, as many interviewees, both from UNICEF and partner organizations, questioned whether "the increased focus on the integrated programming approach will compromise delivery against sectoral commitments and accountability to the various stakeholders (including beneficiaries)... and result in decreased funding for individual focal areas (considering the funding challenges, resource mobilization challenges, donors' preferences ...)".

## LESSONS LEARNED

- **A context-sensitive and context-specific approach to integrated programming.** In the extremely complex realities of fragile contexts such as the Lebanese one, a participatory engagement of local stakeholders (including implementing partners), and a continuous monitoring of internal and external supporting and constraining factors affecting planning and operations are key factors to ensure the successful design and implementation of a context-sensitive and context-specific approach to integration.
- **Operationalizing an approach to integrated programming.** Integrated programming includes joint planning, leveraging resources, evaluating outcomes together, and a holistic well-coordinated approach to integrated programming would essentially rely on buy-in from senior management, dedicated and fully supported human resource capacity, and advocacy for addressing macro- and micro-level system and sub-system requirements and challenges.
- **Data governance challenges.** During the process of evaluation, it has become obvious that data availability and data accessibility is a significant challenge in the absence of an overall approach, conceptual framework, common results frameworks and integration-specific cross-sectoral indicators that derive from the overarching theory of change. This was thoroughly addressed by UNICEF M&E team who supported the exercise. However, should

a decision be made to adopt a full-fledged approach to integrated programming, it is important to consider sufficient time and efforts for data governance to consider which data is needed, which data is missing, and customize efforts to address the gaps.

- **Building the technical capacity of human resource.** Dedicated and capable human resource capacity is crucial and critical for the effective design and implementation of integrated programmes. When there is possibility for on-job training should be considered to continue supporting UNICEF staff and implementing partners with international expertise, while ensuring a sufficient timeline for monitoring progress and shadowing the work along the whole process.
- **Evaluation of integrated programming.** In the absence of a unified definition of “integrated programming”, a standardized evaluation methodology for it, or baseline data on stakeholders’ perceptions, the evaluator, should strike an acceptable balance between her own perceptions, primary data sources (respondents’ perceptions), and secondary data sources (perceptions available in the literature).
- **Design of integrated programming modalities.** Within UNICEF’s business model, it is of critical importance to consider factorial design of integrated programmes to allow estimates of the effects of potential sectoral and cross-sectoral synergistic effects. Also, it is important to consider assessing the effects of management, intervention and operations activities separately.

# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the evaluation suggested the Conclusions and corresponding Recommendations. While many are categorized headings or descriptors, the recommendations reflected in Table 5 below are by no-means exhaustive, should not be seen as free-standing or mutually exclusive, and should not be read in rank order, as many should be carried out concurrently.

**Table 4. Main conclusions and corresponding recommendations**

Main rating per criterion	Main conclusion	Recommendation
<p><b>Relevance</b> Partially Satisfactory</p>	<p><b>Conclusion 1:</b> Integrated programmes were designed and executed while missing an overarching approach to integration</p>	<p>Recommendation 1: Select an adequate design for a holistic approach to “full” or “partial” integration (which are not mutually exclusive).</p> <p>To select an adequate approach design, it is imperative to gain a common understanding of both “integration” and “approach to integrated programming” in in a country such as Lebanon. The suggested framework would ultimately regard the Lebanese context as the system within which the approach operates, and programmes as subsystems conceived to induce change in this context. The approach would also account for fundamental features of interacting or interdependent components that form a complex whole (i.e., tangible elements such as the sectoral levels of intervention and the hierarchical organization, and intangible elements such as personal motives and drives, resistance to change, individual bias, cultural behaviors, values, norms, language expressions and which are linked by interactions). Further to consultations between UNICEF and implementing partners, specific actions include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopting a consensual operational definition of “integration” and “approach to integrated programming” (possibilities are not limited to one “model” or “one approach” as there is no universally standard definition of integration in the development and humanitarian</li> </ul>

Main rating per criterion	Main conclusion	Recommendation
		<p>contexts, for definitions of integration can range from the high-level planning of multi-sectoral goals, to partnerships between individual programs or activities). LCO and implementing partners should consider the specific multiple operational definitions that apply to the level of intended integration (approach, strategy, work plan, programme level, project level, etc.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopting a consensual design of the intended approach to integrated programming,</li> <li>• Clarify roles and responsibilities from the strategy, down to the programme and project levels</li> <li>• Adopt of a programmatic approach to integration</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Conclusion 2:</b> The adopted approach to integration showed strong synergies, but there is a scope for stronger integration should a holistic approach to integration be adopted and operationalized.</p>	<p><b>Recommendation 2:</b> UNICEF LCO and implementing partners should work to further catalyze and demonstrate the value addition of a programmatic approach to integration. Specific actions include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNICEF addresses the identified specificities, commonalities and challenges in the design of integrated programmes.</li> <li>• UNICEF ensures that coordination processes are designed/strengthened before new projects or at least with some logical staging so that they are not designed fully in parallel. Coordination and integration role during design is intensive and may require funding beyond the project grant. Depending on program objectives and scope, additional funds should be available.</li> <li>• UNICEF should consider inclusive activities that support systems-based thinking - such as the midterm systems-based workshops to review drivers and barriers -and adapt</li> </ul>

Main rating per criterion	Main conclusion	Recommendation
		<p>accordingly (both internally with staff, and externally with implementing partners). Such reflection and agility are important processes for supporting progress toward transformational change.</p>
<p><b>Coherence</b> Partially satisfactory</p>	<p><b>Conclusion 3:</b> Project-level and program-level reporting still have to demonstrate the value addition of taking a programmatic approach to integration. While improvements are noted in the design of reporting and M&amp;E systems, important challenges remain.</p>	<p><b>Recommendation 3:</b> Further to inclusive and open consultations, UNICEF LCO and partners should develop a common results frameworks and integration-specific cross-sectoral indicators that derive from the overarching theory of change that would be the cornerstone of the adopted strategy to integration.</p> <p>UNICEF should also support partners in articulating and adapting Theories of Change (which should be reflected in the partnership agreement document with their intended contribution to the desired results to allow the assessment of progress along the implementation of the strategy.</p>

Main rating per criterion	Main conclusion	Recommendation
<p><b>Effectiveness</b></p> <p>Partially Satisfactory</p>	<p><b>Conclusion 4:</b> In the absence of a defined approach to integration, there was no clear documentation of the role the LCO was supposed to assume in this regard. Ensuring a clarity of roles between UNICEF and implementing partners is critical, including coordination, integration and reporting. The value-added potential of the strategy is there but must be measured against stand-alone programme achievements. Current program-level reporting must be improved through monitoring and reporting requirements in project cycle practices.</p>	<p><b>Recommendation 4:</b> To make ongoing efforts in program-level and project reporting effective, the intended approach to integrated programming should include a clarification of roles for it to be able to holistically deliver on the promise of the whole being more than the sum of its parts.</p>
<p><b>Efficiency</b></p> <p>Partially Satisfactory</p>	<p><b>Conclusion 5:</b> UNICEF managed to put in place sufficiently adequate structures, human and financial resources for the effective implementation of integrated programmes. Substantial process improvements are needed for the institutionalization of a full-fledged approach to integration.</p>	<p><b>Recommendation 5:</b> UNICEF should solidly institutionalize organizational structures to support the effective design and implementation of a full-fledged approach to integrated programming (either through the reinforcement of existing processes that facilitate it or the creation of new ones). Specific actions include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sectors assessing and recognizing, both separately and collectively, the additional burdens in time and resources that required towards transformational change and adjusting workloads accordingly. For this, they should plan to conduct in-depth organizational assessments of their staff members' motivation for integration, current capacity for</li> </ul>

Main rating per criterion	Main conclusion	Recommendation
		<p>integration, enablers and barriers, risks and benefits and capacity for organizational change before a decision is made.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once any changes to processes or to the organizational structures are agreed upon and put in practice to facilitate integration, they should be formalized via mechanisms such as project team processes, structural relationships, and provision of incentives.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sustainability</b> Partially Satisfactory</p>	<p><b>Conclusion 6:</b> It is still early to report on many individual, institutional and system-level benefits, and results vary across programmes.</p>	<p><b>Recommendation 6:</b> Initiate awareness raising efforts to sensitize the different stakeholders on the importance of a “common research agenda” that sets the ground for assessing the costs and benefits of a holistic approach to integration, exploring if outcomes from integration last longer than single sector approaches, identifying best practices and influencing policy-level decision-making.</p>

# ANNEXES

Annex I	Terms of Reference
Annex II	Theory of Change
Annex III	Evaluation Matrix
Annex IV	List of Documents Reviewed
Annex V	List of Interview People
Annex VI	Data Collection Tools
	Topic Guide
	Online Survey
	Informed Consent Form
Annex VII	IRB Approval Letter
Annex VIII	Bio of the Evaluator
Annex IX	List of Tables and List of Figures

## Annex I Terms of Reference

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANCY/CONTRACT

Section:	PRIME	Date:	June 12, 2023
Title:	Evaluation of Integrated approach to Programming in UNICEF Lebanon	Duty station:	Beirut, Lebanon
Reporting to:	Evaluation Specialist (PRIME)	Contract type:	Individual
Duration:	4 months	Start date:	May 2022

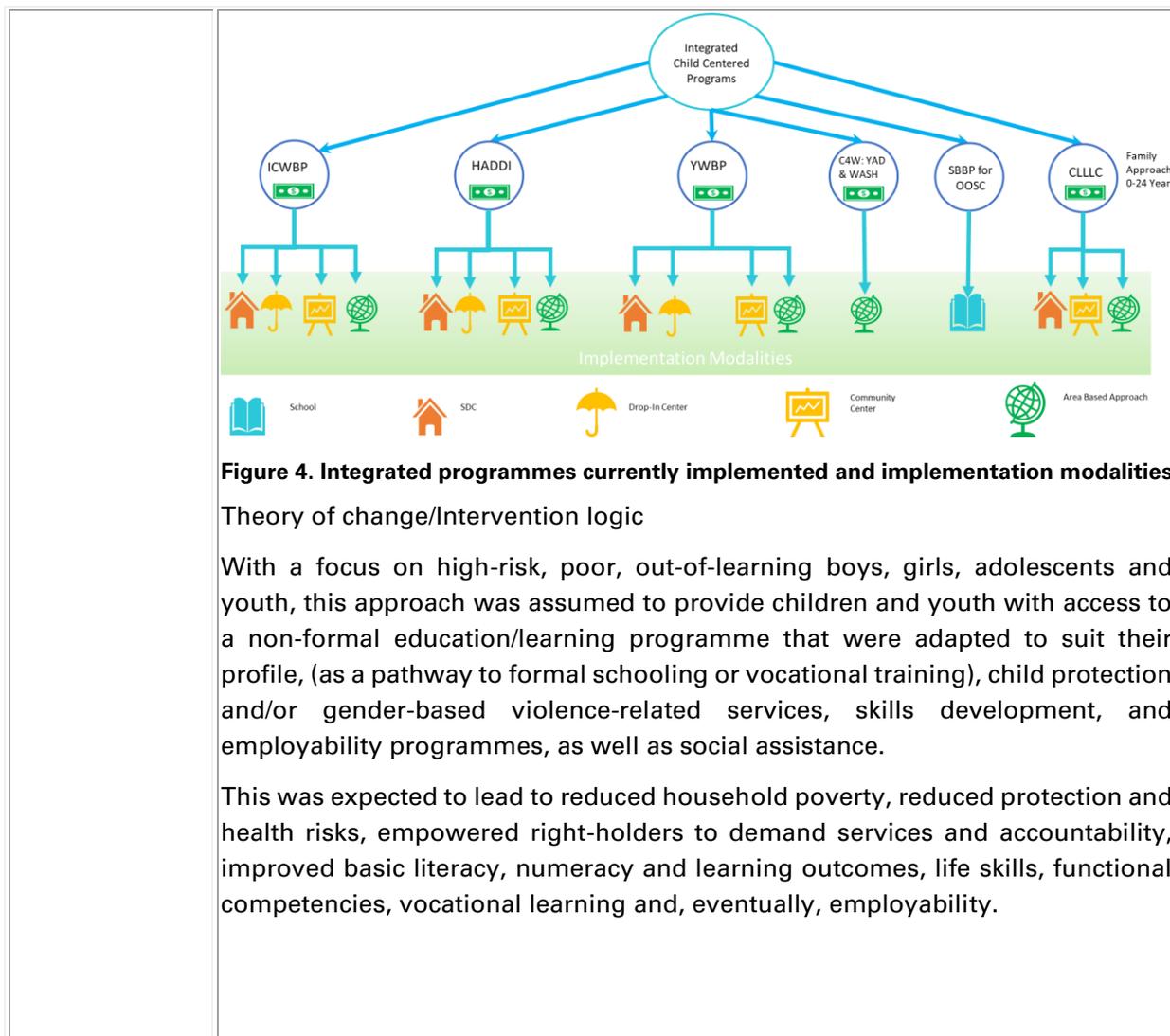
Section	Content
Background	<p>Context</p> <p>UNICEF programmes in Lebanon aim to achieve equitable outcomes for the poorest, and most disadvantaged children and families by working with partners to address policy, systems, and access to and demand for services at the national, subnational and community levels. UNICEF also aims to respond to immediate humanitarian needs, while building resilience to shocks and addressing development deficits. The reality of daily life for most people in Lebanon has significantly changed since mid-2019, with severe economic crisis affecting people’s ability to access and afford most basic needs. Political instability, the COVID-19 pandemic, waves of social protests, and the catastrophe of the Beirut Port Explosion exacerbated the economic turmoil. These layered events have complicated humanitarian and development programmes and services, pushing more families into poverty. Multidimensional child poverty impact children’s rights, including civil rights, health and wellbeing, education, safety and security, economic rights, sexual exploitation and abuse, and children in vulnerable situations.</p> <p>Integrated approach to programming in UNICEF Lebanon</p>

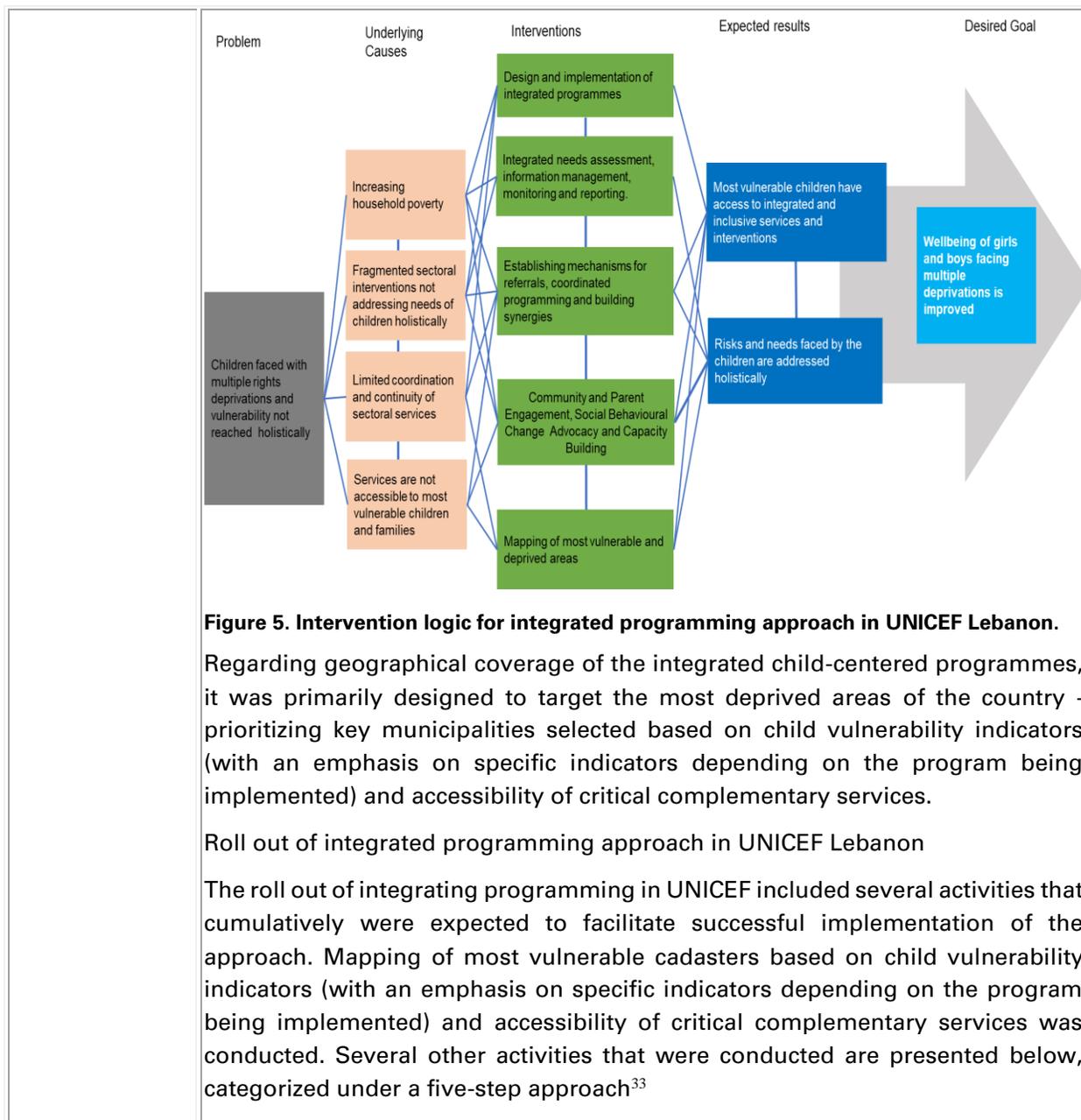
Integrated programming is the geographic and sectoral convergence of UNICEF and partner's interventions on most vulnerable communities for greater impact. It is an approach to creating safer and more resilient communities through the design and implementation of programmes that respond holistically to a children's needs, priorities, risks, and vulnerabilities. According to a [Study on Integrated Programming in UNICEF Humanitarian Action](#), three facets of integration exist in the organization, all dependent on programming context. The three facets are:

1. Contribution – sectors contribute to achieving each other's goals, especially the CCCs.
2. Convergence – sector interventions converge on the same geographic locations.
3. Outcome – sector interventions are combined to achieve an outcome that they could not achieve individually.

UNICEF Lebanon strives to efficiently and effectively reach and serve the most vulnerable children living in the most vulnerable localities and enhance community access to integrated and inclusive social services and resilience-building interventions. Although the country programme 2016-2021 (extended to 2022) was organized into traditional sectoral outcomes to allow alignment with government line ministries, promoting integration through a life-cycle approach with a focus on 0–5 years, primary school ages (6–14), and adolescence and youth (15–24), sections were encouraged to work together towards achieving common outcomes. Sectoral programmes were expected to identify opportunities for integration through common gateways for service delivery, strong referral mechanisms, and monitoring systems. In addition, with-in programme, integration was expected to ensure children are reached with a comprehensive package of service that responds to their needs, profiles and age group.

In response to the worsening economic conditions in the country and with an increasing number of children faced with multiple rights deprivations and vulnerability, UNICEF strengthened focus on programmatic integration of services to reach increasingly vulnerable children. Programmatic interventions that sought to improve well-being of children facing multiple deprivations by providing holistic services and sensitization packages to vulnerable (both refugees and Lebanese families) were designed and implemented (figure 1 below and annex for details).





<sup>33</sup> The Five-Step approach is modified from a six-step approach suggested by UNICEF WCARO - Integrated Programming: From Theory to Practice, September 2019.

	Determining most vulnerable localities/communities	Mapping existing services at the locality and community level	Mapping partners and their capacities	Development of integrated partnerships	De se
	<p>Vulnerability assessment and identification of most vulnerable municipalities and cadasters</p> <p>Based on the Multi-Deprivation Index (MDI), 251 cadastres were identified as the most vulnerable</p>	<p>Implementing partners meetings to facilitate mapping of services and encouraging partners coordination and collaboration through area based taskforces</p> <p>Sharing of partner Programme Documents with other implementing partners</p>	<p>A common framework for referrals for UNICEF services was developed and disseminated to all implementing partners</p>	<p>Implementing partners meetings, including area-based meetings, used as forums for dissemination and knowledge sharing, including RIMS trainings.</p> <p>A common framework for referrals for UNICEF services was developed and disseminated to all implementing partners</p>	
<p>Management arrangements to support integration that include focal points for programme integration</p>					
<p><b>Figure 6. roll out of integrated programming approach in the country office.</b></p> <p>To oversee the roll out in the country office, focal points for programmes integration were identified and several coordination meetings were held. Implementing partners meetings, including area-based meetings were regularly held, to act as forums for dissemination and knowledge sharing, including RIMS (Referrals Information Management System) training. Area based meetings were expected to bring partners together and facilitate mapping of services and referrals encouraging partners coordination and collaboration through area-based taskforces.</p> <p>With all the above efforts, UNICEF Lebanon country office would like to learn what worked well and what did not and why. Documenting best practices shall help to inform the implementation of the approach in the new country programme.</p>					
<p>Purpose and Objectives</p>	<p>The overall purpose of this evaluation is to provide an impartial and independent assessment of the extent to which integrated programming approach has been implemented in UNICEF Lebanon and whether it shall achieve intended objectives. The evaluation shall also examine which factors have proved critical in helping or hindering it and draw lessons for future programming.</p> <p>The evaluation shall support learning by highlighting lessons and best practices that should be continued/taken to scale or disseminated either within the programmes or more widely within UNICEF. Based on lessons learned, UNICEF Lebanon seeks to improve programme integration in implementation of the country programme 2023 -2027.</p> <p>The evaluation shall specifically:</p>				

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze the relevance, effectiveness, coherence, efficiency, and sustainability of integration to the selected programmes of UNICEF, by looking at facilitating and hindering factors, key entry points, missed opportunities, and governance arrangements.</li> <li>• Identifying any good practice, lessons learnt regarding what worked and did not work, and potential areas for improvement for better design and implementation of integrated programmes.</li> <li>• Making specific recommendations on how to strengthen integration across the length and breadth of UNICEF programmes in Lebanon.</li> </ul>
Intended users	<p>Primary users of the evaluation are UNICEF management and programme teams in Lebanon who shall directly utilize the evaluation findings to adjust programme designs, implementation, improve its quality and to guide the future direction of the programmes. Secondary users include the UNICEF Implementing partners that deliver services and programmes. Findings shall be disseminated broadly in UNICEF to facilitate learning.</p>
Scope	<p>This evaluation shall cover the all-UNICEF Lebanon programme components, from 2018 to date.</p> <p>Geographical scope: all governorates.</p>
Evaluation criteria and key evaluation questions	<p>The key questions for this evaluation were formulated based on the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development’s Development Assistance Committee (OECD- DAC) criteria of relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability. Human rights, gender and equity shall be mainstreamed in all the criteria selected and in line with the UNEG guidelines on gender and human rights.</p> <p>These criteria shall best inform the key evaluation questions. Discussions shall be held with the evaluation team during inception phase and depending on evaluability, for inclusion of any other criteria that could help to deliver a high-quality evaluation.</p> <p>Q1. Relevance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To what extent is UNICEF Lebanon's approach to integrated programming fit-for-purpose considering country context, programme’s scope (types of programming across humanitarian and development) and implementation modalities?</li> <li>- How relevant are different programme integration facets currently in use considering the overall humanitarian context / the very much vertical sectoral type of approach?</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To what extent are UNICEF programmes internally coherent in terms of objectives, theories of change and M&amp;E systems to facilitate integration?</li> </ul> <p>Q2. Efficiency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To what extent does UNICEF Lebanon have adequate structures, human and financial resources for effective programme integration? What management and coordination structure and mechanisms have been established/ adopted/ re-engineered within UNICEF LCO to implement the integrated approach? What worked and what needs to be strengthened? What could be done differently?</li> <li>- Are there more cost-effective ways of achieving programme integration?</li> </ul> <p>Q3. Effectiveness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To what extent has UNICEF’s approach to integrated programming been effective? What are the greatest strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to effective programme integration?</li> <li>- What challenges have implementing partners faced in the roll out of integrated programming approach?</li> <li>- To what extent have initiatives and mechanisms established in UNICEF Lebanon Country office been effective in enabling integration?</li> <li>- Which facet of integration has proved to be effective in the Lebanon context?</li> </ul> <p>Q4. Coherence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To what extent is there a commonly shared understanding of integrated programming across UNICEF Lebanon and its implementing partners? What specificities and complementarities can be identified?</li> <li>- To what extent have UNICEF programmes been specifically designed and implemented to promote integration?</li> <li>- To what extent do UNICEF Lebanon’s internal policies and practices promote or hinder integrated programming? How could such policies, procedures and practices be strengthened?</li> </ul> <p>Q5. Sustainability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To what extent is Integrated programming institutionalized in UNICEF Lebanon and considered in programming and operational activities? What steps could be taken to strengthen structures and systems to support integration?</li> <li>- What capacity needs to be developed to ensure the sustainability of integrated programming efforts and benefits?</li> </ul>
<p>Evaluation approach and Methods</p>	<p><b>Design:</b> This formative evaluation is expected to use a non – experimental design, drawing from ‘theory-based’ approach. UNICEF envisages a participatory evaluation that the evaluation team shall consider appropriate for the</p>

programming context. The evaluation shall use a mixed method approach to answer the evaluation questions, with multiple methods, both qualitative and quantitative, and several data sources to ensure that data is sufficiently triangulated to deliver aggregate evaluation outcomes.

**Methodology:** a theory-based approach to evaluation relying on qualitative methods is recommended. The methodology shall consist of an extensive documentation review, interviews with key staff and partners, direct observation through field visits and an online survey of UNICEF and implementing partners staff when possible. The evaluator should aim to promote utilization of the evaluation, by embedding rapid feedback sessions and roundtable discussions where possible. The equity and gender aspects should be considered when needed.

The methodology to be deployed is detailed below:

- Secondary data: This shall include desk review of key documents and relevant studies and assessments, analysis of data from reports, studies technical data from the reports, and monitoring data. UNICEF shall provide all required documents related to integrated programming.

- Primary data collection through data collection methods based on type of information and evaluation questions; these could include:

- Focus group discussion with local partners, beneficiaries, other key stakeholders.
- Key informant interviews and group interviews with key stakeholders including UNICEF Partners, relevant local authorities, and other stakeholders.
- Direct observation: field visits to selected sites (Field Offices).
- Process mapping.
- Facilitating learning workshops to map the existing processes.
- If needed and considered feasible, an online survey may be added.

Following the desk review, the evaluation team shall elaborate and fine tune the methodology during the inception phase as deemed necessary.

Potential information sources

During the inception phase, the evaluator(s) shall be expected to identify any gaps in the available information to answer evaluation questions and develop a plan to collect such information. An evaluation design matrix should be designed to structurally present how evaluation questions shall be answered and data sources.

For document review, the following documentation shall be availed:

- UNICEF country programme Documents and strategy notes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mid Term review report</li> <li>- Country Programme Evaluation</li> <li>- Rolling workplans</li> <li>- Evaluations</li> <li>- Reviews and analysis that have covered the integrated programming in the country office.</li> </ul>
Ethical Considerations	<p>The evaluation shall be carried out in accordance with the ethical principles and standards defined by the United Nations Evaluation Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a. Confidentiality:</b> The assessment must respect the rights of the persons providing information, guaranteeing their anonymity and confidentiality.</li> <li><b>b. Accountability:</b> The report should identify any conflicts or differences of opinion that may have arisen between the consultants and/or between the consultant and those responsible for the programme component regarding the findings and/or recommendations of the evaluation. The entire team must confirm the results presented, with any disagreements to be indicated.</li> <li><b>c. Integrity:</b> The evaluator shall need to highlight issues not specifically identified in the Terms of Reference, in order to obtain a more complete analysis of the program component</li> <li><b>d. Independence:</b> The evaluation team must ensure that it remains independent of the program under evaluation, and should not be associated with its management, implementation or any other element of it.</li> <li><b>e. Incidents:</b> If problems arise during fieldwork, or at any other time during the evaluation, they should be reported immediately to the Evaluation Manager. If this is not done, the existence of such problems can in no way be used to justify the impossibility of achieving the results foreseen by UNICEF in these terms of reference.</li> <li><b>f. Validity of information:</b> The consultant must ensure the accuracy of the information collected during the preparation of the reports and shall be responsible for the information presented in the final report.</li> <li><b>g. Intellectual property:</b> Using the different sources of information, the consultant must respect the intellectual property rights of the institutions and communities consulted.</li> <li><b>h. Submission of reports:</b> If the submission of reports is postponed, or in the event that the quality of the reports submitted is significantly lower than what has been agreed, the sanctions provided for in these terms of reference shall apply.</li> </ul>

	<p>The evaluation consulting firm should adhere to the following UNEG and UNICEF norms and standards and is expected to clearly identify any potential ethical issues and approaches, as well as the processes for ethical review and oversight of the evaluation process in their proposal. Copies of all these documents shall be provided upon request:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Standards for Evaluation in the UN System</li> <li>• United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms for Evaluation in the UN System, including impartiality, independence, quality, transparency, consultative process</li> <li>• Ethical Guidelines for UN Evaluations and the UNICEF procedure for ethical standards in research, evaluation, data collection and analysis shall guide the overall process</li> <li>• UNICEF adapted evaluation report standards and GEROS</li> <li>• The evaluation should incorporate the human rights-based and gender perspective and be based on results-based management principles and logical framework analysis, in compliance with UNEG guidelines on gender and human rights.</li> </ul> <p>The evaluation team is required to clearly identify any potential ethical issues and approaches, as well as the processes for ethical review and oversight of the evaluation process in their proposal. Owing to the envisaged participation of human subjects in the evaluation, the evaluation team should seek ethical review board approval either from a recognized Institutional Review Board in Lebanon or via UNICEF’s LTA for ethical approval.</p>
Report Structure	<p>The report should be written in a style accessible to the general audience and within an 80-pages limit. The executive summary should not exceed 5 pages, while including a summary of each section of the report and being aligned with the structure of the full report. The report should be in English and submitted electronically in Word MS format. The structure of the report should be logical and succinct (e.g., background and objectives before the findings and findings are presented before the conclusion). The following order could be adopted for the report:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Table of contents, list of annexes/figures/tables, etc.</li> <li>II. List of Acronyms</li> <li>III. Executive Summary (2 – 5 pages)</li> <li>IV. Introduction &amp; Background</li> <li>V. Methodology</li> <li>VI. Limitations</li> <li>VII. Ethical Considerations</li> <li>VIII. Results, Discussion, &amp; Recommendations</li> </ol>

	<p style="text-align: center;">IX. Conclusion X. Annexes</p> <p>The report should be written in a style accessible to the general audience and within a 50-pages limit. The executive summary should not exceed 5 pages, including a summary of each section of the report and being aligned with the structure of the full report. The report should be in English and submitted electronically.</p>
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#### Timeline & deliverables

Timeline & deliverables		
<p><b>Inception phase</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A desk review of documents provided by UNICEF;</li> <li>2. Initial interviews with selected key informants;</li> <li>3. A kick-off meeting with the reference group members;</li> <li>4. Submission of a draft inception report to the evaluation manager who shall provide comments and share the adapted version with members of the Reference group;</li> <li>5. Presentation of the inception report to Reference group;</li> <li>6. Incorporation of the written comments and comments received throughout presentation into the inception report and submission of final inception report.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Draft inception report</li> <li>2. Presentation to reference group</li> <li>3. Final inception report. 20% payment</li> </ol>	<p><b>15 days</b></p>
<p><b>Data collection phase</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Data collection through document analysis, (qualitative) content analysis and interviews;</li> <li>2. Data Analysis and synthesis;</li> <li>3. Presentation of preliminary findings.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Post data collection debrief.</li> <li>2. validation workshop with stakeholders for presentation of main findings and recommendations (30% Payment)</li> </ol>	<p><b>35 days</b></p>
<p><b>Analysis, triangulation, and report writing</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Draft evaluation report</li> <li>4. Final report meeting UNICEF quality standards</li> </ol>	<p><b>20 days</b></p>

	and completed comments matrix (50% Payment)	
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	<p>The total duration is 70 days (about 2 and a half months).</p> <p>The evaluator shall deliver the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Inception Report:</b> The inception report shall be a scoping exercise for the review/consultation and shall include the proposed methodologies, data collection and reporting plans with draft data collection tools such as interview guides, the allocation of roles and responsibilities, a timeframe with firm dates for deliverables. It should be articulated around the following points (maximum 20 pages + annexes): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reflection on the Terms of Reference including a clear commitment to be able to answer the evaluation questions within the time and budget mentioned.</li> <li>▪ Confirmation of the purpose of the evaluation, as well as the scope, and the objectives of the evaluation</li> <li>▪ Additional context to the one mentioned in the ToR if applicable</li> <li>▪ Confirmation of the evaluation criteria and questions refined from the literature review and preliminary interviews</li> <li>▪ Methods of data collection, including sampling and consideration of ethical considerations</li> <li>▪ Data analysis methods</li> <li>▪ Evaluation matrix showing for each evaluation criterion and question, the collection methods and corresponding data sources. Including a clear statement on how success shall be judged in the sub-questions.</li> <li>▪ Limitations of the evaluation and mitigation measures</li> <li>▪ Indicative work plan</li> <li>▪ Proposed structure for the final report in line with UNICEF standards</li> <li>▪ Appendices: list of key documents reviewed, set of proposed tools for data collection, list of key informants and sites to visit.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. <b>Draft report:</b> This report shall be the subject of several iterations between the evaluation team and UNICEF until the content of the interim report is in line with UNICEF evaluation report standards and GEROS. Each finding, conclusion and recommendation should be numbered and the link between them should be clearly explicit in the conclusions and recommendations section.</li> </ol>
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	<p>3. <b>PPT presentation of the main preliminary findings and conclusions</b> to the Key Stakeholders; this presentation shall be discussed during the mini workshop to report the results of the evaluation towards the end of the field mission. The PPT presentation shall also be updated and submitted at the same time as the final report.</p> <p>4. <b>Final report:</b> This shall be a report of not more than 50 pages integrating all the comments. The evaluation report must comply with the UNICEF standards for evaluation reports. The report shall be subject to a detailed and in-depth quality review by the UNICEF country office and the regional office before signoff. The final report shall contain a short executive summary (no more than 5 pages) and a main body of the report (no more than 50 pages) covering the background, a description of the methods and limitations, findings, conclusions, lessons learned and clear recommendations. Recommendations should be specific and feasible. The report should also contain appropriate appendices, including a copy of the ToR, cited resources or bibliography, a list of those interviewed, and any other relevant materials.</p>
<p>Payment schedule</p>	<p>Payment 1: 30% after completion of 1<sup>st</sup> deliverable (submission of inception report)</p> <p>Payment 2: 30% after completion of 2<sup>nd</sup> deliverable (submission of draft report and presentation to reference group)</p> <p>Payment 3: 40 % after completion of 3<sup>rd</sup> deliverable (final study report and presentation)</p>
<p>Dissemination plan</p>	<p>UNICEF shall aim to make the evaluation report fully accessible to all organizations that might make use of the findings. Results may also be shared through meetings with donors, ministry officials and implementing partners.</p> <p>In addition to the formal evaluation report, other knowledge products and processes shall be used to optimize the dissemination and make findings more readily available. These include other written materials such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Uploading the report to UNICEF’s Evidence Information System Integration (EISI)</li> <li>- Evaluation Brief</li> <li>- Roundtable with stakeholders</li> <li>- Other platforms, where relevant.</li> </ul>
<p>Timing</p>	<p>June to December 2022</p>

<p>Reporting Requirements</p>	<p>The Contractor shall regularly update the evaluation manager on the progress of the evaluation.</p> <p>The reports shall be electronically submitted to the Evaluation Manager.</p> <p>All deliverables are expected to be in accordance with the terms of this contract as described in the section on timelines and deliverables.</p> <p>The final report must adhere to standards of evaluation report as outlined in UNICEF-Adapted UNEG Evaluation Report Standards.</p> <p>All the products developed during the course of this consultancy must comply with the standards of research integrity, i.e., plagiarism-free.</p> <p>The final report shall be submitted in the evaluation database Evidence Information System Integration (EISI).</p>
<p>Management arrangements and quality assurance</p>	<p><b>Evaluation Manager:</b> To ensure independence of the evaluation, the Evaluation Specialist of UNICEF Lebanon shall be the overall manager of the evaluation. The manager shall ensure compliance with UNICEF norms and standards as well as compliance with quality standards. He/she shall be the UNICEF focal point for the evaluation team and shall be responsible for document validation. He/she shall also ensure that the evaluation reference group is informed of the status of the evaluation.</p> <p><b>Evaluation Quality Control</b> shall be conducted through a review of terms of reference, methodology and reports and shall be carried out by the Evaluation Manager in coordination with the Evaluation Reference Group (ERM) and the UNICEF Regional Evaluation Advisor.</p> <p><b>Reference Group</b> shall be established, and shall include UNICEF programme staff from programme sections, implementing partners, government, and representatives of right holders. It shall endorse the Terms of Reference, the Inception Report and participate in the preliminary findings workshop.</p>
<p>Profile Requirements and application process</p>	<p>The evaluation shall be carried out by individual external evaluator. The selected evaluator should have a good knowledge of UNICEF interventions and programmes. Knowledge of Lebanon country context shall be an asset.</p> <p>Specifically, the evaluation consultant should have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced university degree in Evaluation, Public Policy or Social Sciences or similar relevant fields, with a minimum of 10 years' experience in carrying out programme evaluation.</li> </ul>

- Solid understanding of UNICEF or other UN agencies programming and planning processes.
- Proven and verifiable experiences in conducting evaluations in similar contexts
- Proven experience in applying theory-based evaluation approaches and methodologies.
- Familiar with facilitating working groups, including supervising an evaluation/research team.
- Excellent oral and written skills in English is mandatory. Fluency in Arabic shall be essential for key informant interviews.
- Excellent analytical skills and proven experience in qualitative data collection and analysis

The application should be submitted online to be considered. The following should be submitted in addition to the information required in the application form.

1. A short cover letter outlining your relevant experience for this consultancy & motivation
2. Proposed daily rate
3. Availability between August 2022 – December 2022 (70 days minimum required)
4. CV which should include details of your relevant experience to undertake this consultancy
5. 3 writing samples (preferably at least 2 previous evaluations), MANDATORY for those that have not conducted evaluations for UNICEF.

Applicants shall be evaluated based on:

- Previous experience conducting evaluations and knowledge of various methodological approaches in evaluation
- Clearly demonstrated experience and knowledge of understanding of humanitarian and development programming.
- Experience producing high-quality publications on humanitarian and/or development topics
- Availability and capacity to deliver the proposed evaluation
- Value for money

Detailed tasks and estimated duration	Activities	Duration (Days or weeks)
	I. Inception Phase	15 days

Signature of the contract	
Initial meeting with evaluation manager	1 day
Review of the literature, and preliminary interviews	5 days
Evaluation matrix validation workshop	1 day
Development of data collection tools	2 days
Developing and submission of the draft inception report	4 days
Revision of the inception report based on the comments	2 days
<b>II. Data collection phase</b>	<b>35 days</b>
Meeting with UNICEF staff and other stakeholders	3 days
Data collection (and updating the evaluation manager regularly on the progress of work by WhatsApp, Tel, email, etc.)	15 days
Post data collection debrief	1 day
Data processing and analysis	5 days
Meeting + PPT presentation of preliminary conclusions	2 days
<b>III. Report Writing Phase</b>	<b>20 days</b>

	Drafting of the interim evaluation report	13 days
	Submission of the Interim Evaluation Report (Draft 0)	1 days
	Submission of the revised version of the report (Draft 1) incorporating the comments of the ERG.	2 days
	Submission of the final version of the report incorporating comments Reference group and key stakeholders	4 days
	Workshop to disseminate results	2 days
	<b>Total number of days</b>	<b>70 days</b>
Budget	\$40,000 – \$60,000	
Funding source	Germany (KFW)	WBS: 2490/A0/07/880/003/007 Grants: SC200746

PREPARED BY:

REVIEWED BY:

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REVIEWED BY:

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Programme Section Chief

ENDORSED BY:

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Zarak Jan, Chief of PRIME

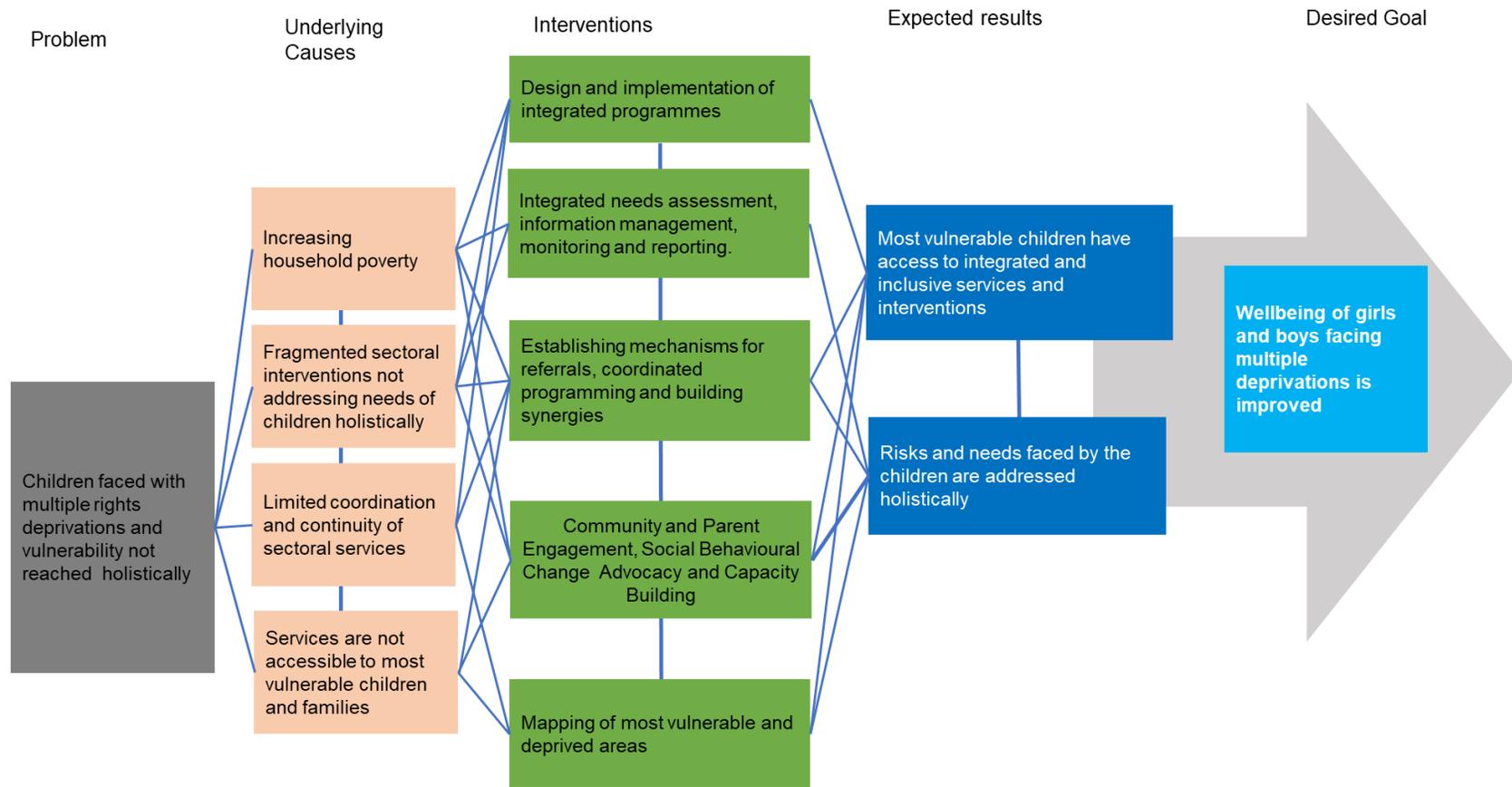
APPROVED BY:

\_\_\_\_\_

Ettie Higgins, Deputy representative



## Annex II Theory of Change



**Intervention logic for integrated programming approach in UNICEF Lebanon.**

## Annex III Evaluation Matrix

Criterion	Data/indicator	Proposed related EO	Judgement criterion	Source of information	Data collection methods
Relevance and Coherence	Alignment of the approach with the context and the programme's realities and requirements	To what extent is UNICEF Lebanon's approach to integrated programming fit-for-purpose considering country context, programme's scope (types of programming across humanitarian and development) and implementation modalities?	Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International reports</li> <li>• Country reports</li> <li>• UN reports</li> <li>• UNICEF reports</li> <li>• Partners' reports</li> <li>• Interlocutors' narratives and opinions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• KIIs</li> <li>• FGDs</li> <li>• Online survey</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic resilience analysis, indicators, and targets</li> </ul>	Was the context, problem, needs and priorities well analyzed while designing the approach?	Design		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The additionality at completion and expected transformational change</li> <li>• The evidence that the approach to</li> </ul>	To what extent did the design of the approach help in achieving its own goals? Were there clear objectives, baseline indicators and/or benchmark for performance?			

Criterion	Data/indicator	Proposed related EO	Judgement criterion	Source information	Data collection methods
	integrated programming is helping to introduce innovations				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF's M&amp;E systems demonstrating progress toward transformational change</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How relevant are different programme integration facets currently in use considering the overall humanitarian context / the very much vertical sectoral type of approach?</li> <li>To what extent are UNICEF programmes internally coherent in terms of objectives, theories of change and M&amp;E systems to facilitate integration?</li> </ol>	Coherence & Consistency		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Considerations of governance, credibility and partnerships</li> <li>Perceptions of stakeholders on incentives and/or disincentives to participate in</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Were the design processes of the approach to integrated programming sufficiently participatory?</li> <li>Was UNICEF Lebanon's approach to integrated programming relevant, appropriate and strategic to the mandate, strategy, functions, roles, and</li> </ol>			

Criterion	Data/indicator	Proposed related EO	Judgement criterion	Source of information	Data collection methods
	UNICEF's approach to integrated programming	<p>responsibility of the key actors/partners?</p> <p>3. To what extent do UNICEF Lebanon's internal policies and practices promote or hinder integrated programming? How could such policies, procedures and practices be strengthened?</p> <p>4. To what extent is there a commonly shared understanding of integrated programming across UNICEF Lebanon and its implementing partners? What specificities and complementarities can be identified?</p> <p>5. To what extent have UNICEF programmes been specifically designed and implemented to promote integration?</p>			

Criterion	Data/indicator	Proposed related EO	Judgement criterion	Source of information	Data collection methods
Effectiveness and Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress towards attaining the objectives and outcomes of the approach to integrated programming</li> <li>Impact of the current COVID-19 crisis on the design and implementation of the approach</li> </ul>	To what extent has UNICEF's approach to integrated programming been effective?	Achievements & fallout effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF reports</li> <li>Partners' reports</li> <li>Interlocutors' narratives and opinions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document review</li> <li>KIIs</li> <li>FGDs</li> <li>Online survey</li> </ul>

Criterion	Data/indicator	Proposed related EO	Judgement criterion	Source of information	Data collection methods
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible weaknesses in order to improve next steps of interventions in the focus areas</li> <li>• Key lessons learned, good practices, success stories and challenges to inform future work of various stakeholders in addressing integrated programming</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the greatest strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to effective programme integration?</li> <li>2. What challenges have implementing partners faced in the roll out of integrated programming approach?</li> <li>3. Which facet of integration has proved to be effective in the Lebanon context?</li> <li>4. Were there any lessons learned, failures/lost opportunities? What might have been done better or differently?</li> <li>5. How did the approach deal with issues and risks?</li> </ol>	Challenges, weaknesses and good practices		

Criterion	Data/indicator	Proposed related EO	Judgement criterion	Source of information	Data collection methods
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The use of resources in the planning and execution of intended outputs (management arrangements, work planning, finance, value for money, timing and delays, project-level M&amp;E systems, coordination, stakeholder engagement, reporting, communications...)</li> <li>• Roles and responsibilities of the various agencies and stakeholders and the level of coordination between relevant actors</li> <li>• Transparency and inclusivity in governance, and UNICEF's catalytic role in the coordination processes</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To what extent does UNICEF Lebanon have adequate structures, human and financial resources for effective programme integration? What management and coordination structure and mechanisms have been established/ adopted/ re-engineered within UNICEF LCO to implement the integrated approach? What worked and what needs to be strengthened? What could be done differently?</li> <li>2. To what extent have initiatives and mechanisms established in UNICEF Lebanon Country Office been effective in enabling integration?</li> <li>3. Are there more cost-effective ways of achieving programme integration?</li> </ol>			

Criterion	Data/indicator	Proposed related EO	Judgement criterion	Source information of	Data collection methods
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linkages between design, implementation and reporting</li> </ul>				

Criterion	Data/indicator	Proposed related EO	Judgement criterion	Source of information	Data collection methods
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess the likelihood of continuation of the approach's outcome and benefits</li> <li>• Describe key factors that shall require attention in order to improve prospects for sustainability of the achieved results</li> <li>• Assess the potential for sustainability of the results and the feasibility of ongoing efforts and commitment to help advance the focus areas of the approach</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To what extent is Integrated programming institutionalized in UNICEF Lebanon and considered in programming and operational activities? What steps could be taken to strengthen structures and systems to support integration?</li> <li>2. Was the capacity (individuals, institution, and system) built towards integrated programming since the early stages of design/implementation? What capacity needs to be developed to ensure the sustainability of integrated programming efforts and benefits?</li> <li>3. Were the delivered actions/initiatives and results owned by the partners and stakeholders?</li> </ol>	Financial and policy sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International reports</li> <li>• Country reports</li> <li>• UN reports</li> <li>• UNICEF reports</li> <li>• Partners' reports</li> <li>• Interlocutors' narratives and opinions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• KIIs</li> <li>• FGDs</li> <li>• Online survey</li> </ul>



## Annex IV List of Documents Reviewed

### Background documents

Integrated approaches to health: a handbook for the evaluation of One Health. Edited by: Rüegg, Simon R; Häslér, Barbara; Zinsstag, Jakob (2018). Wageningen: Wageningen Academic Publishers.

### Strategic documents

1. Draft UNICEF Strategic Plan 2022-2025.pdf
2. UNICEF\_LCO Prioritized Municipalities for 2019-2020-210128.pdf
3. Workplans 2019-2020
4. Workplans 2021-2022
5. Strategy notes.zip
6. TOC integrated programme UNICEF LCO.pptx
7. Donor Proposal Standard Operating Procedures for UNICEF Lebanon
8. PRC Secretariat's Checklist on process and review of documents
9. Programme Document/SOP to be filled out by implementing partners
10. 2018 UNICEF Lebanon MTR documentation

### Specific assignment documents

1. Evaluation ToR\_UNICEF\_Integrated Programming.docx
2. Final Evaluation Report CPE Lebanon (2).pdf
3. Integrated Child Centered Programming.ppt
4. Integrated Child Wellbeing Study
5. Integrated Programming.ppt
6. Integrated Programming – WCD experience –.ppt
7. Integrated Programming and models.docx
8. Integrated Programming.pdf
9. Literature.docx
10. UNICEF ESAR Integrated Approaches to Programming\_Working Paper October 2018.pdf
11. PPT Presentations from the programme integration meeting December 6, 2022
12. BRIEF: Integrated Child Well-Being Package for Out-of-School Girls and Boys in Lebanon
13. Roberta Cecchetti, Zeina Helou, Aimee Ghamen, Samah Halwany, Chris Rayment , Analysis of Lebanon's system for service delivery for children's wellbeing – Findings & Recommendations, Oxford Policy Management, August 2020

### Ethical considerations

1. Research Ethics Review Document, UNICEF HML Ethics Review Board
2. How to Request a Research Ethics Review, UNICEF HML Ethics Review Board

3. UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation (2016): Available from [www.uneval.org/document/detail/1914](http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/1914);
4. Ethical Guidelines for UN Evaluations (2008): Available from [www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/102](http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/102)
5. Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN system (2008): Available from [www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100](http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100)
6. Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation – Towards UNEG Guidance (2011): Available from [www.uneval.org/document/detail/980](http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/980)
7. Ethical Research Involving Children, 2013: <http://childethics.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/ERIC-compendium-approved-digital-web.pdf>

## Annex V List of People Interviewed

### UNICEF partners

1. Patricia Khoury, HIMAYA
2. Rana Rahal, ABAAD
3. Salwa Mahfoud, WVI
4. Luca Ricciardi, Terre des Hommes Italia
5. Rachelle Abdayem, Sawagroup
6. Ibrahim Abdelhay, Al Fayhaa
7. Michel Mhanna, Mouvement Social
8. Lama Ajrouch, Amel Association

### UNICEF staff

1. Ettie Higgins, Deputy Representative
2. Zarak Jan, Chief of PRIME
3. Maulid Warfa, Chief of Field Operations and Humanitarian Coordination
4. Luca Solimeo, Chief of Social and Behavioral Change
5. Sarah Hague, Chief of Policy
6. Atif Rafique, Chief of Education
7. Kyaw Aung, Chief of Health
8. Paul Edwards, Chief of WASH
9. Nazih Yacoub, Chief Palestinian Programme
10. Justus Kamwesigye, Evaluation Specialist
11. Ernst Mbangula, Research and Evaluation Specialist
12. Georges Haddad, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist
13. Tamara Nasreddine, Evaluation Officer
14. Lama Ghanem, Research and Evaluation Officer
15. David Muhia, Supply and Logistics Manager
16. Sonia Vila Hopkins, Partnerships Manager
17. Andrea Arslanian, Public Partnerships Specialist
18. Sonia Butros Ilias, Programme Specialist, Local Governance
19. Aleksandra Vidojevic, Child Protection Specialist
20. Lisa Kim, Education Manager
21. Abir Abi Khalil, Programme Specialist - Acting Chief of Unicef office for North and Akkar
22. Jackline Atwi, Child Protection Officer
23. Hassan Rajab, Education Officer
24. Lara Hallak, Child Protection Officer
25. Nawal Ayad, Youth Development Officer

## Annex VI Data Collection Tools and Processes

### Email Script

UNICEF Lebanon strives to efficiently and effectively reach and serve the most vulnerable children living in the most vulnerable localities and enhance community access to integrated and inclusive social services and resilience-building interventions. Although the country programme 2016-2021 (extended to 2022) was organized into traditional sectoral outcomes to allow alignment with government line ministries, promoting integration through a life-cycle approach with a focus on 0–5 years, primary school ages (6–14), and adolescence and youth (15–24), sections were encouraged to work together towards achieving common outcomes. Sectoral programmes were expected to identify opportunities for integration through common gateways for service delivery, strong referral mechanisms, and monitoring systems. In addition, with-in programme, integration was expected to ensure children are reached with a comprehensive package of service that responds to their needs, profiles and age group.

In response to the worsening economic conditions in the country and with an increasing number of children faced with multiple rights deprivations and vulnerability, UNICEF strengthened focus on programmatic integration of services to reach increasingly vulnerable children.

An evaluation of the approach shall be carried out by an independent expert, Dr. Cosette Maiky, between mid-November and mid-December 2022. In this evaluation, we are seeking to generate empirically grounded evidence on 1) the relevance, effectiveness, coherence, efficiency, and sustainability of integration to the selected programmes of UNICEF, by looking at facilitating and hindering factors, key entry points, missed opportunities, and governance arrangements; and 2) good practice within and outside integrated programming, lessons learnt regarding what worked and did not work, and potential areas for improvement for better design and implementation of integrated programmes. The evaluation shall also provide recommendations based on validated lessons that can make a difference in how to strengthen integration across the length and breadth of UNICEF programmes in Lebanon.

Your opinions shall be an invaluable contribution to the evaluation. If your schedule permits, we would be thankful for no longer than 20-30 minutes of your time to hear your thoughts on these issues (the interview can take place either in Arabic or English).

Note that all the information you provide us shall be strictly confidential and shall not be shared with any third party.

If you have any inquiry, do not hesitate to contact us.

## Informed Consent Form

### Evaluation of Integrated Approach to Programming in UNICEF Lebanon

Principal Evaluator: Dr. Cosette Maiky

**1. What is the purpose of this evaluation?**

In response to the worsening economic conditions in the country and with an increasing number of children faced with multiple rights deprivations and vulnerability, UNICEF strengthened focus on programmatic integration of services to reach increasingly vulnerable children.

An evaluation of the approach shall be carried out by an independent expert, Dr. Cosette Maiky, between mid-November and mid-December 2022. In this evaluation, we are seeking to generate empirically grounded evidence on 1) the relevance, effectiveness, coherence, efficiency, and sustainability of integration to the selected programmes of UNICEF, by looking at facilitating and hindering factors, key entry points, missed opportunities, and governance arrangements; and 2) good practice within and outside integrated programming, lessons learnt regarding what worked and did not work, and potential areas for improvement for better design and implementation of integrated programmes. The evaluation shall also provide recommendations based on validated lessons that can make a difference in how to strengthen integration across the length and breadth of UNICEF programmes in Lebanon.

**2. Who are the eligible subjects and how will we recruit them?**

We will approach informants involved in the design and implementation of the integrated approach from UNICEF and implementing partners (both at the head office and field levels). Heads of departments, managers, administrative officers, financial officers, M&E/research officers, reporting officers, programme officers shall be chosen purposively by the evaluator in collaboration with the UNICEF team.

We will first send to each of the informants an introductory email explaining the main evaluation idea and the key themes we will discuss with them. If they consent, we will ask them to specify their preferred day, time and location for the interview. We will continue to recruit subjects until we reach saturation of data and emerging themes, for a maximum period of one month.

**3. What will I do if I choose to be in this evaluation and for how long?**

If you wish to participate, a private setting will be adequately secured based on your convenience. There will be no interruptions by any intruder and the setting will include the evaluator involved in this project and the participant only. We will ask if you consent to participate in an in-depth interview.

**4. How will we recruit the subjects in the in depth interview and how long will it take?**

If you agree to participate in this project, the evaluator will carry a face-to-face interview with you for 55-60 minutes and you will be asked questions pertaining your personal expertise and

engagement/involvement in the design and/or implementation of the integrated approach to programming.

**5. How will the data for the in-depth interviews be collected?**

If you give us permission, only written notes will be taken. The discussions will be anonymized and then transcribed and the data will be accessible only to the evaluator and used for analysis and evaluation purposes only.

**6. What are the possible risks or discomforts?**

There are minimal risks associated with your participation in the evaluation as you might experience minimal discomfort for being asked certain questions. We will clarify the right to decline answering any given question and to halt the participation at any point you wish during the interview, without any consequences. Your participation will not lead to any physical or emotional harm. We ensure the privacy of the enrolled participants and the confidentiality and anonymity of the provided data.

**7. Are there costs to me for participation?**

There is no other monetary cost or compensation for participating in and contributing to this evaluation.

**8. Who can I contact if I have questions about the evaluation?**

If you have questions or concerns, or if you think the research has hurt you in any way, you can contact:

Mr. Justus Kamwesigye

Evaluation Specialist, UNICEF Lebanon

Office: +961 1607 467 | Mobile: +961 76774431 | E: [jkamwesigye@unicef.org](mailto:jkamwesigye@unicef.org)

**9. Will information about me and my participation be kept confidential?**

Yes. the data will be collected in a manner that preserves the confidentiality of all subjects and ensures that no breach of participants' privacy occurs. All the data will be collected, coded to the participants' identity, managed and stored by the evaluator only.

**10. What are my rights if I take part in this evaluation?**

Your participation in this evaluation is voluntary. You may choose not to participate and you can withdraw your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled, and will not affect your work or legal status, or your relationship with UNICEF.

**11. Documentation of Informed Oral Consent**

I have had the opportunity to read this consent form and have the evaluation explained. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the exercise, and my questions have been answered. I am prepared to participate in the evaluation described above. I will be offered a copy of this consent form. I consent to :

a)  participating in the evaluation, b)  notetaking, c)  quoting

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Evaluator's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Topic Guide

**Disclaimer:** The sample questions presented in the guide below were for the sake of guiding the moderator and shall not be posed in the literal phrasing displayed. The questions were elaborated, broken down, adapted to the interviewee and scope context through probing questions.

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed for this evaluation. I shall start with some broad questions around your background as well as the nature of your engagement within the design/implementation of the approach to integrated programming, before moving to specific questions related to the selected evaluation criteria, that shall include some questions around barriers and enablers. The interview shall take no longer than 30 minutes. Before we begin, do you have any question?

1. Quick introduction about the interviewee (Position/programme/responsibilities - Activities implemented and supervised)
2. To what extent is UNICEF Lebanon's approach to integrated programming fit-for-purpose considering country context, programme's scope (types of programming across humanitarian and development) and implementation modalities?
3. Was the context, problem, needs and priorities well analyzed while designing the approach?
4. Was the design of the approach/initiatives adequate to expected objectives, and flexible enough to adapt to potential changes?
5. To what extent did the design of the approach help in achieving its own goals? Were there clear objectives, baseline indicators and/or benchmark for performance?
6. To what extent did the approach adopt gender-sensitive, human rights-based and conflict-sensitive approaches?
7. To what extent was the adopted theory of change a relevant and appropriate vision on which to base the initiatives?
8. How relevant are different programme integration facets currently in use considering the overall humanitarian context / the very much vertical sectoral type of approach?
9. To what extent are UNICEF programmes internally coherent in terms of objectives, theories of change and M&E systems to facilitate integration?
10. Were the design processes of the approach to integrated programming sufficiently participatory?
11. Was UNICEF Lebanon's approach to integrated programming relevant, appropriate and strategic to the mandate, strategy, functions, roles, and responsibility of the key actors/partners?
12. To what extent do UNICEF Lebanon's internal policies and practices promote or hinder integrated programming? How could such policies, procedures and practices be strengthened?
13. To what extent is there a commonly shared understanding of integrated programming across UNICEF Lebanon and its implementing partners? What specificities and complementarities can be identified?
14. To what extent have UNICEF programmes been specifically designed and implemented to promote integration?
15. To what extent has UNICEF's approach to integrated programming been effective?

16. What are the greatest strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to effective programme integration?
17. What challenges have implementing partners faced in the roll out of integrated programming approach?
18. Which facet of integration has proved to be effective in the Lebanon context?
19. Were there any lessons learned, failures/lost opportunities? What might have been done better or differently?
20. How did the approach deal with issues and risks?
21. To what extent does UNICEF Lebanon have adequate structures, human and financial resources for effective programme integration? What management and coordination structure and mechanisms have been established/ adopted/ re-engineered within UNICEF LCO to implement the integrated approach? What worked and what needs to be strengthened? What could be done differently?
22. To what extent have initiatives and mechanisms established in UNICEF Lebanon Country Office been effective in enabling integration?
23. Are there more cost-effective ways of achieving programme integration?
24. To what extent is Integrated programming institutionalized in UNICEF Lebanon and considered in programming and operational activities? What steps could be taken to strengthen structures and systems to support integration?
25. Was the capacity (individuals, institution, and system) built towards integrated programming since the early stages of design/implementation? What capacity needs to be developed to ensure the sustainability of integrated programming efforts and benefits?
26. Were the delivered actions/initiatives and results owned by the partners and stakeholders?

## Online Survey

In 2018, UNICEF strengthened focus on programmatic integration of services to reach increasingly vulnerable children. An evaluation of the approach shall be carried out by an independent expert, Dr. Cosette Maiky, between mid-November and mid-December 2022. In this evaluation, we are seeking to generate empirically grounded evidence on 1) the relevance, effectiveness, coherence, efficiency, and sustainability of integration to the selected programmes of UNICEF, by looking at facilitating and hindering factors, key entry points, missed opportunities, and governance arrangements; and 2) good practice within and outside integrated programming, lessons learnt regarding what worked and did not work, and potential areas for improvement for better design and implementation of integrated programmes. The evaluation shall also provide recommendations based on validated lessons that can make a difference in how to strengthen integration across the length and breadth of UNICEF programmes in Lebanon.

This electronic survey should only take 10 minutes, and your responses are completely anonymous. Your participation is voluntary; you may choose to not respond to any or all questions or may withdraw any time without consequences. You can only take the survey once, but you can edit your responses until the survey is closed on December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2022.

If you have any questions about the survey, please email us: [cosette.maiky@gmail.com](mailto:cosette.maiky@gmail.com)

We really appreciate your input!

For Evaluator's use only		Question	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know
Relevance & Coherence	Alignment	Q1. UNICEF Lebanon's approach to integrated programming is fit-for-purpose considering Lebanon's context realities since 2018 (country specificities, national priorities, challenges, etc....)					
		Q2. UNICEF Lebanon and implementing partners have a shared understanding of					

Effectiveness & Efficiency		integrated programming					
	Design	Q3. The design of the integrated approach/initiatives was adequate to expected objectives, and flexible enough to adapt to potential changes					
		Q4. The design of the integrated approach/initiatives was participatory					
	Coherence	Q5. UNICEF Lebanon's programmes (under different sectors) are coherent in terms of objectives, theories of change and M&E systems to facilitate integration					
		Q6. UNICEF Lebanon's approach to integrated programming is relevant, appropriate and strategic to the mandate, strategy, functions, roles, and responsibility of the key actors/implementing partners					
	Internal policies and business processes	Q7. UNICEF Lebanon designed and put in place adequate internal policies and business processes for planning and implementing the integrated					

		<p>approach/initiatives (management arrangements, budgeting arrangements, project development, work planning, finance/value for money, project-level M&amp;E systems, coordination, partnership/stakeholder engagement, reporting, communications...)</p>					
	Achievements	<p>Q8. UNICEF Lebanon made significant progress towards attaining the objectives and outcomes of the approach to integrated programming</p>					
	Fallout effects	<p>Q9. The COVID-19 crisis had a significant impact (delay, negative impact, involuntary impact) on the implementation of the integrated approach/initiatives since 2018</p>					
		<p>Q10. The social, political and economic conditions had a significant impact (delay, negative impact, involuntary impact) on the implementation of the integrated approach/initiatives since 2018</p>					

	Challenges	Q11. UNICEF Lebanon’s approach to integrated programming succeeded in dealing with issues and risks					
	Good practices and lessons learned	Q12. The achievements documented to date within the rollout of UNICEF’s Lebanon approach to integrated programming provide a solid basis for a systematic rollout in the future					
Sustainability		Q13. Integrated programming is institutionalized in UNICEF Lebanon (in programming and operational activities)					
		Q14. The capacity (individuals, institution, and system) has been built towards integrated programming since the early stages of design/implementation					
		Q15. The delivered actions/initiatives and results were/are owned by the partners and stakeholders					



## Research Ethics Approval

26 November 2022

Cosette Maiky, PhD  
External Evaluator  
c/o MENARO  
Amman, Jordan

RE: Ethics Review Board findings for: *Evaluation of Integrated Approach to Programming in UNICEF Lebanon* (HML IRB Review #649LEBA22)

Dear Dr. Maiky,

Protocols for the protection of human subjects in the above study were assessed through a research ethics review by HML Institutional Review Board (IRB) on 16 – 26 November 2022. This study's human subjects' protection protocols, as stated in the materials submitted, received **ethics review approval**.

You and your project staff remain responsible for ensuring compliance with HML IRB's determinations. Those responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- ensuring prompt reporting to HML IRB of proposed changes in this study's design, risks, consent, or other human protection protocols and providing copies of any revised materials;
- conducting the research activity in accordance with the terms of the IRB approval until any proposed changes have been reviewed and approved by the IRB, except when necessary to mitigate hazards to subjects;
- promptly reporting any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others in the course of this study;
- notifying HML IRB when your study is completed.

HML IRB is authorized by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Human Research Protections (IRB #1211, IORG #850, FWA #1102).

Sincerely,

D. Michael Anderson, Ph.D., MPH  
Chair & Human Subjects Protections Director, HML IRB

cc: Emmanuel Saka, Robert Stryk, Khurelmaa Dashdorj, Penelope Lantz, JD

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## **Annex VIII      Bio of the Evaluator**

The evaluator recruited for this Evaluation holds a PhD in Political Sociology, a Master of Research in Clinical Psychology, and a Master of Arts in Psychosocial Intervention in War-torn Societies (Lebanese University). She has 16 years of hands-on experience on conflict and post-conflict governance (with emphasis on Monitoring and Evaluation), with international organizations and intergovernmental bodies in more than 20 conflict settings in the Middle East and North Africa, Central, East and Southeast Asia.

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Month Year