

Canada, Sweden and the UK: A Joint Institutional Approach

Working together with UNICEF
for the World's Children



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Contents

Page

Foreword	3
1. Introduction	4
2. Background	5
3. UNICEF's Strategic Plan for 2006-2009	6
4. Canada, Sweden and the UK: a Joint Institutional Approach	7
5. Priority Areas of Work	8
Partnership Focus 1	8
1.1 Human Rights Based Approach to Programming	8
1.2 Gender Equality	10
1.3 Humanitarian Capacity	12
Partnership Focus 2	15
2.1 Results-Based Management	15
2.2 Evaluation	16
Partnership Focus 3	18
3.1 UN Reform	18
3.2 Human Resources	19
6. Support from Canada, Sweden and the UK	21
7. Monitoring, Review and Lesson Learning	23
Annexes	
1. List of key documents and web references	24
2. Guidance for establishing country-based bilateral support to UNICEF	25
3. Acronyms	27

Foreword

Canada, Sweden and the UK are committed to creating a world fit for children in which sustainable human development takes account of their best interests and rights as enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In 2005, world leaders came together to reaffirm their commitment to eliminate poverty and attain the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Children are at the heart of the MDGs. UNICEF, with its mandate to protect and promote the rights of the child, is an important partner in mobilizing efforts with national authorities to achieve concrete and sustainable results.

Canada, Sweden and the UK have agreed to join efforts to support UNICEF in delivering results for children. This Joint Institutional Approach (JIA) focuses on priority areas of work which we believe will strengthen UNICEF's performance in implementing its commitments for children as stated in its Medium Term Strategic Plan 2006-2009. The Joint Institutional Approach will also underpin UNICEF's commitment to implementing agreed UN reforms.

This partnership framework is intended to guide the three donor partners in working more coherently and effectively with UNICEF in the spirit of good donorship. We are pleased to endorse this innovative partnership and look forward to progress in its implementation.

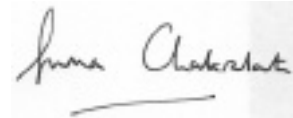
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1. Introduction

The Millennium Declaration, related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the outcome of the 2005 Millennium World Summit represent the collective commitment of the international community to a better future for all. For children this means that their rights and principles to health, education, protection and equality are protected, respected and fulfilled. Within the UN, UNICEF is mandated to advocate for the protection of the rights of the child, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential. With less than a decade now to reach the MDGs, the international community, including the UN Secretary General through his programme for reform, is looking for ways to work more effectively together. In 2005 (through the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness), representatives of governments and bilateral and multilateral development agencies resolved to reform the ways in which aid is managed and delivered.

Rising to these challenges means aid partners must work differently and more cohesively; business as usual is not an option, particularly when so many girls and boys continue to be denied their rights or are subjected to violations of their rights. It is in this context that Canada, Sweden and the United Kingdom decided to join efforts to further strengthen and support the work of UNICEF, by bringing their interests, resources and knowledge together. This is expected to help UNICEF improve its performance, effectiveness and thereby its ability to deliver results for children within a reforming UN and international aid system.

2. Background

UNICEF's mandate is guided by the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Millennium Declaration, related Millennium Development Goals, and the outcome document of the 2005 Millennium World Summit, as well as commitments included in "A World Fit for Children". UNICEF is a human rights organisation which operates on the principle of universality. Cooperating in over 150 countries, responding directly to each country's operational environment, it is considered a close, trusted and impartial partner of national governments. It is therefore in a strong position to influence national policy and programmes in favour of children, build national capacity through technical assistance and strategic policy and advocacy support, and deliver services for girls and boys when appropriate.

In the broader UN system, UNICEF is a major actor. It has implementation capacities appreciated by other parts of the UN and development agencies and unparalleled fund-raising capacities within the UN system. These strengths have attendant risks including that of being drawn into activities outside of its mandate, of being overly focused on service delivery and stand-alone projects, and of maintaining the UNICEF brand to the detriment of greater cooperation and partnership. The challenge is for UNICEF to find an appropriate balance between maintaining the strengths of its brand whilst becoming a more integrated and effective member of the UN and wider aid system.

3. UNICEF's Medium Term Strategic Plan for 2006-2009

In September 2005, UNICEF's Executive Board approved its medium term strategic plan (MTSP) for 2006-09. The MTSP takes full account of UNICEF's mandate and experience, is results based and firmly anchored to show contributions towards the MDGs. It reflects a longer-term change process in which UNICEF will progressively reposition itself within the international aid system and strengthen its role as the global leader on policy and advocacy for children and their rights.

UNICEF's MTSP concentrates on five focus areas: 1) young child survival and development; 2) basic education and gender equality; 3) HIV/AIDS and children; 4) child protection; and, 5) policy advocacy and partnerships for children's rights. Programmes are developed with these broad objectives in mind, responding to national operating environments and based on the situation and needs of children and women. Where humanitarian actions are required, these are specifically guided by UNICEF's Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies (CCC), and more generally by international humanitarian law, principles and established practice.

Underpinning the five focus areas are cross-cutting strategies: 1) the human rights-based approach to cooperation and gender equality; 2) results-based management; 3) generation and use of knowledge, including good practices and lessons learned; 4) strengthening evaluation; and 5) partnerships for shared success (including furthering UN reform and working with UN partners). Progress on these strategies is considered by both UNICEF and donors alike as absolutely essential to the achievement of sustainable results. Yet the current MTSP does not fully elaborate these strategies. The JIA donor partners will focus on UNICEF's efforts to improve and fully implement these cross-cutting strategies.

4. Canada, Sweden and the UK: a Joint Institutional Approach (JIA)

This is first and foremost a commitment by the three donor partners of UNICEF to harmonise and align efforts to help UNICEF implement the MTSP (2006 – 2009), improve its performance and deliver better results for girls and boys. It is the product of a careful review and evaluation of UNICEF's role and performance, which included the participation of UNICEF.

The JIA aims to:

- Provide targeted and effective support to UNICEF's MTSP and its cross-cutting strategies in order to strengthen UNICEF's capacity to deliver on its commitments;
- Provide a coherent framework to guide the three donor partners' interests and support including through the Executive Board, policy dialogue and other donor meetings;
- Contribute to the reduction of transaction costs over time; and
- Advance harmonisation amongst the three donor partners.

At the strategic level, the JIA will focus on three 'partnership foci':

1. To work with UNICEF to fulfil its core role to protect and promote the rights of the child and women's enjoyment of human rights within different settings, including humanitarian situations;
2. To work with UNICEF to improve the quality of its results reporting systems and support efforts to manage information to strengthen policy, programming and advocacy at all levels and,
3. To work with UNICEF to fulfil its commitments to increase aid effectiveness.

These three overarching objectives provide strategic focus for this partnership, with specific links to UNICEF's cross-cutting strategies highlighted. Partnership expectations are elaborated in the next section. Section 6 sets out the possible inputs from the three donor partners to support this approach. These inputs will be more fully detailed in a joint action plan to be developed in late 2006. In the final section, a proposed timetable for monitoring and reviewing the JIA and using lessons learned is set out.

5. Priority Areas of Work of the JIA

The following section outlines the three partnership foci identified by the JIA and related priority areas of work. The range of outputs varies given the state of developments within UNICEF. In some cases only interim outputs and indicators are included as further definition is dependent on upcoming reports or developments at UNICEF.

For each of the priority areas of work, the document highlights the commitments and indicators made by UNICEF in its MTSP. The three donor partners will review UNICEF's own reporting on the MTSP. This is followed by an outline of challenges facing UNICEF, and concludes with the three donor partners expectations of progress. The three donor partners will carry out their own assessment of the JIA-specific indicators. These indicators should be refined and revisited during the four year period.

Partnership Focus 1: To work with UNICEF to fulfil its core mandate to protect and promote the rights of the child and women's enjoyment of human rights within different settings, including humanitarian situations.

This partnership focus highlights UNICEF's work on protecting and promoting the rights of the child to survival, development, protection and participation and women's full enjoyment of human rights. The three donor partners support UNICEF's efforts to play an active role in challenging, guiding and supporting governments to uphold the rights of all children and women across all social and economic processes. The three donor partners value and support

UNICEF's role in promoting the rights of children and women across the UN and wider development community.

In this context the three donor partners have agreed to focus on the following priority areas of work:

- Human Rights Based Approach to Programming
- Gender Equality
- Humanitarian Capacity

Priority Area of Work 1.1 – Human Rights Based Approach to Programming

Context

UNICEF has adopted the human rights based approach to programming (HRBAP) as a foundation strategy.¹ The findings of internal reviews shows that over the past years UNICEF has gradually shifted from a needs-based, vertical sector programme to a rights-based approach rooted in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including its four general principles: non-discrimination, best interest of the child, right to life and development, and participation. It was also found that greater clarity on the implementation of rights based programming is needed at the country level.² A human rights based approach to programming is relevant in humanitarian situations.

UNICEF recognises there is a need for clearer strategy to ensure that programming is grounded in a human rights based approach to programming in all contexts.

1 MTSP paragraph 104

2 UNICEF (2004). *UNICEF's Strengths and Weaknesses: A Summary of key internal and external institutional review and evaluations conducted from 1992 – 2004*. Evaluation Working Paper. September.

UNICEF commitments³

UNICEF has defined a human rights based approach to programming as a foundation strategy, and their MTSP commitments in this area include:

- Use the Convention on the Rights of the Child when defining goals and actions;
- Help build capacities to meet national accountabilities for the rights of the child, involving developing and strengthening a range of relevant policies, legislation and institutions;
- Promote participation of children, adolescents and young people;
- Use the human rights based approach to programming in order to define interventions;
- Direct attention, long-term commitment, resources and assistance from all sources to the poorest, most vulnerable, excluded, discriminated and marginalised groups;
- Use human rights based approach to programming to promote use of international monitoring and reporting mechanisms and the work of independent human rights treaty bodies; and
- Use human rights based approach to programming to call upon partners to develop tailored strategies and allocate resources to ensure that children and their families gain effective access to basic social services and protection.

Tracking change

The three donor partners will monitor UNICEF's progress as it reports on the following indicators:

Priority Area 1.1: Human Rights Based Approach to Programming	
MTSP Indicators	MTSP reference
% of new country programme documents referring to concluding observation and recommendations of CRC and/or concluding comments of CEDAW committees	Annex 2, Table 2 – Key Performance Indicators
Number of countries in which children's views are systematically sought and disseminated Number of countries with institutionalised mechanisms at local/sub-national/national levels for sustained engagement of children and young people in policy development and/or programme implementation	Annex 1 Results Matrices; Focus Area 5, Key Result Area 4
Number of countries and regions generating thematic analyses using human rights and gender analysis framework Analytical and policy framework harmonising economic principles with those of human rights and gender equality, developed and tested	Annex 1 Results Matrices; Focus Area 5, Key Result Area 2

Challenges

Despite these policy commitments and advances, the three donor partners recognise the following challenges:

- Applying a human rights based approach to programming across all MTSP focus areas.
- Ensuring consistent human rights advocacy in all situations.
- Counterparts and partners still have little capacity in dealing with rights-based approaches.
- Ensuring that the rights of girls and women are consistently and effectively incorporated in the human rights based approach to programming.
- Ensuring that UN reform strengthens the use of a human rights based approach to programming in all situations.

³ MTSP, paragraphs 98–112

Moving Forward

It is a priority for the three donor partners that UNICEF consistently applies a human rights based approach to programming in all of its work. The three donor partners will monitor progress in the following areas:

Expected Progress	JIA Indicators
All of UNICEF's work, for example strategies, reports and policies, consistently and explicitly supports the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child Explicit attention to CEDAW and rights of girls and women within HRBAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Annual sample of new country programs takes a HRBAP and reflects CRC/CEDAW committees concluding observations⁴● Sectoral strategies reflect HRBAP● Sample of documents reporting on results reflects progress on rights of the child and women's rights

Priority Area of Work 1.2 – Gender Equality

Context

UNICEF's policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls identifies gender mainstreaming as the strategy to achieve gender equality and women's rights as reflected in the CEDAW. Strategies include: 'mainstreaming' gender concerns in advocacy and action; promoting gender-specific programme activities targeting girls and women; and giving special attention to the girl child.⁵ UNICEF has acknowledged that the overall implementation of its policy directions has been uneven.⁶

UNICEF Commitments⁷

UNICEF has defined gender equality as a foundation strategy (along with human rights based approach) and its MTSP commitments include:

- Provide evidence and analysis on the situation of women, men, girls and boys;
- Advocate for policies and programmes that contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment;

- Carry out regular gender reviews of their cooperation programmes;
- Work with United Nations partners to develop guidelines, learning resources and indicators on gender mainstreaming for use by United Nations Country Teams (UNCT); and
- Increase the integration of gender analysis and recognition of inequalities between boys and girls in poverty reduction strategies and sector-wide approaches.

⁴ Criteria to be developed as part of action plans using UNICEF's documentation

⁵ *Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls: A Policy Review*. 1994 (E/ICEF/1994/L.5)

⁶ MTSP 2002-05 Mid-Term Review, 2004

⁷ MTSP paragraphs 98 – 112.

Tracking change

The three donor partners will monitor UNICEF's progress as it reports on the following indicators:

Priority Area 1.2: Gender Equality	
MTSP Indicators	MTSP reference
% of new country programme documents referring to observation of CRC and/or CEDAW committees % of country programmes for which a gender review and self-assessment undertaken	Annex 2, Table 2 – Key Performance Indicators
Number of country programmes that have undertaken gender analysis of key child protection issues ⁸	Annex 1 Results Matrices; Focus Area 4, Key Result Area 1
Number of countries that implement programmes to strengthen gender-appropriate protection and response capacities against abuse, exploitation, and violence, including psychosocial support	Annex 1 Results Matrices; Focus Area 4, Key Result Area 2
Number of countries in emergencies which implement programmes to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation of children and women	Annex 1 Results Matrices; Focus area 4, Key Result Area 3
Number of countries and regions generating thematic analyses using a human rights and gender analysis framework Analytical and policy framework harmonising economic principles with those of human rights and gender equality, developed and tested	Annex 1 Results Matrices; Focus Area 5, Key Result Area 2
Number of countries with PRS and/or national development and/or transition plans which address key challenges for children, women and gender equality, as defined in UNICEF-supported recent analysis	Annex 1 Results Matrices; Focus Area 5, Key Result Area 3

Challenges

Despite these policy commitments and advances, the three donor partners recognise the following challenges:

- Developing a clear rights-based, results-focused approach to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.
- Ensuring attention to gender analysis and explicit gender equality results across all programme areas, including humanitarian assistance.
- Building internal capacities and accountability structures to ensure policy implementation.

⁸ Although not in the MTSP, UNICEF has expressed willingness to report on: the number of countries developing a strategy for capacity building on gender equality and women's empowerment.

Moving Forward

UNICEF needs to assess the difference its programmes make to the full enjoyment of the human rights of women and girls. UNICEF expects to complete an evaluation of its work on gender equality in mid-2007. The three donor partners will monitor UNICEF's response to this evaluation's findings and recommendations. The three donor partners also urge UNICEF to go beyond monitoring and assessing internal processes and to look at how their investments support the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment (through a results-based lens). The three donor partners will monitor progress in the following areas:

Expected Progress	JIA Indicators
Successful completion of the planned gender equality evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Gender equality evaluation adopts results focus and includes humanitarian assistance as part of review scope● Gender equality evaluation undertaken within the expected timeframe (mid-2007)● Management response to the evaluation is delivered within 3 months of the report's finalisation and includes concrete follow-up
Updated policy, effective implementation and improved reporting for results to support gender equality and women's empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Updated policy is consistent with international norms and commitments concerning gender equality and women's empowerment● UNICEF leadership approves an implementation plan for the policy with resources to ensure successful implementation● Sample of documents reporting on results reflects progress on rights of the child and women's rights

Priority Area of Work 1.3 – Humanitarian Capacity

Context

In 2005, approximately 40% of UNICEF's programme funds was spent on work in emergency and humanitarian settings. In humanitarian situations UNICEF is active in providing support in all five Focus Areas.⁹ In response to the increasing scale and complexity of emergency situations, the United Nations has developed more routine and formal approaches to sector coordination among its agencies and partners. Under this approach UNICEF has: cluster lead roles in provision of common data communications services, nutrition, and water, sanitation and hygiene; substantive roles in education, health and protection; and, is the provider of last resort when services for children have broken down.¹⁰ The

need to continue to build UNICEF's humanitarian preparedness and response capacity figures strongly in the current MTSP.

Following two phases of capacity building support for emergency response and preparedness, UNICEF commissioned an external evaluation of progress against the identified objectives. The evaluation findings, released in 2005, identified key areas for improvement which are reflected in this JIA.

UNICEF commitments¹¹

UNICEF has taken the approach of mainstreaming capacity to respond to emergencies into its operations, and the MTSP commitments include:

- Continue to build its capacity to respond to emergencies in a timely and effective manner;

⁹ In the MTSP, under the commitments in the five focus areas, there is a summary of the targets for the implementation of the Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies (paragraph 41, Box 2).

¹⁰ United Nations Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; and UNICEF (2006) UN Reform: What it means for Children. April

¹¹ MTSP paragraphs 25-28, 41 and 123.

- Make use of lessons learned in recent emergencies, while consistently supporting children affected by complex emergencies and natural disasters;
- Continue to provide its extensive field experience and presence in support of work, including the proposed Peace-building Commission and the United Nations Integrated Missions;
- Develop approaches to evaluate organisational performance related to humanitarian action; and
- Closer collaboration with UN peacekeeping missions in situations of crisis and post-conflict transition, and the use of lessons from such situations in the development context.

Tracking change

The three donor partners will monitor UNICEF's progress as it reports on the following indicators:

Priority Area 1.3: Humanitarian Capacity	
MTSP Indicators	MTSP reference
% of field offices with annually updated emergency preparation and response plan % of recruitment for emergency posts completed in under 30, 31-60, 60-90, over 90 days	Annex 2, Table 2 – Key Performance Indicators
% of declared emergencies where a rapid assessment of the child health, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene situation has been conducted within the first 30 days % of children between 6 months and 4 years of age vaccinated against measles % of severely malnourished children provided with therapeutic feeding % of affected households/population with a minimum safe drink water supply	Annex 1 Results Matrices; Focus Area 1, Key Result Area 4
% of affected schools reopened, replaced or made operational with trained teachers and adequate supplies (primary and secondary)	Annex 1 Results Matrices; Focus Area 2, Key Result Area 4
% of males and females aged 15-24 (with sub-analysis for 15–19 year-olds), with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS (MDG indicator 19b)	Annex 1 Results Matrices; Focus Area 3, Key Result Area 3
Proportion of conflict affected countries monitoring and reporting violations of the child protection rights No. of countries signed, ratified the CRC Optional protocol 2 No. of countries in emergency which implement programmes to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation of children and women % of separated children in emergencies reunified or placed in alternative care arrangements	Annex 1 Results Matrices; Focus Area 4, Key Result Areas 1, 3, 4 and 5
No. of UNICEF offices in emergency/conflict-affected countries reporting violations of children's rights, as per the Secretary General's Bulletin ST/SGB/2003/13 No. of countries and Regions generating thematic analyses (e.g. on poverty, disparities, disabilities, on economic or humanitarian crises affecting MDG outcomes) using a human rights and gender analysis framework	Annex 1 Results Matrices; Focus Area 5, Key Result Areas 1 and 2

Challenges

Despite these policy commitments and advances, the three donor partners recognise the following challenges:

- The inconsistencies among offices in the capacity to respond when crises occur and in approaches to the support for national preparedness capacity building or transition requirements, as the rights-based approach and the Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies (CCC) require.
- Gaps in its sectoral capacity to be able to fulfil its Inter-Agency accountabilities.
- Need to systematically improve human resource planning and deployment in emergencies.
- Insufficient capacity to consistently address the rights of women and girls through humanitarian assistance.
- The lack of a reliable and consistent system to monitor, report on and address child rights violations in conflict areas.

Moving Forward

The three donor partners wish to ensure that UNICEF's capacity to respond to crises is consistently developed and implemented. The three donor partners will monitor progress in the following areas:

Expected Progress	JIA Indicators
UNICEF demonstrates consistent, reliable, timely and effective response in humanitarian situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Real time evaluations of response to emergencies and CO, RO and HQ monitoring show that UNICEF performance against the CCC is assessed as satisfactory, timely, relevant and effective● Real time evaluations of response to emergencies and CO, RO and HQ monitoring show that UNICEF is meeting its cluster lead commitments● Real time evaluations of response to emergencies and CO, RO and HQ monitoring show that gender equality is systematically integrated into analysis, design, implementation and evaluation of all UNICEF emergency response● % of staff with appropriate profiles deployed against emergency staffing plan requirements in 15-30, 31-60, over 60 days● All humanitarian appeals and programmes are based on gender analysis and HRBAP¹²● Successful development and use of a monitoring and reporting mechanism on child rights violations and conflict situations

¹² This refers only to UNICEF's portion of the appeals. The sample and criteria to be determined and analysed by the 3 donor partners.

Partnership Focus 2: To work with UNICEF to improve the quality of its reporting systems and its use of information to strengthen policy, programming and advocacy at all levels

The three donor partners support UNICEF's efforts to improve and strengthen its planning, analysis, reporting and evaluation functions as crucial underpinnings of the MTSP, and will focus on two specific areas of work:

- Results-Based Management
- Evaluation

Priority Area of Work 2.1: Results-Based Management (RBM)

Context

Result-based planning and management are ongoing challenges for most international organisations. UNICEF reviews have found that the use of RBM is growing but concepts and terminology are still a challenge. Programming is becoming more results oriented but management by inputs is still the dominant model.¹³ As UN reform proceeds,

UNICEF must adapt and contribute to common UN results-based management systems.

UNICEF commitments¹⁴

The current MTSP has a stronger results focus than previous plans, with an Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (IMEF) and a results matrix for each Focus Area, as well as institutional Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). MTSP commitments to RBM include:

- Use of results-based management approaches in each of its business units and for the MTSP as a whole;
- Development of standard indicators for use in Office Management Plans (OMP) to enable more detailed comparisons of performance;
- Periodic reporting for reviewing progress in relation to organisational targets, performance standards and results for children;
- Strengthening the quality of field reports; and
- Giving greater attention to strengthening systems, structures and practices for generating and applying knowledge and lessons from field experience.

Tracking change

The three donor partners will monitor UNICEF's progress as it reports on the following indicators:

Priority Area 2.1: Results-Based Management	
MTSP Indicators	MTSP reference
% of donor reports submitted on time	Annex 2, Table 2 – Key Performance Indicators
% of country programme documents submitted to Executive Board independently assessed as adequate or better against criteria for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely (SMART) results	

¹³ UNICEF (2004). *UNICEF's Strengths and Weaknesses: A Summary of key internal and external institutional review and evaluations conducted from 1992 – 2004*. Evaluation Working Paper, September.

¹⁴ MTSP paragraphs 113–117.

Challenges

Despite these policy commitments and advances, the three donor partners recognise the following challenges:

- UNICEF needs to strengthen its capacity to monitor development results, ensuring the sex-disaggregation of data, and to report on outcome level results. This is especially difficult in some programme areas (such as advocacy), which do not lend themselves to easy quantification.
- Provide quality reporting to the Executive Board on institutional change processes.
- The timeliness and quality of reports require improvements. Executive Board members have expressed concern over the weaknesses of reports (e.g. lack of analysis, over-reporting of activities, and insufficient attention to challenges and gaps).

Moving Forward

It is a priority for the three donor partners that UNICEF manages for results. The three donor partners will monitor progress in the following areas:

Expected Progress	JIA Indicators
Quality of reporting improved at all levels: country, thematic, global and institutional Improved systems for managing by results UNICEF is an active participant in UN reform process on RBM	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Annual sample of UNICEF reports demonstrate improved quality¹⁵● UNICEF develops new KPIs on managing by results● UNICEF makes progress in the application of the Joint Inspection Unit's (JIU) RBM benchmarks● Executive Board reporting provides information on UNICEF's participation in and response to the development of common RBM processes

Priority Area of Work 2.2 – Evaluation

Context

The evaluation function in UNICEF has been strengthened in recent years. UNICEF has also contributed to the development of norms and standards relating to evaluation at the UN level. Within UNICEF the evaluation function is highly decentralized. UNICEF country offices conduct most of the evaluation work with regional offices providing oversight and support. Headquarters programming divisions undertake (and generally finance) evaluations of their work relating to their areas of expertise. The Evaluation Office provides functional leadership and overall management coordination of the evaluation system.¹⁶

UNICEF is one of two UN organizations which were selected by the Evaluation Network of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) to be assessed under the “New Approach” to assessing multilateral organizations’ evaluation performance. This initiative includes a comprehensive and systematic approach for assessing the extent to which donor agencies can rely on evaluation evidence produced by multilateral organizations. This process provided solid analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of UNICEF’s evaluation function and propose priorities for improvements. An Executive Directive clarifying management commitments is due in 2006 in response to this peer review.

¹⁵ JIA partners will assess the quality of a sample of UNICEF reports with specific attention to: results-focus, good use of analysis, change measured against benchmarks, weaknesses analysed, sex-disaggregation, etc. Details to be developed in the joint action plan.

¹⁶ Currently within UNICEF there are approximately 25 evaluations and reviews carried out each year at the institutional level and 30 at the country programme level. At the project activity level there are some 400 evaluations and reviews each year (data provided by UNICEF).

UNICEF commitments¹⁷

UNICEF's MTSP Commitments regarding evaluation include:

- National capacity-building and strengthened national leadership in country level evaluations;
- Strengthen evaluation within the United Nations system and with other partners;
- Evaluation in humanitarian crisis;
- Evaluations related to MTSP focus areas, strategies and operational effectiveness;
- Strengthened organisational capacity in evaluation; and
- Heightened management attention to the evaluation function.

Tracking change

The three donor partners will monitor UNICEF's progress as it reports on the following indicators:

Priority Area 2.2: Evaluation	
MTSP Indicators	MTSP reference
% of evaluations with a formal management response	Annex 2, Table 2 – Key Performance Indicators
% of evaluations rated as satisfactory or better based on United Nations standards	

Challenges

Despite these policy commitments and advances, the three donor partners recognise the following challenges:

- Increased utility, credibility, usability, analysis, reliability and independence of evaluations.
- Increased use of lessons learned in policy, planning, budgeting and programming.
- Evaluations better used in programme planning.
- Strengthening the evaluation function within UNICEF, including clear policy direction, increased capacity at the regional office level and clear lines of reporting.

Moving Forward

It is a priority for the three donor partners that UNICEF strengthens its evaluation work. The three donor partners will monitor progress in the following areas:

Expected Progress	JIA Indicators
UNICEF management responds to the 'new approach peer review'	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Management response to 'new approach peer review' in late 2006 including a proposal for implementation of accepted recommendations● Sample of UNICEF documents reflect use of lessons learned and evaluation findings¹⁸● Executive Board reporting provides information on UNICEF's participation in development of common UN evaluation processes
Strengthened evaluation function	
Active participation in UN reform process relating to evaluation	

¹⁷ MTSP paragraph 123

¹⁸ This is the same sample referred to earlier. Specific criteria will be developed in the JIA Action Plan.

Partnership Focus 3: To work with UNICEF to fulfil its commitments to increase aid effectiveness

This partnership focus highlights the importance of UNICEF progressively adapting to its changing environment, through a culture of continuous improvements. The three donor partners are keen to see UNICEF demonstrate greater leadership and progress on the UN reform agenda (including the humanitarian assistance side), particularly addressing the issue of protecting the mandate for the rights of the child and women’s enjoyment of human rights within a reformed UN system.

In this context, the three donor partners have identified two priority areas of work:

- UN Reform
- Human Resources

Priority Area of Work 3.1 – UN Reform

Context

UNICEF is committed to the UN Secretary General’s agenda on UN Reform launched in 1997 and further elaborated in his 2005 report “In Larger Freedom.” UNICEF has moved forward in a number of operational areas such as harmonisation, alignment with country programmes through the UNDAF with national development policies and strategies, and collaboration on initiatives of common services and offices. These are important measures that should

continue over the medium term and will have an impact on UNICEF’s preparedness to address the findings and recommendations of the High Level Panel on UN System Wide Coherence.

UNICEF commitments¹⁹

Within the cross-cutting strategy of partnership, UNICEF is committed to:

- The development and testing of a common country programmes among UN agencies in support of national priorities and the Millennium agenda;
- The strengthening of the Resident Coordinator system and of the role and functioning of the Resident Coordinator, on the basis of mutual accountability among UN Country Team members;
- Appropriate rationalization of field presence, using experience from post-conflict countries, joint office models and other models of closer United Nations teamwork, including increased sharing of operational services;
- The recognition of the comparative strengths and technical capacities of agencies within the United Nations, including their normative roles, as one of the system’s unique features;
- Further reduction of transaction costs for governments and other partners dealing with the UN; and
- Closer engagement with and linkage of the respective business plans of UN agencies.

Tracking change

The three donor partners will monitor UNICEF’s progress as it reports on the following indicators:

Priority Area 3.1: UN Reform	
MTSP Indicators	MTSP reference
% of programme funds expended on annual work plans which are jointly financially supported by one or more other UN agencies	Annex 2, Table 2 – Key Performance Indicators
Policy and Procedures Manual with annually updated developments in UN Reform, joint programming and emergency preparedness/response	

¹⁹ MTSP paragraph 128.

Challenges

In spite of this more positive environment and the actions being pursued, particular challenges remain, including:

- Development and communication of UNICEF's vision and position on UN Reform.
 - Implementation of UN reform commitments, including providing leadership, engagement in joint programming and joint programmes,
- increased numbers of UNICEF staff in Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator pool, and development of shared/joint offices and business processes.
 - Continued high-level engagement with the reform process.
 - Clarify UNICEF's definition of its role as a builder of national capacities, strengthen its role, and ensure complementarity with UN and other partners.

Moving Forward

The three donor partners expect UNICEF to be working in a more integrated and harmonised way. The three donor partners will monitor progress in the following areas:

Expected Progress	JIA Indicators
UNICEF fulfils existing commitments and is engaged in the ongoing development and humanitarian UN reform processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Action Plan on UN Reform with targets is developed in 2006● UNICEF reports on country level examples of joint programming and joint programmes● Increase in number of UNICEF staff as Resident Coordinators (RC) to 25 and Humanitarian Coordinators (HC) to 10 by the end of 2009● UNICEF sets and meets targets for joint offices, joint programming, common services and integrated UN programmes and budgets

Priority Area of Work 3.2 Human Resources

Context

Human Resource management has been identified as a challenge for UNICEF. For example, concerns have been raised about UNICEF's response to emergencies, as well as slow processes of recruitment; the mismatch between the competencies of the staff in the organisation and those required to meet its MTSP commitments; and the overburdening of staff.²⁰

UNICEF commitments²¹

In the MTSP high priority is given to the development of UNICEF's management and

organisational capacity. UNICEF's commitments to human resources include:

- Supporting and promoting its own ability to recruit and retain high-quality staff who will further its aims of effective partnerships and contributions to United Nations reform;
- Building on its human resources (HR) strategy, by ensuring the timely recruitment, deployment and management of competent, committed staff members operating in a supportive work environment, including in emergency situations; and

²⁰ UNICEF (2004). *UNICEF's Strengths and Weaknesses: A Summary of key internal and external institutional review and evaluations conducted from 1992–2004*. Evaluation Working Paper. September.

²¹ MTSP paragraphs 128 (i), 139–48.

- Seeking the continuous and systematic improvement of staff capacity to learn and adapt to rapidly changing roles and responsibilities through enhancing recruitment and HR management in a supportive work environment – competency-based recruitment, improved performance management system, rapid response teams for

emergencies, development of policies on work/life balance and an improved conflict resolution system; and, strengthening organisational learning and staff development – creating an enabling environment for learning, increasing the investment in learning and ensuring all staff are involved in comprehensive learning programmes.

Tracking change

The three donor partners will monitor UNICEF’s progress as it reports on the following indicators:

Priority Area 3.2: Human Resources	
MTSP Indicators	MTSP reference
% of recruitment for regular and emergency posts completed in under 30, 31-60, 60-90, over 90 days	Annex 2, Table 2 – Key Performance Indicators
% of staff indicating a sense of well-being in different functional areas ²²	
% of staff costs spent on learning and staff development	
Number of staff successfully completing basic, programme excellence, and the leadership and management learning programmes	

Challenges

In spite of this more positive environment and the actions being pursued, particular challenges remain, including:

- Adequate resources available to support the Human Resources Strategy.
- Ensure a coherent response to the various internal organisational review processes.
- Implementation of essential reforms to achieve the MTSP targets, including their expanding role in humanitarian situations.
- Respond to the human resources challenges posed by UN reform.

Moving Forward

The three donor partners place a high priority on UNICEF’s work in human resources and will monitor progress in the following areas:

Expected Progress	JIA Indicators
Organisational reforms carried out and staff capacity built to meet MTSP and UN reform commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● UNICEF sets, meets and reports to the Executive Board on Human Resources targets relating to required capacities such as coordination of UN operational activities for development, in humanitarian coordination and cluster leaders, gender equality, MTSP focus areas (with a particular emphasis on Policy, Advocacy, and Partnership for Children’s Rights), results based management, human rights based approach, and evaluation ● UNICEF’s HR reporting provides disaggregated data on the basis of sex, geographic diversity and functional areas

²² UNICEF has clarified this indicator: % of staff indicating that they feel confident and they are competent in their different functional areas.

6. Support from Canada, Sweden and the UK

The three donor partners will work together to support UNICEF to make progress in each of the cross-cutting strategies. This section highlights:

- Potential inputs to support UNICEF;
- The value added by this approach.

These are captured under four broad areas that will be elaborated in a Joint Action Plan to support the implementation of this approach, including monitoring mechanisms. A joint action plan, updated annually, will include specific commitments and contributions of the three donor partners.

6.1 Executive Board

Through their participation at Executive Board meetings, the three donor partners will:

- Identify and maximise opportunities to collaborate on Board decisions and make joint national statements;
- Seek to build consensus on shared interests with other Board members;
- Seek opportunities to support the development and implementation of the cross-cutting strategies, such as raising Board agenda items, and proposing reports and evaluations.

This is expected to:

- Provide more focus at the Executive Board on the cross-cutting strategies;
- Improve coherence and consistency by the three donor partners.

6.2 Technical Cooperation

Specific technical and/or financial inputs are difficult to predict prior to the development of a Joint Action Plan. Possibilities include:

- Providing/exchanging technical expertise;
- Sharing information and lessons-learned;
- Financial support to develop institutional capacity;
- Arranging joint seminars, workshops and conferences.

This is expected to:

- Provide direct support to the implementation of the cross-cutting strategies;
- Improve the quality and consistency of work in areas of shared interest – on the part of all three donor partners and UNICEF.

6.3 Policy Dialogue

The three donor partners commit to advance shared interests, particularly in support of the cross-cutting strategies, through joint policy dialogue.

This could include:

- Facilitating high-level meetings;
- Providing analytical support and/or challenges on evolving strategies, reviews of policies and programme documents, and sharing views and information among partners;
- Enabling opportunities to promote policy dialogue and partnership to advance the implementation of mutual interests.

This is expected to:

- Provide platforms for advancing shared interests;
- Improve policy consistency and thereby leverage change beyond this partnership.

6.4 Good Donorship

The three donors are committed to becoming better donor partners of UNICEF. Possibilities include:

- Working towards providing more sustainable and predictable resources by increasing the proportion of resources to the regular budget and thematic funding, and pursuing multi year funding;
- Improving internal mechanisms and procedures of the three donor partners to support coherent and coordinated programming and funding modalities;
- Promoting the reduction of transaction costs, such as reducing the burden of reporting at various levels, and increased use of low transaction cost mechanisms such as thematic funding and the Central Emergency Revolving Fund (see annex 2);
- Seeking opportunities at the country level to make sure that the three donor partners support is consistent with the aims of this approach and helps to strengthen the relationship between UNICEF and the three donor partners.

This is expected to:

- Make visible progress on donor commitments, such as the Paris Declaration;
- Pilot an innovative approach;
- Reduce transactions and improve effectiveness;
- Promote greater understanding and consistency among the three donor partners.

7. Monitoring, Review and Lesson Learning

Given the innovative nature of this approach, the three donor partners are committed to monitoring and reviewing this partnership – both in relation to harmonising efforts and strengthening UNICEF. Reviews will be carried out at the following key stages:

- Mid 2007: at the end of year one to monitor the actions of UNICEF and the three donor partners in support of the cross-cutting strategies;
- Late 2007-early 2008: at the mid-term to take a closer look at progress and determine whether any changes are required to this approach;
- Early 2009: at the end of year three to continue to monitor progress; and
- Late 2009: prior to completion, to assess overall performance by UNICEF and the three donor partners against this approach and consider their relationship beyond 2009.

The three donor partners are committed to minimise reporting obligations of UNICEF in relation to this approach so to the greatest extent possible, assessments will be based on UNICEF's own targets, indicators and existing reporting mechanisms. The three donor partners will carry out their own assessment of JIA-specific indicators.

Lesson-learning about this approach and its strengths and weaknesses for the three donor partners and for UNICEF is also of great importance. Lesson-learning will be carried out at two stages:

- 2006: at the start of the approach, to reflect on the process leading to the establishment of the partnership and highlight themes to examine later; and
- Late 2009: at completion, to reflect on experience and results, and to develop a lesson learning document for wider dissemination.

Annex 1 – List of key documents and web references

International Conventions and Commitments

- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women:
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>
- Convention on the Rights of the Child:
<http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/k2crc.htm>
- Millennium Declaration:
<http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.pdf>
- Millennium Development Goals:
<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>
- Outcome document from the High-Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly of September 2005 (Millennium World Summit):
http://www.un.org/ga/59/hl60_plenarymeeting.html
- Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness:
<http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.pdf>
- A World Fit for Children:
<http://www.unicef.org/specialsession/wffc/index.html>

UNICEF Documents

- UNICEF's Core Commitments to Children in Emergencies:
http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/CCC_EMERG_E_revised7.pdf
- UNICEF Executive Board approval for MTSP, 2006–2009:
http://www.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/05-11_MTSP.pdf

United Nations Documents

- In Larger Freedom: Towards Security, Development and Human Rights for All.
Report of the Secretary General:
<http://www.un.org/largerfreedom/>
- United Nations Development Group Action Plan:
Harmonization and Alignment to help achieve the MDG's:
<http://www.dgo.org/index.cfm>

Annex 2 – Guidance for country-based bilateral support to UNICEF

Introduction

Canada, Sweden and the UK are three major funding partners of UNICEF, providing US\$390m in 2005. A significant proportion was provided as non-core²³ support primarily at country level. As donors supporting major financial reform of the UN system, we want to encourage a shift towards greater support for core²⁴ resources; central support which will reinforce UNICEF's strategic programme and budget, and puts less dependence on projects designed and implemented on a short-term basis.

All our resources should support UNICEF to contribute towards the MDGs in line with the Paris aid effectiveness principles working in close collaboration with the rest of the UN development system. However non-core resources are usually provided to support short-term projects which may reinforce some of the behaviours UNICEF is criticised for by donors, such as too great a focus on fund-raising, working unilaterally, or a narrow focus on activities (to show attribution for effort) rather than demonstrating its contribution to broader development efforts for children. Short-term funding can also lead to staff recruitment, training and retention problems which do not reinforce a strong, stable and professional cadre of staff for UNICEF.

The ways to minimise these problems are for bilateral agencies to either provide thematic funding (sectoral or country-specific), or for country-based programmes to transfer resources intended for UNICEF to their Headquarters to include with the regular resource contribution. The latter approach is preferable within the context of the emerging reform to the financing of the UN development system. However, it is appreciated that these two options may

not be workable currently. Country programmes often wish to target their assistance and for UNICEF to report to them directly on it, and support to UNICEF at the national level is often part of a negotiated package with the host government.

A third option is therefore proposed which would help reduce the burdens on UNICEF and ensure non-core funding is provided in a way which complements the direction and approach set out in the Joint Institutional Approach (JIA). This note aims to provide guidance to country-based staff to assist in establishing "JIA consistent" relationships and funding, and draws on the principles and commitments adopted by the international development community on improving harmonisation and aid effectiveness.

UNICEF Medium-Term Strategic Plan (2006-2009)

UNICEF, with its international mandate for the rights of the child and global presence, makes an important contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

The MTSP has five focal areas: Young Child Survival and Development; Basic Education and Gender Equality; HIV/AIDS and Children; Child Protection; and Policy Advocacy and Partnerships for Children's Rights. These objectives will be implemented by UNICEF through strengthened partnerships to promote sustained and scaled-up investments for children; continued support for building national capacities to fulfil the rights of the child; and systematic efforts to leverage resources and results for children.

²³ Non-core resources in UNICEF comprise: ORR: other resources – regular; and ORE: other resources – emergencies

²⁴ Core resources in UNICEF comprise: RR: regular resources

UNICEF has programmes in most countries and operates to respond to specific national priorities and to suit national contexts. For example, in humanitarian, emergency and fragile contexts, UNICEF is likely to act as a service provider for children (as defined under the MTSP and as set out in UNICEF's Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies (CCC)). In more stable environments, UNICEF is a close partner of government, for example through working on the development of policies, programmes or legislation in favour of the rights of the child. However, UNICEF may also be requested to provide services to fill gaps at particular times or to test new ideas for national provision.

Guiding principles for bilateral engagement

When non-core bilateral support is indicated necessary at the request of national governments, or where there is a gap in policy or programming which relates specifically, and uniquely to UNICEF's comparative advantage, funding should be provided within UNICEF's MTSP framework, and should utilise its targets and indicators wherever possible.

Bilateral support, where indicated, should support UNICEF, where appropriate, to:

- Align its support behind government-led strategies;
- Find opportunities to utilise its knowledge and position to advocate for the rights of the child and women's full enjoyment of their human rights, for example through engaging on child-related policies and programmes;
- Strengthen national and local capacities;
- Utilise and strengthen national systems for performance assessment and accountability within areas of UNICEF's comparative advantage;
- Advance its work on harmonisation with other development partners;
- Promote coherence between UN agencies at the country level through the UN initiative to establish One Programme/Framework, One Leader, One Team.

Bilateral support should recognise UNICEF's differing role and programmes according to operational environments, and seek to work with other partners as appropriate, remaining accountable to national authorities.

Bilateral support should include provision for UNICEF to recover the full economic cost (rates set by UNICEF's Executive Board) of carrying out non-regular budget activities. Failure to do so could undermine UNICEF's core responsibilities by diverting resources to support non-regular budget activities.

Bilateral reporting

Where UNICEF is required to produce a report on the bilateral contribution, these reports should, as far as possible:

- Support partner country reporting systems, using where possible defined measures and standards of performance and accountability;
- Use to the extent possible partner country systems; and
- Aim to produce evidence for use in policy dialogue at the national, regional and international levels.

Strengthening relationships

Bilateral relationships often provide opportunities for mutual learning and sharing of good practice, sharing knowledge and evidence of results and impact, and utilising comparative advantages. These should be encouraged and used to the full, including:

- Using UNICEF-produced data on the situation of girls and boys, women, and of their experience in key sectors;
- Supporting UNICEF's capacity to engage and participate in national policy dialogues; and
- Using UNICEF's experience on the ground and access to national government, as well as the technical and analytical capacity of the bilaterals.

Annex 3 – Acronyms

CCC	Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CO	Country Office
COAR	Country Office Annual Report
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFID	Department for International Development
ECHA	Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
HQ	Head Quarters
HRBAP	Human Rights Based Approach to Programming
IMEF	Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
JIA	Joint Institutional Approach
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MTR	Mid-Term Review
MTSP	Medium Term Strategic Plan
OMP	Office Management Plan
PPM	Policy and Procedure Manual
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
RC	Resident Coordinator
RBM	Results Based Management
RO	Regional Office
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely (indicators)
TCPR	Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

