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Strategy for Evaluation in UNHCR 2024-2027

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Strategy for Evaluation in UNHCR 2024-2027

Using evidence to
drive results towards
safeguarding the rights
and well-being of
people we serve





Vision

UNHCR's vision is that evaluation informs choices made at all levels of the organization in strategic planning, programming and decision-making based on timely, credible and impartial evidence. This evidence will reflect, directly and indirectly, the views and perspectives of forcibly displaced persons, stateless and host communities with which UNHCR works regarding the protection, assistance and solutions provided by the organization.

To do so, UNHCR requires a whole-of-organization approach. Evaluation will increasingly become an integral part of the organization's results-based management culture and practice at all levels. Transparent and credible evaluations will be recognized and routinely used by UNHCR to demonstrate results and value for money to its member States, partners and stakeholders.

Purpose

In October 2022, a new [Policy for Evaluation in UNHCR](#) was approved by the High Commissioner. [The Policy](#), building on the first UNHCR Evaluation Policy of 2016, sets out the overall framework for the evaluation function, and responds to the growing need for evaluation at all levels of the organization. It reflects organizational decentralization and regionalization reforms and the introduction of UNHCR's new results-based management approach. The Policy aims to ensure that evaluative evidence is generated and available at the right place at the right time to aid decision-making and reinforce the organization's ability to credibly report on results.

[This Strategy](#) operationalizes the Policy. It outlines what actions are required, the assumptions and risks, the key collaborations within the organization and the partnerships with external stakeholders to be developed to achieve the vision and meet the specific norms and principles¹ defined. It builds upon the foundations, approach and achievements of the prior [Evaluation Strategy 2018-22](#). It also addresses the [recommendations and agreed actions](#) to the independent UN/OECD-DAC independent peer review of UNHCR's [evaluation function](#), commissioned by UNHCR and carried out in 2021, addressed in the new Policy and further elaborated on in this Strategy. Finally, the strategy takes into consideration the key findings from the 2023 MOPAN assessment as they relate to evaluation and the broader RBM system².

The Strategy outlines and addresses [the inter-dependencies](#) with other relevant policies and strategies. The strategy responds to UNHCR's [Policy on Independent Oversight](#) (2019), in particular through the specification of the role of central independent evaluation in third line oversight and supporting the second line oversight role of regional bureaux. It outlines actions to support oversight coordination led by the Inspector General (IG), particularly regarding Audit led by the Office for Internal Oversight Services (OIOS). Evaluation is an instrumental part of results-based management (RBM), both in terms of providing evidence of what is being achieved, what is not and why, but also to support



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¹ amongst others, independence, credibility and utility (UNEG Norms & Standards)

² Of 7 areas indicated for improvement, two have implications for evaluation: Further strengthening the use of evidence in planning and programming, reinforcing the foundations laid by its new COMPASS reporting and results-based management and budgeting framework, and Improve consultation with the Executive Committee and improve "no surprises" reporting to funders. MOPAN also found a dearth of evidence related to cost effectiveness, weaknesses in the organizations use of theories of change, monitoring systems, and ability to communicate results transparently. Finally the MOPAN report points to the need to further clarify the role of RBs in 2nd line oversight.

the reflective learning processes that are critical to strategic prioritization, risk management and adaptation. This strategy defines the relationship and actions with respect to policies, guidance and the learning processes on RBM, in particular the Policies on 'Plan, Get, Show', on Partnership Management and on Resource Allocation and Management, in addition to the recently updated Programme Handbook.

Scope

This strategy guides UNHCR personnel at all levels of the organization involved in or overseeing strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation, as well as oversight coordination. The achievement of its outcomes will also depend on effective collaboration with the Division of Strategic Planning and Results (DSPR) as well as across a range of other organizational processes, including strategic workforce planning led by the Division for Human Resources (DHR); data and evidence work of the Global Data Service (GDS), the Divisions for Resilience and Solutions (DRS) and International Protection (DIP); and in external partnerships through the Division for External Relations (DER). Central to the effective implementation of this strategy are regional bureaux and country operations, reinforcing the organization's aim of becoming increasingly agile and responsive to the needs of the forcibly displaced and stateless persons that we serve.

Compliance is not mandatory.



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Evaluation Past

UNHCR has made use of evaluation over several decades, and created a dedicated independent Evaluation function reporting to the High Commissioner in 2016. UNHCR subsequently developed a first Evaluation Policy and five-year Evaluation Strategy (2018 to 2022) to support its operationalization.

The **growth in the production of evaluation** (Figure 1) is evident over the past strategy cycle, both centralized (Evaluation Office-led) and decentralized (division, bureau and country office-led) studies. This has been made possible by a **steady increase in financial resources**³ largely drawn from core resources, with external fundraising for specific evaluations; and the recruitment of senior evaluation officers outposted to regional bureaus to foster the commissioning and use of country strategy and decentralized evaluations⁴.



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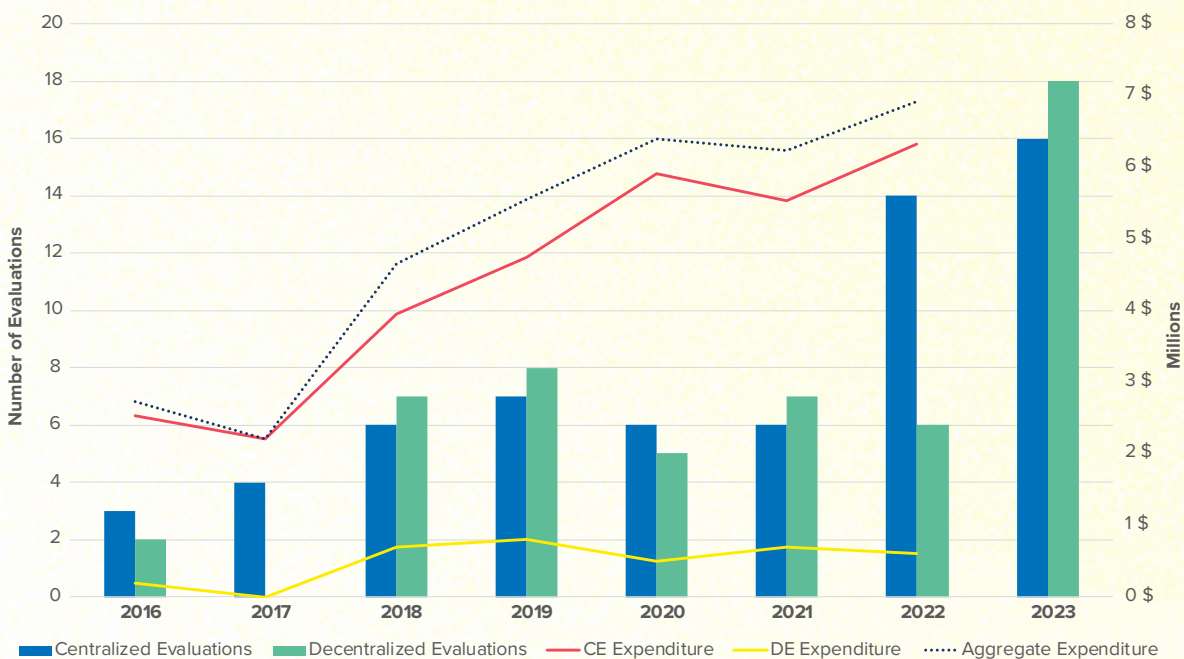


Figure 1. Evaluation numbers and expenditures (2016-23)

Source: Evaluation Office (2023) [“Evaluation Office Coverage and Trends Dashboard”](#)

- 3 Funding has leveled off since 2019, with the Evaluation Office OL budget consistent at between 6-7 million per annum since 2020.
- 4 The Evaluation Office has sought to increase the capacity and experience of country and regional bureau staff in designing and managing decentralized evaluations by deploying senior evaluation experts to guide and support the Regional Bureaux. In 2020, the first Senior Regional Evaluation Officer (SREO) was outposted in the Americas Regional Bureau. By 2023, four additional SREOs were outposted to their respective Regional Bureaux in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Asia Pacific (AP), West and Central Africa (WCA), and the East and Horn of Africa, and the Great Lakes Region (EHAGL). In line with the policy, a senior evaluation officer will be in place in all regional bureaus by 2027.

This growth has inevitably also expanded the geographic and thematic evaluation coverage of UNHCR's operational activity. Defined in terms of some form of evaluation or evaluative activity over the past five years, coverage ranges from very full in the Africa region (with over four fifths of operations covered), to patchy in the Europe region (with less than half of operations covered). The Americas and Asia Pacific sit between the two extremes, with just under two thirds of operations covered in the period. Thematically, framed by the UNHCR global results areas, the largest number of evaluations have addressed outcomes pertaining to well-being and basic needs; protection, self-reliance, economic inclusion and livelihoods. Less coverage exists over the period in the outcome areas of safety and access to justice; clean water, sanitation and hygiene and resettlement and complimentary pathways (see Annex 4 for further details).

Evaluation capacity has been strengthened in recent years – through the establishment of outposted evaluation officers; the establishment of framework agreements with evaluation firms to deliver evaluations; guidance and training materials; the development of an internal monitoring & evaluation community of practice and M&E focal points (and in some cases staff); and the establishment of an external quality assurance and assessment system.



Evaluation capacity has been strengthened in recent years

Evaluation Present

As shown above, the number of evaluations at global, regional and country level has increased due to increased internal and external demand for evidence to inform strategy, practice, partnership, and accountability for results.

Global strategic and thematic evaluations are increasingly aligned with key policies and organizational priorities. However, the number of large-scale rapid onset humanitarian crises continues to increase – which, in the context of limited resources, challenges the Evaluation Office's capacity to evaluate these whole-of-organizational responses.



Global strategic and thematic evaluations are increasingly aligned with key policies and organizational priorities.

Supported by the growing evaluation capacity in regional bureaux, and driven by multi-year planning needs, the number and scope of **regional, multi-country and country strategy evaluations** has increased threefold since 2016. Similarly the number of country office commissioned project and programme evaluations – responding both to grant agreements and internal demand – has grown. In particular, the growth in earmarked donor funding has come with associated project specific accountability requirements including evaluation. Tracking and supporting project evaluations has been impeded by a lack consolidated information on projects

– something that is expected to improve with the role-out of Synergies.

The number of **inter-agency and joint evaluations** has also increased, reflecting the growth of joint programming with other UN agencies and other partners and demand for greater system-wide accountability.

The demand for evidence and analysis to drive decision making, for advocacy, and for greater external accountability, are expected to keep growing – and with it the need for strong oversight and adaptive management systems and better analytical capacities at country level.

Three issues stand out in the present, that will guide the future. First, as a steward of public funds, good governance dictates that UNHCR must be able to account for the decisions made with respect to these resources. Evaluation is positioned to improve **organizational relevance, performance and efficiency** – it thus has a value in ensuring the right functioning of the organization. Second, there is a growth in the generation and use of data and evidence within the organization to analyze and manage risks, assess results and performance, and - through partnership with states and external stakeholders - to illustrate and monitor trends. In this context, evaluations are increasingly in demand as a mean to **independently and credibly demonstrate the results of our work** and are important global public goods. Third, in a resource-constrained environment, the organization's focus on prioritization has become paramount. Moving forward, evaluations will increasingly provide impartial evidence-based options for critical decisions, and therefore must be seen as serving as a valuable management tool. Finally evaluations that involve key partners have the potential to bring them closer to us and to the people we serve.



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Evaluation Future

Vision: To ensure that evaluation informs choices made at all levels of the organization in strategic planning, programming and decision-making, this strategy defines a whole-of-organization approach. It outlines the key outcomes that we⁵ will work towards, the pillars and workstreams to deliver it, and the operational framework defining who will do what to achieve these ends.

OUTCOMES

The change we will make over the next five years spans across three dimensions: **coverage, capacity and culture (The “three Cs”)**.



Coverage of Strategic Directions with quality evaluative evidence

What this looks like: Systematic, balanced thematic and geographic evaluation coverage of UNHCR’s global, regional and country strategies, emergency responses and programmes and projects by right-sized, credible and usable evaluative evidence.

Why this is important: UNHCR’s work spans a wide range of areas outlined in the Strategic Directions and Global Results Framework. UNHCR works across some 170 countries in a wide range of contexts. Identifying, commissioning, delivering and using right-sized, evidence-based and informative evaluations in a balanced manner is critical to feed lessons into strategy and programming, and in providing accountability to those we serve and other stakeholders.



Capacity to evaluate and use evidence

What this looks like: Profiles, skills, capabilities and guidance in place to ensure that high quality evaluations are commissioned, carried out effectively and systematically used.

⁵ Here and elsewhere in the strategy “we” refers to UNHCR, not only to the Evaluation Office.

Why this is important: Evaluations will only be used and followed-up effectively where the structures, systems and incentives are supported by the capacity to design, manage and deliver them in a timely manner. Capacity covers a range of issues, including individual knowledge and capability, a supportive operating environment and strong systems to deliver. Hence the responsibility is both with management and staff to ensure that this is developed. The strategy proposes actions to strengthen in particular capacities for the conduct and use of decentralized evaluations commissioned by regional bureaux and country offices.



Culture of evidence and learning

What this looks like: Evaluative evidence is owned, shared, used and followed-up on in strategic planning, management and operational decision-making.

Why this is important: A strong evidence and learning culture is one where staff routinely use available evidence and apply it to their work. It also implies one where staff are willing to share what they know with others, and that there is collective action around systematizing good practices and ways of working. Risks are many – and decision makers need to be able to manage them while still delivering on the organization’s mandate. To achieve this, we require good and timely evidence, both from evaluations and other sources, and routine mechanisms for sharing and acknowledging success. We also need to recognize when things aren’t working and feed this information back into policy and strategy development and decision-making. Leadership needs to play a central role in communicating a mature reflective culture, both through demonstrating it in their work, and supporting the organization’s RBM system, evaluation and other relevant policies related to evidence and adaptive management practices.

WORKSTREAMS

Seven workstreams have been prepared to deliver on the three outcomes over the five years of this strategy. They cover planning, budgeting, delivery, human resources, capacity development, communications and knowledge management, governance and accountability. Each workstream involves a series of priority actions, many of which involve collaboration across UNHCR – vertically from country, region to headquarters, and horizontally across divisions. The Evaluation Office (EvO) will play a facilitative role in convening stakeholders and generating momentum in achieving the 3 outcomes. and monitor and report on core performance indicators for the function. Annexes 2 and 7 outline this in tabular form.

The relationship between the workstreams and the outcomes is illustrated in Figure 2.

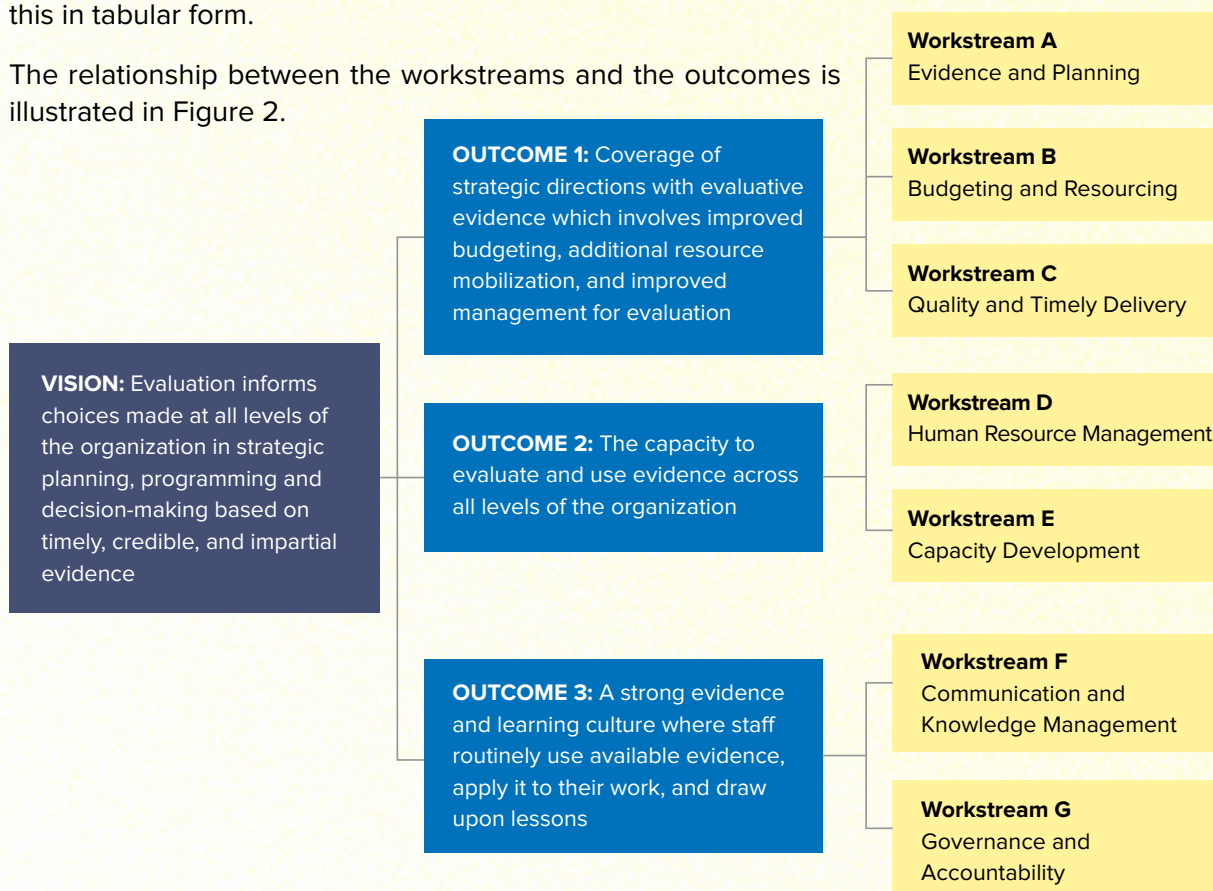



Figure 2. Relationship between workstreams, outcomes and the strategy goal

A. Evidence in Planning

UNHCR’s ability to develop robust policies and strategies and flexible multi-year strategies depends, in part, upon the timely generation and use of evidence – including from evaluations – that reveals challenges and opportunities and provides credible options and potential solutions. To achieve this, requirements, guidance and support are needed to ensure evidence that is generated is presented and considered at the appropriate times in the calendar, and that agreed steps and lessons are followed-up on. This workstream will focus on ensuring that policies and

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guidance on results-based management clearly outline when and how to plan, budget, implement, use and follow-up on evaluations. To support this, the guidance and process for the the identification and prioritization of evaluation topics to be included in the central rolling evaluation plan will continued to be refined as needed, with coverage monitored to ensure that all substantive policies / strategic results areas are evaluated at least once in 10 years in line with the Evaluation Policy. Periodic mapping will be carried out with relevant divisions to ensure that findings and lessons from strategic evaluations are timed to feed into the (re)design of global action plans, relevant policies and strategies. Specific guidance will be presented to assist operations in the selection and prioritization of evaluation topics at country, regional and divisional levels in line with evidence needs, donor requirements⁶ and coverage targets. For smaller operations, options will be developed to allow for joint and co-managed evaluations. Evaluation plans will be rolled-up to ensure that evidence generation is optimized across the organization and in line with the needs to account for progress against Strategic Directions. A management response tracking system will be developed and embedded in the RBM system and supported by DSPR to allow for easy follow-up and tracking of evaluation uptake.

B. Budgeting and Resourcing

Evaluation provides a credible base of evidence on the impact of UNHCR's protection , assistance and solutions work, how and where it is and isn't being effective and the reasons why. This requires investment. An appropriate level of resourcing needs to be planned for, allocated and used for evaluation to serve the purpose for which it was intended. As the roll-out of multi-year strategic planning and associated resource management through new instruments and processes is embedded across the organization, greater attention is required to ensure evaluations are properly costed, budgeted and embedded in planning and management practice. This is particularly the case for evaluations that are required in line with donor agreements, which have not always been effectively planned, budgeted and carried out, generating reputational risk to the organization and to future funding. To strengthen the organization's budgeting and resourcing for evaluation, four output areas of work will be undertaken during the strategic period.



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⁶ **Donor earmarking.** Despite commitments made (Paris Declaration, Grand Bargain), many of our traditional and non-traditional donors have substantial requirements around monitoring, evaluation and results reporting. In this context, it is important that contractual requirements for evaluation are adequately planned and budgeted for – as future funding decisions may be made based on the quality and findings of these evaluations. This applies equally to evaluations of joint programmes with other UN agencies. [Here](#) is the link to the 2023/24 global evaluation workplan which highlights the increasing number of donor-demanded evaluations.

- First, guidance and assistance for budgeting for evaluations of different types and needs will be developed, disseminated and linked to existing evaluation and guidelines.
- Second, a framework for resource allocation and mobilization for evaluations within each region will be outlined, covering Bureau and Country Office led evaluations, linked to prioritization and assessment tool outlined in pWorkstream A) and potential explored for pooling and ringfencing evaluation funds⁷. The Evaluation Office will work with DSPR and DER to ensure evaluation budgets can be clearly ringfenced (particularly for donor-required evaluations), tagged and tracked.
- Third, a pooled funding mechanism will be developed and piloted in one region to support multi-country evaluations of regional flagship results, which will help ensure that country offices with limited budgets benefit from the learning dividends of locally commissioned evaluations (see Chapter on Resource Mobilization for further details); a EvO contingency fund to support evaluations at country and regional level will be established linked as part of a wider resource raising plan developed to mobilize additional resources from partners to support evaluations at all levels⁸.

C. Quality and Timely Delivery

While the independently assessed quality of UNHCR evaluations has improved over the past five years, among the challenges identified to the quality of evaluations has been a predominant focus on assessing organizational performance with less attention on reflecting the views and experiences of those UNHCR serves or on measuring impact and cost-effectiveness. The 2021 Peer Review encouraged UNHCR to reduce the time to undertake evaluations (and to deliver on time) and to consider additional methodological approaches to evaluation. In this context, evaluations should increasingly focus on relevance, outcomes and impact to generate new insights to the extent that they can. While UNHCR is still organizing and improving its management and data systems, better use can be made of the data that does exist to reduce the cost of evaluation and enable primary data collection to be focused to generate better insights.

To achieve this, the focus over the coming five years will be in five output areas.



While UNHCR is still organizing and improving its management and data systems, better use can be made of the data that does exist to reduce the cost of evaluation and enable primary data collection to be focused to generate better insights.

⁷ Including 1) working with DER and DSPR to ensure that contractually required evaluations are automatically flagged from contracts/agreements, and then incorporate into the M&E plan in COMPASS; 2) resource allocations from EvO to RBx for country strategy evaluations (ringfenced).

⁸ This may include, for example, crowd-funded initiatives that allows UNHCR and external parties that are interested in evidence on displacement and statelessness to identify gaps in the evidence base and enable funders to pool resources to fill these gaps

- First, the EvO will work on strengthening the quality of the methods applied in evaluation and analysis through collaboration across UNHCR and in partnership with external entities⁹, including a focus on the use of technology, agile use of evaluation synthesis, and a greater engagement with the persons we serve.
- Second, the EvO will systematically make better use of UNHCR monitoring tools and existing data¹⁰ in evaluation, to strengthen evaluation quality and reduce the need for, or refocus primary data collection efficiently.
- Third, staff managing evaluations will continue to build on the quality of the engagement processes throughout the evaluation cycle, ensuring colleagues and external stakeholders have clear and meaningful opportunities to share views, engage in interpretation and findings and shape recommendations as part of a participatory evaluative process where learning is continuous rather than delivered at the end of an evaluation process.
- Fourth, we will continue to review, update and utilize consultant rosters and robust framework agreements that enable timely deployment of high-quality teams.
- Fifth, evaluation managers will systematically apply independent quality reviews at the draft TOR, inception and reporting stages of evaluations. The system for quality assurance and assessment is maintained by the Evaluation Office.

D. Human resource management

The ability to collect and analyze complex data and information associated with evaluation and research requires a set of specific competencies both qualitative and quantitative – which are currently embedded in part in certain job profiles and which some staff possess.¹¹ While evaluation capacities exist in the Evaluation Office in the form of expert positions, elsewhere in the organization such expertise is patchy and the “career path” for staff with similar skillsets is not clear-cut.

This strategy will support the regionalization and decentralization of UNHCR by supporting regional bureaux and country offices to develop and retain requisite capacities to ensure that evaluation coverage is met in line with the Policy, and that quality, useful evidence is available and used. There are three output areas to pursue this.



This strategy will support the regionalization and decentralization of UNHCR through ensuring that regional bureaux and country offices have the requisite capacities to ensure that the Policy of evaluation coverage is met, and that quality, useful evidence is available and used.

⁹ Other UN system agencies, through the United Nations Evaluation Group; methods networks and academic institutions.

¹⁰ Such as the Results Monitoring Survey (RMS data), post-distribution monitoring, protection monitoring data and administrative data generated from upgraded BTP related systems.

¹¹ New features in Workday are making it easier to identify colleagues with expertise in specific functional areas.

- First, to strengthen the demand for and use of evidence from evaluation, the EvO and Division for Human Resources (DHR) will work to incorporate evidence-based decision-making and data literacy as competency areas within competency framework and performance review mechanisms for senior management
- Second, to strengthen the capacity at the regional and country level to design, manage and disseminate evaluation, DHR, EvO and the Division for Strategic Planning and Results (DSPR) will work to:
 - » outline evaluation skills within skills catalogue;
 - » make a generic job description for M&E officers available, including to facilitate the integration of monitoring and evaluation competencies and skills in relevant positions in country offices;
 - » support strategic workforce planning in each region to enable appropriate capacity among personnel to carry out evaluation related tasks.
- Third, to encourage mobility and career development across analytical functions within UNHCR and with other UN system agencies, we will work to establish cross-analytical skills and competencies¹²; reduce barriers and create incentives to non-evaluators with analytical skills to apply for evaluation positions; and better leverage inter-agency mobility opportunities.

E. Capacity development

To enable those with responsibility for evaluation identification, generation and use requires UNHCR to continue to strengthen the guidance, tools, support and experiential learning required to be effective. A robust support system to build the institutional framework for evaluation at global, regional and country levels and the capacity of staff in evaluation and evaluation-related activities will require the following output areas over the strategy period.

- First, the EvO will update and expand guidance on evaluation, types, methods and procedures, particularly for decentralized evaluations at regional, multi-country and country levels, and in related evaluative activities¹³.
- Second, EvO and DHR will develop modular training, adapted from new UNEG training material and curated with other evidence functions including applied research methods; theory of change, evaluation design and management; data visualization and use.



To enable those with responsibility for evaluation identification, generation and use requires UNHCR to continue to strengthen the guidance, tools, support and experiential learning required to be effective.

¹² Shared relevant competencies and technical skills associated with data, evidence, analysis and knowledge management (inter-alia evaluators, DIMAs, economists, programme officers and monitoring and evaluation officers)

¹³ Including, but not limited to evaluability studies, evaluation syntheses, evaluative reviews, rapid assessments and the like.

- Third, the Evaluation Office will expand its global and develop regional help desks, providing on technical assistance on evaluation, on-the-job support and quality assurance services.
- Fourth, the practical experience of junior evaluators and non-evaluators in other analytical functions will be expanded through the nurturing of communities of practice and stretch assignments to work on evaluation design, management and use.

On the demand side, the Evaluation Office will support DSPR, TCS, DHR, GDS and others to build data literacy and a culture of adaptive management that emphasizes empowerment and decision-making at decentralized levels, where analysis and evidence allows management to act with greater confidence, taking calculated risks when the situation warrants. The generation of scenarios as part of evaluation practice will be encouraged and the process of evaluation designed to contribute strategic moments of reflection and adaptive decision-making within the organization.

F. Communication and Knowledge Management

A critical element in ensuring that evidence is used relates to its availability at the right place at the right time, in forms that are easily understandable and useful. The strategy will seek to draw on organizational reforms and change management processes to ensure that mechanisms are in place to share, curate, store and use evidence both vertically (country office/regional bureau/HQ) and horizontally (cross sector/discipline). Tied to actions outlined elsewhere in this strategy, incentives will be devised to build ownership around the analysis and use of data and evidence, which should enhance the knowledge of the importance of evidence in strategic planning and programming^{14, 15}. This strategy has four output areas to enhance the accessibility of evaluative and related evidence across the organization.

- The EvO will continue to promote effective evaluation communication processes, products and events building on tactics reflected in the Evaluation Communication and



A critical element in ensuring that evidence is used relates to its availability at the right place at the right time, in forms that are easily understandable and useful.

¹⁴ The independent Peer Review of the Evaluation Function (2019) noted that the Evaluation Office and wider function would be well placed to ensure its evaluations support learning if it could identify how learning happens in the different contexts UNHCR works in.

¹⁵ “The Rapid Organizational Assessment (2016) and staff survey refer to a culture that is hierarchical, formal, reactive and defensive, with deeply embedded values of control, leading to a culture that’s riddled with silos, and characterized by low trust” Annex 4.1 Working together differently – finding harmony by embracing diversity (A thought paper on moulding UNHCR’s organizational culture of the future, 17 Sept 2018)




Engagement Strategy 2022-24¹⁶. The use of AI to support rapid evidence summaries is a new element of the strategy.

- Linked to this is the idea of a common ‘evidence platform/gateway’ amongst interested entities/divisions and regional bureaux, supported by senior management, to bring together data and evidence in a single portal for internal and external use.
- Third, as outlined in other pillars of this strategy, we will strengthen the processes and capacities to ensure evidence and lessons are considered and applied in strategic planning and reporting, and the use of evaluation is clearly documented.
- Fourth, we will update, resource and manage evaluation transmission and communication mechanisms – internal and external websites, networks /M&E communities of practice, dashboards and scorecards- and strengthen and ensure that all staff access networks and these as reliable routes for transmission and communication of evidence across the organization.

G. Governance and accountability

For evaluation to be effectively embedded in working practices, the governance mechanisms at country, bureau and headquarters levels need to be strengthened and interlinked, and the responsibilities and accountabilities at all levels clear and enforced. Critically, senior management ownership and collective mechanisms to review the appropriateness of evaluation plans, ensure the work is carried out, the results fed into strategies and plans, and management responses followed-up are needed to close the circle, and ensure value for the investment in evaluation.

 For evaluation to be effectively embedded in working practices, the governance mechanisms at country, bureau and headquarters levels need to be strengthened and interlinked, and the responsibilities and accountabilities at all levels clear and enforced.

¹⁶ Focused in particular on a series of tactics: Communicate each evaluation systematically; meet, greet and be recognized; meet your audience where they gather; make evaluations more interesting and easier to find.

At the global level, the Evaluation Office is part of UNHCR's independent third line oversight function and subject to scrutiny from UNHCR's Independent Audit and Oversight Committee. Given the potential for overlap between audits and evaluation, both entities are increasingly coordinating their activities, but more needs to be done to ensure the roles and functions of each are complimentary and not overlapping. Under the leadership of the IGO, quarterly coordination meetings are essential. Guidance on the development of the evaluation function from the SET is also crucial.

At decentralized levels, the roles of Regional Directors and Representatives are becoming increasingly clear as reflected in the organizational Roles, Accountabilities and Authorities (RAAs).¹⁷

To further strengthen governance and accountability, the strategy outlines five output areas.

- First, to establish a standing item twice per annum for evaluation¹⁸ in SET/Regional Management Team meetings at global and regional bureau levels to oversee progress of evaluation and the function, utilization and follow-up to management responses.
- Second, to further clarify the roles, authorities, accountabilities of commissioners and managers, at different levels, for evaluation; reflect them in job descriptions and annual performance/Evolve; and align appropriate reporting lines.
- Third, to improve accountability mechanisms in evaluation, incorporate reference groups, including key external stakeholders, in all evaluations; and work towards the greater inclusion of displaced persons and stateless in evaluation practice and accountability.
- Fourth, to continue to strengthen oversight coordination and the complementarity of evaluation and audit (geographically, temporally, substantively) with a clear division of labour.
- Fifth, to establish a routine for reflective practice, presentations and discussion both internally and with partners and member states on evaluation findings and the health of the function.



Given the potential for overlap between audits and evaluation, both entities are increasingly coordinating their activities, but more needs to be done to ensure the roles and functions of each are complimentary and not overlapping.

¹⁷ For example, the Regional Director has the authority to commission a Country Strategy Evaluation and, together with the Representative, approves the management response.

¹⁸ Or evaluation and oversight

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR DELIVERY

Delivering on this strategy requires a clear shared purpose across the organization and with key external stakeholders. At the same time, embedding evaluation firmly in the organization requires strong internal collaboration between the Evaluation Office, as the custodian of the function, divisions and units as well as all regional bureaux and country offices.¹⁹ This is particularly the case as this Strategy seeks to further embed the evaluation function in the seven regions where UNHCR operates to stimulate and support the gradual increase in evaluations and their use in strategic planning, management for results, and organizational learning.

The Policy on Evaluation establishes overall Roles, Authorities and Accountabilities for the effective use of evaluation across the organization. Realizing the Outcomes set out in this Strategy will involve targeted action and engagement to fulfill established roles.

At the **global level**, the Evaluation Office has two distinct but mutually reinforcing roles. As part of the **third line**, it advances the delivery of evaluation products and services through planning, commissioning, managing, and disseminating independent global, corporate, L3, joint and UN system-wide evaluations, and oversees and reports on the performance of the global function²⁰. It is responsible for ensuring that the principles of credibility, utility and impartiality of evaluation outlined in the Policy are maintained.

In its **second line** role, it supports the organization's evaluation function through normative, guidance, training, mentoring and quality assurance.

To deliver on the implementation of this Strategy, the Evaluation Office will:

- Prepare a multi-year central rolling evaluation workplan through a consultative process²¹ and publish the workplan (including projections for decentralized evaluations).



At the same time, embedding evaluation firmly in the organization requires strong internal collaboration between the Evaluation Office, as the custodian of the function, divisions and units as well as all regional bureaux and country offices.

¹⁹ For a detailed account of the roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities, please see Annex 3, in which they are further outlined.

²⁰ As for all independent oversight providers to UNHCR, the Evaluation Office should have full and independent authority while performing its functions; the authority to direct, organize and conduct the work free of interference from any internal and external party, including governments and other actors; and having full, free and unrestricted access to any member of the workforce and all records and information of the Organization, subject to applicable data protection rules and regulations.

²¹ **Strategic and thematic evaluations** are planned by the independent Evaluation Office based on criteria related to coverage but also taking into consideration policy life-cycle factors and key issues and debates within the organization and discussions with its governing bodies. The Head of Evaluation develops a costed biannual workplan in consultation with senior management which, in advance of the endorsement of the High Commissioner, is reviewed and commented on by the IAOC. **Evaluations of major emergency responses** cannot, by their nature, be planned. They are triggered automatically, within 15 months, in the case of an L3 declaration by the High Commissioner. While focussing on rapid scale up, L3 evaluations should also focus on the longer-term strategy, given that many major emergencies in practice continue for a number of years.

- Ensure that centralized evaluations are managed by competent senior evaluation staff in line with corporate guidelines and established processes
- Ensure efficient management of allocated resources for the centralized function
- Advance the dissemination of key evaluation findings and learning by publishing all evaluation reports and developing, briefing senior management on learning and areas for change, and implementing comprehensive dissemination plans.

At the **regional level**, Regional Bureaux, in their **second line role**, are responsible for planning, commissioning and managing Country Strategy Evaluations (CSEs)²², driven by multi-year strategies and associated monitoring and evaluation plans. They also provide oversight and assistance to country operations in the development of M&E plans within multi-year strategies, and in supporting the design, management and use of country level project and programme evaluations. The **first line role** of the RB pertains to evaluation identification, team selection, and management of multi-country, thematic or programmatic evaluations of work led by the RB itself.

To advance the implementation of this Strategy, the Regional Bureaux should:

- Advance cross regional learning and the use of evidence in multi-year country strategies and results-based management and follow -up on regional and country level evaluation management responses
- Ensure that Senior Regional Evaluation Officers (SREOs) play a central role in managing and backstopping evaluations, and are integrated into the Strategic Planning Pillar of the Regional Bureaux structure
- Allocate adequate resources for planned regional evaluations; develop and maintain adequate capacity to support evaluation design, management and use at regional and country levels.
- Support COs in evaluation planning, financing, and use.

At the **country level**, the Country Offices play a central role in ensuring that at least one evaluative activity is planned over a multi-year cycle, or at least once every five years, as determined by evidence needs in the MYS, priority areas, and/or in response to donor requirements²³.

²² **Country Strategy Evaluations** are triggered by planning cycles for new multi-year strategies, changes in the operating context that impact on strategy and operations. All regions should carry out one CSE per year, and all country operations should have one CSE at least every two multi-year cycles or 8-10 years.

²³ Evaluations of projects and programmes are carried out where required by donor agreements and/or an intent to measure impacts of specific types of interventions, or when piloting a particular approach.

To deliver the implementation of this Strategy, the Country Offices should

- At a minimum, appoint a senior level staff member (national/international at L3 grade or higher), such as the Planning Coordinator, to serve as the focal point for (monitoring & evaluation)²⁴. Focal points support the Representative to coordinate the multifunctional team in commissioning, planning and budgeting for and using the findings of evaluation, in keeping with the monitoring and evaluation plan and evaluation standards.
- Incorporate all evaluations that are funded through earmarked contributions in the multi-year strategy's monitoring and evaluation plan and budget and complete these evaluations in a timely way.

Annex 5 provides further details on the roles and accountabilities for evaluation at global, regional and country levels.

Collaboration within UNHCR

This strategy outlines work streams, actions and responsibilities that span country, regional bureaux and headquarters divisions, reflecting the whole-of-organization approach that is necessary to advancing the evaluation function and strengthen the use of evidence in planning and decision-making. From a standard-setting and strategy implementation perspective, a particular focus is required on the roles of specific centralized divisions. Increased collaboration between the Evaluation Office and **DSPR** will further strengthen evaluation's contribution to strategic planning and results-based management and will focus on developing guidance and training in RBM, tracking management responses, developing evidence-sharing mechanisms, and examining methods in performance assessments. Increased coordination with **DRS** and **DIP** can advance additional evidence-sharing mechanisms particularly on UNHCR's work on resilience and solutions, while strengthening data collection and analysis tools. Strengthening existing collaboration with **GDS** can further help to advance the use of evaluation evidence and data across the organization. In these ways, increased collaboration within UNHCR can also advance key areas of the Strategy. see Annex 3a. for further details.



This strategy outlines work streams, actions and responsibilities that span country, regional bureaux and headquarters divisions, reflecting the whole-of-organization approach that is necessary to advancing the evaluation function and strengthen the use of evidence in planning and decision-making.

Key External Partnerships

Whilst collaboration within UNHCR is central to the Strategy's implementation, external partnerships can also play a crucial role. Advancing partnerships with other **UN agencies** and the **UN Evaluation Group** (UNEG), can strengthen UNHCR expertise in conducting evaluations and generating evidence on collective results across the UN system. Similarly, increasing partnerships with **Member States** can allow for evaluation evidence and data

²⁴ The updated Handbook on Field Presence will provide additional guidance on when dedicated M&E staff may be needed/justified.

to be presented more broadly, providing assurance, all while building a broader awareness of evaluation's contribution to organizational oversight, resourcing, and strategic planning²⁵. Finally, collaboration **with consultancy companies** to deliver high quality and independent evaluations and **academic institutions** can further strengthen learning and methodological development, while exploring new approaches in evaluation design and implementation. These partnerships are important at global, regional and country levels. See Annex 3b. for further details.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

This section addresses the level of resourcing (financial and human) required to deliver the strategy, and the instruments and processes to be put in place to mobilize these resources.

COSTING AND FINANCING THE STRATEGY

To be implementable, this strategy requires robust and realistic costing, covering all aspects of the evaluation function at headquarters, regional bureaux and country operations; and a plan mobilizing these resources.

Costing the Strategy

A detailed costing of the strategy (summarized in Figure 6) has been carried out for the 2023-27 period, showing overall a projected increase in budgetary requirement globally from just over USD 7.5 million in 2023 to just over USD 13 million in 2027. This approximates a rise to 0.23% of UNHCR's total expenditure (at current levels) by 2027²⁶. While reasonable compared to 'industry standards', this trajectory is ambitious in the context of declining resources for the organization - and will need to be reviewed every 2 years.

The assumptions, drivers and features of this budgetary projection are as follows:

- Stability over the strategy period in the number of centralized strategic/thematic and emergency evaluations commissioned by the EvO (3-5/year) with an increased focus on generating more evidence synthesis across evaluations and studies.

²⁵ Informal briefings for Member States will be provided on all global strategic evaluations.

²⁶ The UNEG Norms and Standards of June 2016 recommend that benchmarks for resourcing of the evaluation function globally should be commensurate with the size and function of the organization. The United Nations Joint Inspection Unit report (JIU/REP/2014/6) concluded that organizations should consider a range of funding that is between 0.5 per cent and 3 per cent of organizational expenditure.

- A proportional shift of overall evaluation resources from a situation where the vast majority of evaluation funds are provided by the Evaluation Office budget to a situation where at least as many decentralized evaluations as centralized evaluations are conducted annually charged to the relevant cost centers. Within the Evaluation Office budget, an increasing allocation in support of decentralized evaluations (staff costs, with senior regional evaluation officers to be located in all regions - financed from headquarters but outposted, country strategy evaluations (similarly financed by headquarters but identified and managed from regional bureau, and capacity development related activities and expenditures)
- A gradual increase in evaluations commissioned at country level, a projected curve based on the increase over the previous strategy period.
- Workstreams and actions of this strategy that are not cost neutral, in particular the evaluation contingency fund to support decentralized evaluations; the growing quality assurance mechanism to meet the need of an increased number of evaluations; establishing and resourcing an evidence platform and evaluation capacity development activities.

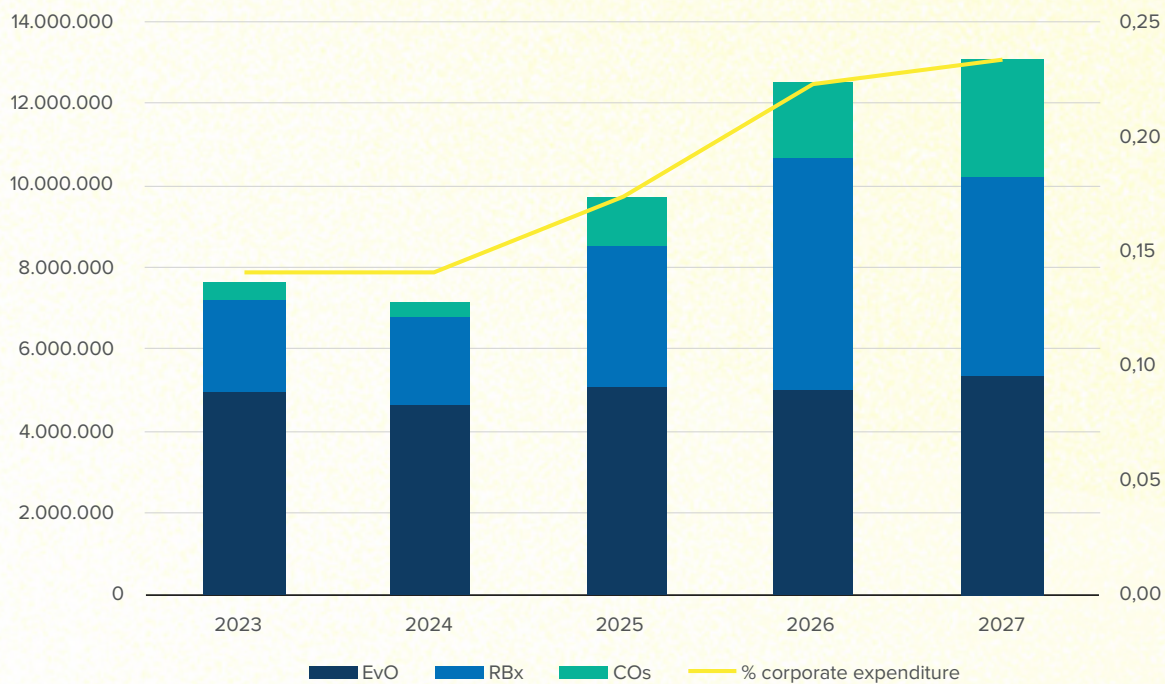


Figure 6. Projected global requirements for evaluation 2023-27 (by investment centre²⁷)

²⁷ Rather than cost centre. For example, all senior regional evaluation officers and country strategy evaluations will be financed from the EVO budget to ensure their sustainability over the strategy life-cycle, but these staff and evaluations are located at the regional levels. Increased investment at regional level includes the 2 last SREO positions committed to in the policy as well as increased regional allocations for evaluation. Investments at country level will likely involve increased CO capacity in M&E as well as, in the context of increasing earmarking of funding by donors, a larger number of project evaluations.

Financing the Strategy

The Evaluation Strategy is a whole-of-organization initiative, and hence will seek resources from several different sources as suggested in the Evaluation Policy and detailed in Annex 8 to this strategy. As projected requirements exceed current levels of expenditure, both resource mobilization and (re)prioritization of available resources will be pursued towards the strategy outcomes.

Pooled Fund for Evaluation

As indicated in the policy, funding for evaluations of major humanitarian responses should be sourced from the same (appeal) resources that finance the scale-up. As donor resources allocated in response to humanitarian appeals are by their nature pooled funds, a mechanism to set-aside adequate funding for (monitoring and) evaluation will need to be developed. Consideration should be given to allocating this funding not only for M&E activities but also for the required staffing to support them.

At the decentralized level the feasibility of a pooled-fund mechanism²⁸ will be assessed, and if workable, developed to enable smaller country offices to raise adequate funding to finance evaluations. This will be piloted in one region in 2024/25.

Evaluation Contingency Fund for Country Offices

An evaluation contingency fund will be formally established in 2024 in the Evaluation Office to provide financial assistance and technical support to country offices to address identified evidence gaps and meet the coverage target laid out in the Evaluation Policy. This will build on the experience and lessons of the top-up financing provided on a case-by-case basis by the Evaluation Office during the previous strategy period.

The eligibility criteria for the Fund include the following:

- Country Offices with limited operational budgets (parameters to be defined)
- Co-financing only. Each applying office is expected to contribute a share of the resources towards evaluation themselves, the proportion of which will be agreed case by case and should include some financial support from the regional bureau.
- The maximum amount an office can receive for a single evaluation is 80,000 USD
- No office can receive more than one grant in the Strategy period.



An evaluation contingency fund will be formally established in 2024 in the Evaluation Office to provide financial assistance and technical support to country offices to address identified evidence gaps and meet the coverage target laid out in the Evaluation Policy.

²⁸ The composition and mechanism for RB managed pooled funds may utilize a percentage approach from each country office budget pooled at the regional level, to finance – case-by-case, evaluations at the country level. This would enable country offices with smaller budgets to finance evaluations.

A mechanism for applications will be established, administered from the Evaluation Office, and operated through the senior regional evaluation officers in each regional bureau. Applications can be submitted at any time during the year, until the funds are exhausted.

Resource mobilization plan

UNHCR will need to mobilize and allocate resources for evaluation over and above existing levels to deliver the strategy. During the previous strategy, resources were raised from a number of member states for specific evaluations, including Luxembourg for the humanitarian-development nexus and Finland for COVID-19.



UNHCR will need to mobilize and allocate resources for evaluation over and above existing levels to deliver the strategy.

For the period 2023-27, resource mobilization will focus on:

- Impact evaluations focused on attributable results in protection²⁹
- Methodological development for citizen-led Evaluation (accountability for affected persons)
- Contingency fund to support evaluations in hard-to-reach areas and smaller operations
- Evaluation capacity development including training.
- JPOs (resources in kind) to reinforce evaluation capacities in selected offices
- (Co) funding of global thematic evaluations
- Funding of humanitarian evaluations from the resources raised for the response.

Various approaches will be considered to attract resourcing from member states and the private sector, including crowd-funding to allow those interested in evidence on forced displacement and statelessness to identify gaps in the evidence base and enable funders to pool resources to fill these gaps. A full plan will be developed in 2024.

Staffing for Evaluation

A strategic workforce planning process is currently underway to define the staffing capabilities required to deliver the evaluation function at country, regional and global levels in line with and phased in over the lifetime of this strategy.

Global level

Human resources are required to ensure that the Evaluation Office can effectively play its two main roles: carry out 3-5 independent corporate evaluations/year (as well as, on average, 1 country strategy evaluation/region/year) and support for the decentralized

²⁹ While impacts of socio-economic interventions such as CBI, health and education are readily measurable, important conceptual and methodological challenges exist in documenting protection impacts. Increased investment in measuring protection results is thus warranted.

evaluation function through the development and promotion of tools, guidance and learning and quality assurance.

This includes staffing for overall direction, senior evaluation experts³⁰/managers, supervision of SREOs and support and expertise in capacity development, data analysis, communications and knowledge management expertise and capacity to manage funds, contracts and personnel. As evaluation work is quite projectized and evaluation managers work less with each other than with consulting companies and UNHCR personnel globally, it is quite feasible to base senior evaluation experts anywhere. The EvO will pilot ‘work anywhere’ modalities for SEOs over the 2023-2027 period, taking stock of performance, efficiency gains and the extent to which such a modality promotes diversity and attracts high levels of expertise.

In support of the enhanced management response follow up system for evaluation³¹ and to promote evaluation uptake in organizational strategies, policies and programming, the DSPR will determine how to mainstream management responses in organizational planning and reporting systems. New associated tasks may require additional human resources.

Regional level

Capabilities needed to manage CSEs (1-2 per year), to support decentralized evaluations conducted by the RB and COs (3-5/ year), to nurture a regional community of practice and to promote knowledge sharing and evaluation/evidence use at country and regional level includes senior evaluation expertise (to strengthen independence, the reporting line will remain to the EvO) and analytical and coordination support.

Country Level

Capabilities needed to manage decentralized evaluations at country level and to promote the use of learning from evaluations and other types of evidence in CO planning will vary. At a minimum, to plan and manage 1 evaluative activity over a 5-year period, an evaluation focal point will be needed – someone who can be trained and coached/supported by the SREO. This person may come from programme or one of the data disciplines (economist, IMO, etc). Where demand is greater and an office is undertaking more evaluations, as well as significant other evidence generation activities, operations may consider dedicated M&E capacity. To this end a new standard job description for an M&E officer is envisioned.

³⁰ As per the evaluation policy, 50% of EvO positions will be maintained as expert or specialist positions.

³¹ The 2022 evaluation policy requires UNHCR management to not only formulate a management response to every evaluation but also to report on its implementation of accepted recommendations after 12 and 24 months. Actions agreed to in MRs should be reflected in annual plans and budgets of the organization and be reflected in the IGO managed recommendation tracker for oversight functions.

Risk management

Six major risks have been identified to achieve the outcomes outlined in this strategy, pertaining to:

1. due diligence in the rigorous management of evaluations with a particular focus on decentralized evaluations at regional and country levels,
2. quality assurance through the process,
3. attention paid to accountability to affected persons in the conduct of evaluations,
4. the adequacy of resources for the function to deliver the strategy, including financial and human resources;
5. the active support of management to evaluation as an instrument of results-management, and
6. the impact of external events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic or other crisis on the ability to deliver evaluations (see Annex 6).

These risks will continue to be monitored and managed, removed and added to as appropriate, through six-monthly risk review meetings including headquarters and outposted evaluation officers. Proactive and reactive treatments will be reviewed and updated, and all recorded on the corporate risk register tool.

Monitoring and Review

The strategy's implementation and performance will be tracked through key performance indicators (see Annex 7) which will feed into adjustments to the system as needed and narrative reporting on progress at global level by the Evaluation Office. The Regional Bureaux will be encouraged to support tracking of progress towards outcomes that they contribute to and with respect to their own accountabilities for ensuring evaluation coverage in their regions.

The Evaluation Office will measure and report on results annually in the Annual Results Report in COMPASS, drawing upon inputs from other stakeholders. This will complement the Annual Report of the High Commissioner on Evaluation presented to the Executive Committee based on the July – June reporting year. See Annex 7. for details.

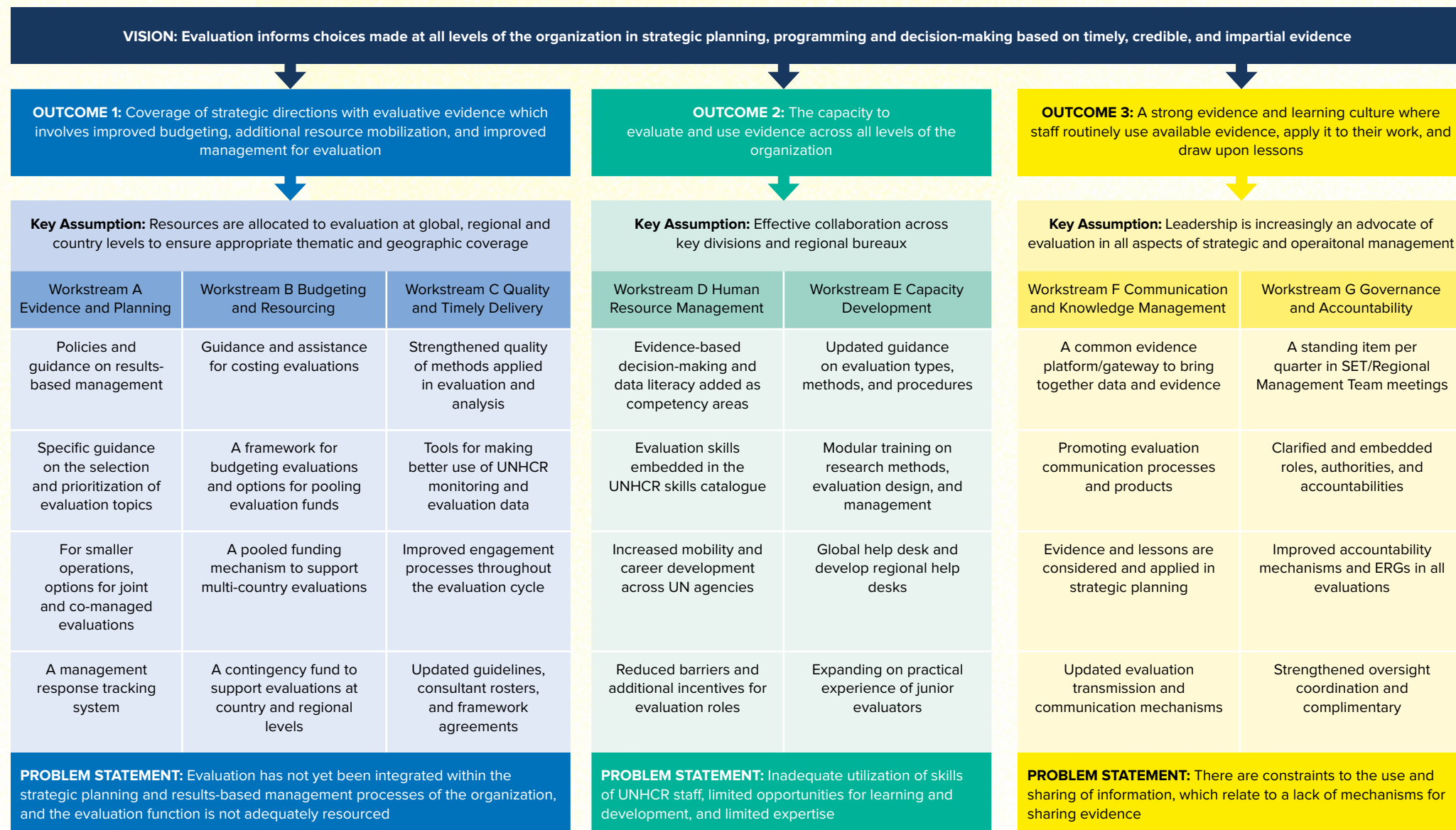
An independent evaluation of the evaluation function is proposed at the end of the strategy. In the mid term, it is likely that a JIU review of decentralized evaluation functions of UN agencies will be undertaken which will take stock of and benchmark progress in UNHCR in the use of evaluation as a second line management, planning and learning tool.



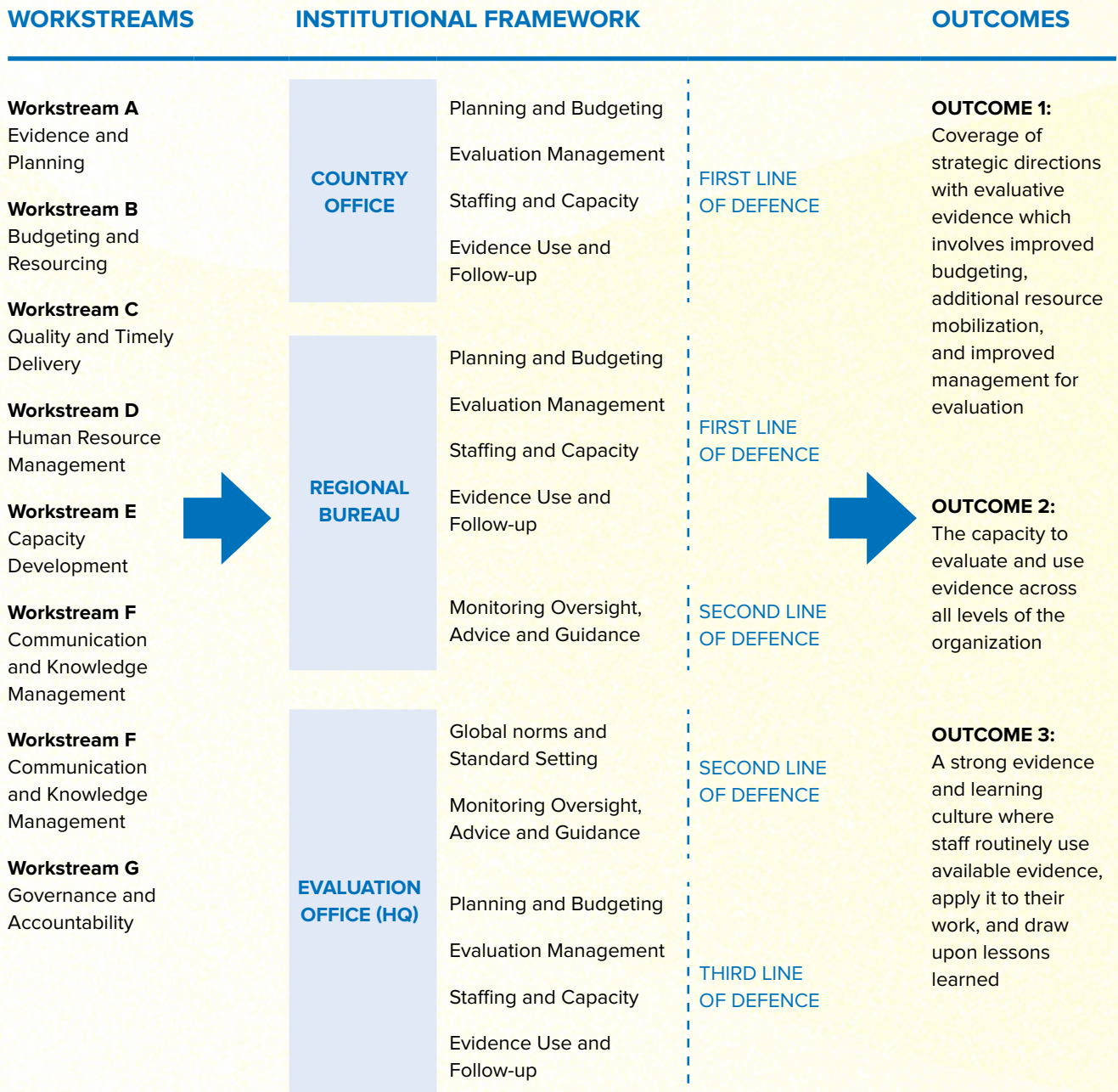
The Evaluation Office will measure and report on results annually in the Annual Results Report in COMPASS, drawing upon inputs from other stakeholders.

Annexes

Annex 1a. Theory of Change



Annex 1b. Institutional Framework for Delivery



Annex 2. Strategy Work Plan

OUTCOME 1. COVERAGE OF STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS WITH EVALUATIVE EVIDENCE

WORKSTREAM A. EVIDENCE AND PLANNING

KEY ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN
1.1 Development and application of a transparent approach to the rolling centralized evaluation workplan in line with coverage targets, evidence needs and stakeholder interest.	EvO	2024-2027
1.2 Ensure planning process and associated guidelines for decentralized evaluations clear and embedded in multi-year strategic planning, budgeting and review processes.	EvO, DSPR, RBx	2023
1.3 Strengthen the quality of the multi-year M&E workplan, update it annually and assign evaluation management responsibilities to a senior colleague in the Office.	CO	2023-2027
1.4 Encourage, as appropriate, joint evaluations with UN and other partners to broaden thematic coverage and reinforce partnerships in line with UN reform	EvO, RBx, COs, DER	2023-2027

WORKSTREAM B. BUDGETING AND RESOURCING

KEY ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN
2.1 Develop a resource mobilization strategy and actively seek external funding for the evaluation function.	EvO	2024
2.2 Create operational model for budgeting evaluations within each region – covering Bureau and Country Office led evaluations (linked to prioritization and assessment tool in previous outcome area) and potential explored for pooling evaluation funds.	EvO, DSPR, RBx	2024
2.3 Develop closer partnership with monitoring to reduce the cost of evaluation and data collection, e.g., through more systematic use of monitoring tools and data, e.g., LIS, RMS, flagships.	EvO DSPR, DRS GDS, RBx	2025
2.4 Establish mechanism for pooled, joint, and co-managed evaluations in regions with small budgets.	EvO DSPR	2025
2.5 Establish contingency fund to support evaluations at country and regional level, and link it to a wider resource raising plan.	EvO, RBx	2025

OUTCOME 1. COVERAGE OF STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS WITH EVALUATIVE EVIDENCE

2.6 Ensure that planned evaluations (in particular those required of earmarked funded projects) are allocated adequate resources.	CO	2023-2027
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WORKSTREAM C. QUALITY AND TIMELY DELIVERY

KEY ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN
3.1 Strengthen the quality of the methods applied in evaluation and analysis through collaboration across UNHCR and in partnership with external entities.	EvO	2024
3.2 Strengthen the quality and innovation of engagement processes for staff, persons we serve and other stakeholders to contribute to and learn from evaluations during their implementation.	EvO DSPR, DIP GDS RBx, Academia	2024
3.3 Systematically make better use of UNHCR monitoring tools and existing data in evaluation, to strengthen evaluation quality and reduce the need for, or refocus primary data collection efficiently.	EvO, RBx, GDS, DIP	2025
3.4 Update evaluation guidelines, particularly Decentralized Evaluation Guidelines.	EvO	2023-24
3.5 Update consultant rosters, and framework agreements.	EvO and RBx	2023-24
3.6 Ensure that evaluations commissioned by the operation benefit from QA at TOR, inception and reporting stages.	CO	2023-2027

OUTCOME 2. THE CAPACITY TO EVALUATE AND USE EVIDENCE

WORKSTREAM D. HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

KEY ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN
4.1 Ensure that the competency framework and performance review for senior management incorporate evidence-based decision-making and data literacy as competency areas related to evaluation.	EvO, DHR	2024

OUTCOME 2. THE CAPACITY TO EVALUATE AND USE EVIDENCE

4.2 Ensure that evaluation skills are fully outlined in the skills catalogue; that monitoring and evaluation competencies and skills are embedded in relevant positions; and create generic job description for M&E Officer.	EvO, DHR	2024
4.3 Encourage mobility and career development across analytical functions within UNHCR and with other UN system agencies.	EvO DSPR, DRS, DIP GDS	2024
4.4 Establish cross-analytical skills and competencies, reduce barriers and create incentives to non-evaluators to apply.	EvO DSPR, DRS, DIP GDS	2024
4.5 Establish M&E focal points and, where warranted, M&E positions in support of quality reporting on results.	CO	2024

WORKSTREAM E. CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

KEY ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN
5.1 Update and expand guidance on evaluation, types, methods and procedures, particularly for decentralized evaluations and in related evaluative activities.	EvO	2024
5.2 Develop modular training curated with other evidence functions including applied research methods; theory of change, evaluation design and management; data visualization and use.	EvO, DSPR, DRS, GDS	2024-25
5.3 Expand our global and develop regional help desks, providing on technical assistance on evaluation, on the job support and quality assurance services.	EvO, RBx	2024
5.4 Expand on the practical experience of junior evaluators and non-evaluators in other analytical functions through stretch assignments and the active nurturing of an M&E community of practice.	EvO, DSPR, DHR	Contin.

OUTCOME 3. CULTURE OF EVIDENCE AND LEARNING

WORKSTREAM F. COMMUNICATION AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

KEY ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN
6.1 Establish a common evidence platform/gateway to bring together data and evidence in a single portal for internal and external use.	EvO, DSPR, DRS, DIP, GDS	2025-26
6.2 Promote effective evaluation communication processes, products and events building on tactics reflected in the Evaluation Communication and Engagement Strategy 2022-24.	EvO	2023-24
6.3 Strengthen and ensure that all staff access networks and there as reliable routes for transmission and communication of evidence across the organization.	EvO DSPR, DRS, DIP GDS	2025
6.4 Promote mechanisms for a shared evidence agenda and 'space' across the organization, supported by senior management to drive the generation and use of evidence, including evaluation, for internal and external use.	EvO DSPR, DRS, DIP GDS	2025-26

WORKSTREAM G. GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

KEY ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN
7.1 Establish a standing item once per quarter for evaluation in SET/Regional Management Team meetings at global and regional bureau levels.	RBx	2024
7.2 Clarify and embed roles, authorities and accountabilities for commissioning and management of evaluation.	EvO with TCS DHR	2023
7.3 Ensure local accountability mechanisms are improved: reference groups, including key external stakeholders, are standardized in all evaluations; greater inclusion of displaced persons and stateless in evaluation practice and accountability.	EvO, RBx, COs	2025
7.4 Continue to strengthen oversight coordination and ensure evaluation and audit are complimentary.	IGO, OIOS EvO	Contin.
7.5 Create mechanism for tracking management responses and their implementation.	DSPR	2024

Annex 3. Partnerships and Collaboration

Annex 3.1 Areas for Internal Collaboration

UNIT	RATIONALE	KEY AREAS OF COLLABORATION
DSPR	Evaluation's contribution to strategic planning and results-based management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance and training in RBM • Financing Evaluation • Management Response Tracking • Methods in performance assessment • Evidence sharing mechanisms
GDS	Evaluation's use of organizationally generated data and evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training in data generation and analysis • Collaboration in data collection and analysis to strengthen tools and reduce overlap • Methods in performance assessment • Data protection and sharing mechanisms
DRS	Evaluation's use of analytics and research and provision of evidence on UNHCR's work on resilience and solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact evaluation • Evidence sharing mechanisms
DIP	Evaluation's use of protection monitoring and provision of evidence on protection policy and practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration in data collection and analysis to strengthen tools and reduce overlap • Evidence sharing mechanisms
DHR	Evaluation's workforce and contribution to organizational learning and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competency framework and Job profiles for monitoring and evaluation. • Professionalization of evaluation function • Inter-agency mobility • Capacity development
DER	Evaluation's contribution to external accountability for resources provided and ensuring evaluation requirements met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overseeing donor evaluation requirements • Contribution to global reporting

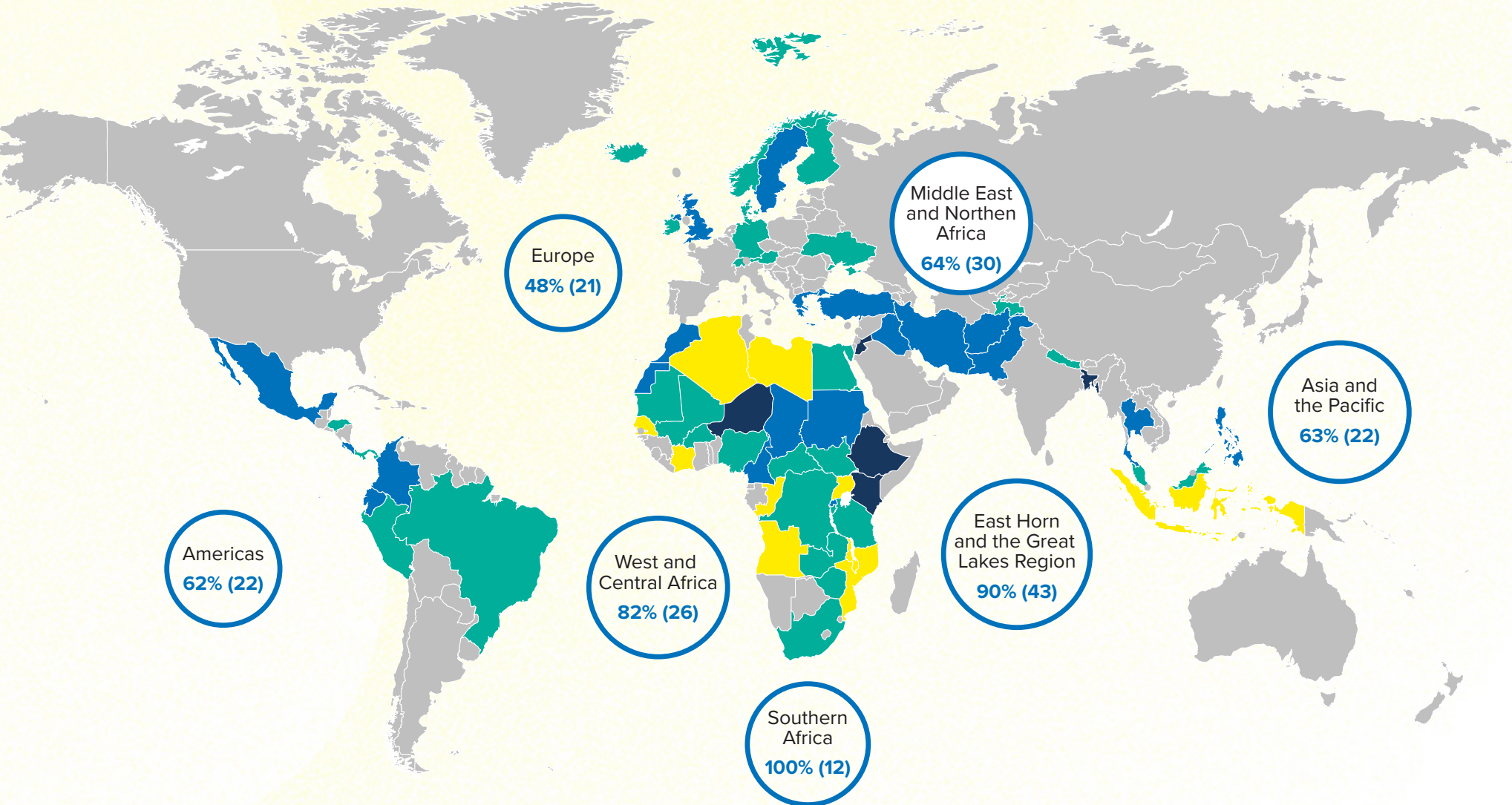
UNIT	RATIONALE	KEY AREAS OF COLLABORATION
ERM	Evaluation's use of risk evidence, and contribution to risk profiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence in compiling risk register • Use of risk registers in evaluation selection and design
RBx	Evaluation's support to regional MYS, performance and results and oversight of country office performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional, multi-country and country strategy evaluation • Use of evidence in regional MYS and RBM • Support to COs on evaluation selection, financing and use • Oversight of CO management responses to evaluation

Annex 3.2 Key External Partnerships

INSTITUTION GROUP	RATIONALE	KEY AREAS OF PARTNERSHIP
Member states	Evaluation's contribution to organizational oversight and resourcing evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of key findings from evaluation to member states (MS) • Inclusion of MS in evaluation reference groups • Identification of co-financing opportunities for evaluation
UN agencies	UN Reforms and the need to measure UNHCR contributions to collective results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluations and Joint Evaluations • United Nations Evaluation Group
Consultancy firms	Conduct evaluations for UNHCR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through Framework Agreement, conduct evaluations. • Improve quality of evaluation through stronger partnership and engagement
Academia	Strengthen learning and methodological development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact evaluation • New approaches/technologies in evaluation design and implementation • Evidence mapping

Annex 4. Geographic and thematic coverage of evaluations

Annex 4.1 Geographic Evaluation Coverage 2019-23









Annex 4.2 Thematic Evaluation Coverage by UNHCR Global Results Areas 2018-22



Annex 5. Roles and Accountabilities at Global, Regional and Country Levels






Annex 5.1 Global roles and accountabilities for corporate evaluations

NORMS AND STANDARDS	All substantive policies/strategic results areas are covered by a corporate policy, strategy/thematic evaluation at least once in a 10-year period	Emergency Evaluation of all L3s within 15 months of declaration. L2 emergencies at the request of SET or RB	
PLANNING AND BUDGETING	Commission global independent evaluations, disseminate UNHCR evaluations, develop and oversee evaluation norms as well as standards	Annual budgeting process in line with strategy	Global evaluation strategy, multi-year evaluation work plan prepared through consultative process
EVALUATION MANAGEMENT AND FOLLOW UP	All EvO-led evaluations managed by senior evaluation officer in line with corporate guidelines and established processes		
STAFFING AND CAPACITY	Staff costs financed by EvO core budget report to Head of Evaluation. Outposted Senior Evaluation Officers report to Head through Senior Evaluation Coordinator	Skill development through formal training, and peer-to-peer learning	
EVALUATIVE EVIDENCE USE AND FOLLOW UP	Ensures dissemination of evaluations through communication action plan	Establishes management response tracking system and supports its implementation	
	Coordinates and follows up on management response of EREs	Coordinates and follows up on management response of global strategic evaluations, and promotes reflective management practices and adaptation	

 AHC-O	 Head of EvO
 SEO	 Head of EvO to establish; DSPR to implement
 SET member	 Head of EvO to establish with input from SMC and SET

Annex 5.2 Regional roles and accountabilities for decentralized evaluations³²





NORMS AND STANDARDS	Coverage and frequency determined by the Regional Bureau. At the regional level, types can include: Regional programme/project, regional thematic, multi-country; regional inter-agency; impact evaluation; case studies. At country level, CSEs which are determined by RB with CO and led by SREO for independence	
PLANNING AND BUDGETING	Setting the evaluation agenda consistent with evidence gaps and multi-year strategic priorities. Annually through MYS process, documented in M&E plan	Allocation in annual regional budget linked to M&E plan and appropriately costed
EVALUATION MANAGEMENT AND FOLLOW UP	Regional evaluation (decentralized) process, reporting, dissemination, and technical follow up	CSE management and dissemination. Backstop evaluations in country offices.
STAFFING AND CAPACITY	SREO to be financed from the EvO budget integrated into Strategic Planning Pillar, with dotted line to Bureau Director and straight line to Head of Evaluation	CSE management and dissemination. Backstop evaluations in country offices.
EVALUATIVE EVIDENCE USE AND FOLLOW UP	Sharing evidence from evaluation, other M&E activities and audit. Ensuring evidence gets into ARRs through liaising with results leads	Ensuring that a management response is issued within three months

 SREO	 Head of Strategic Planning
 Multifunctional Team	 RB Evaluation Manager supported by the SREO
	 Regional Bureau Director

³² SREO = Senior Regional Evaluation Officer

Annex 5.3 Country roles and accountabilities for decentralized evaluations

NORMS AND STANDARDS	All country offices must carry one evaluation activity* over a multi-year cycle or at least once every five years, determined by evidence needs in the multi-year strategy, priority projects/ programmes or where a donor requirement	
PLANNING AND BUDGETING	Setting the evaluation agenda. Annually through MYS process, documented in M&E plan	Allocation in annual budget linked to M&E plan
EVALUATION MANAGEMENT AND FOLLOW UP	Following step-wise guidance, and coordinate reference group/oversight of the process with support from the Regional Bureau	Provides technical assistance and support to Evaluation Manager
STAFFING AND CAPACITY	Coordinating with the relevant regional bureau and the Evaluation Office, as appropriate, on evaluation plans for quality assurance purposes, technical advice, publication, and other support that may be needed	Identifies monitoring and evaluation priorities and processes
	Carries out need capacity development, where needed	Skill development through peer-to-peer through social networks, formal training and stretch assignments
EVALUATIVE EVIDENCE USE AND FOLLOW UP	Management response follow up	Sharing evidence from evaluation and other M&E activities. Ensuring evidence gets into Annual Results Reports (ARRs) through liaising with results leads

 SREO	 Evaluation Managers and Focal Points
 Representative	 Planning Coordinator

Annex 6. Evaluation Strategy Risk Framework

OUTCOMES	RISK	IMPACT	LIKELIHOOD	RATING	MEASURES
Coverage	Due diligence	Major	High	Yellow	Strengthening evaluation management at all levels. Development of an evaluation function performance dashboard
	Quality assurance	Major	Medium		Strengthen use of EQA system and oversight at all levels
Capacity	Accountability to Affected Persons	Minor	Medium	Teal	EvO promote AAP into evaluation tools and practices
	Adequate resourcing of the function	Major	High	Red	Strengthened EvO advocacy for growing core resources and external fundraising
Culture	Management support	Major	High		Red
	External crises	Major	High	New ways of working	

Annex 7. Key performance indicators for evaluation strategy

Outcome 1: Coverage and Quality	Proportion of evaluations completed annually on time as per rolling evaluation workplan (centrally/regionally/country).
	Proportion of substantive policies/ strategic results areas evaluated at least once in 10 years
	Proportion of CO who have been engaged in some form of evaluative activity over the past 5 years
	Proportion of programme expenditure spent on evaluation (disaggregated CE/DE).
	Mean quality score of evaluation reports (centralized and decentralized)
Outcome 2: Capacity	Proportion of RBs with S-REOs in place
	Proportion of country level evaluation focal points with basic skills in the planning and conduct of evaluations
	Evaluation guidance and targets mainstreamed into COMPASS and related training and outreach
Outcome 3: Culture	Proportion of global and multi-year country strategies that explicitly reference evaluative evidence
	Proportion of accepted evaluation recommendations demonstrably acted upon within 24 months of management response
	Number of visits & downloads on ES intranet and external webpage page (disaggregated)

Annex 8. Evaluation resource framework

(As outlined in the 2022 Policy on Evaluation)

LEVEL	TYPE	COMMISSIONING UNIT	FUNDING OPTIONS
Global independent	Corporate policy, strategy, thematic, joint, synthesis	Evaluation Office	Evaluation Office Operating Limit budget (OL) and/or donor resources
	L3 Emergency	Evaluation Office	L3 Supplementary Appeal / earmarked resources ³³
Global management-commissioned	Thematic or programme-specific evaluations	Division	Division OL and/or donor resources
Regional	Multi-country thematic, L2 emergency or programmatic evaluations	Regional Bureaux	Bureau OL and/or donor resources
	Country Strategy Evaluation	Evaluation Office / Regional Bureaux	Evaluation Office OL until 2026 then Regional Bureau OL
Country	Thematic, programme and project-level evaluations	Country Operation	Country operation OL and/or donor resources ³⁴ or pooled fund, with support from Evaluation contingency fund.

³³ Resources earmarked from L3 Emergency Appeals for evaluation should automatically result in an OL increase for the Evaluation Office.

³⁴ Where donor agreements incorporate resources earmarked for evaluation, it is critical that this is negotiated to cover the full cost of evaluation in line with the evaluation costing guidelines, and that this is earmarked within the OL resource envelope, planned for and carried out as required.

