

EVALUATION  
REPORT

# REVIEW OF UNICEF'S PARTNERSHIPS WITH CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

Abridged Version

EVALUATION OFFICE  
APRIL 2007

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Health, Education, Equality, Protection  
ADVANCE HUMANITY

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REPORT**

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PARTNERSHIPS WITH CIVIL  
SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS**

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## **Review of UNICEF's Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations**

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UNICEF

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April 2007

The purpose is to assess the situation, facilitate the exchange of knowledge and perspectives among UNICEF staff and to propose measures to address the concerns raised. The contents of this report do not necessarily reflect the policies or the views of UNICEF.

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## **PREFACE**

The Evaluation Office in close cooperation with the Office of Public Partnerships commissioned the Review of UNICEF's partnerships with Civil Society Organizations (CSO). The review was done from November 2005 to April 2006 under the general oversight of a senior level Steering Committee. It was conducted by two external consultants, Anne Bernard and Shyama Kuruvilla.

This Review of UNICEF's partnerships with Civil Society Organizations answers the following question: "How well is UNICEF performing as a partner organization in light of the principles and standards of good practice in partnerships, as perceived by its civil society partners? The Review fostered an enhanced understanding by UNICEF of the nature of its collaboration with civil society organisations. It identified key conditions and factors that influence the strengths and weaknesses of UNICEF-CSO partnerships. It provided guidance for improving institutional policy.

The findings of the Review made a significant contribution to the Organisational Review that was undertaken subsequently.

Much appreciation goes to the Steering Committee chaired by Rima Salah, Deputy Executive Director. Special thanks go to Peter Crowley, Director of the Office of Public Partnerships and to Simon Lawry-White, Senior Evaluation Specialist who managed the review and was assisted by Xavier Foulquier, Evaluation Officer.

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Director  
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Acronyms .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Résumé Analytique.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Resumen Ejecutivo .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Section I: Purpose And Background Of The CSP Review.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Section II: UNICEF’s Strengths And Challenges As A Partner.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Section III: Civil Society Organizations And Partnership Contexts.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Section IV: What Partnership Means To UNICEF’s CSO Partners .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Section V: Key Partnership Processes And Influences.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Section VI: UNICEF-CSO Partnerships In The MTSP Focus Areas.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Section VII: Two Typologies Of Partnership And Implications For UNICEF Contracts And Programming.....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Section VIII: Recommendations .....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Annex 1 Terms Of Reference.....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Annex 2 Two Typologies Of Partnership.....</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>Annex 3 UNICEF CSP Review: Survey Results At A Glance .....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Annex 3.1 Survey Analysis Of ‘Factors That Matter’ In UNICEF-CSO Partnerships.....</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Annex 4 Compendium Of Issues Explored With CSO Partners .....</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>Annex 5 Country Contexts .....</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>Annex 6 Partnership Results .....</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>Annex 7 Best Practices In Making Partnerships Work .....</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>Annex 8 CSP Review Contributors .....</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>Annex 9 Case Country Selection Process.....</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>Annex 10 Review Methods.....</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>Annex 11 Bibliography .....</b>	<b>119</b>



## ACRONYMS

CBO	Community-based organization
CCC	Core Commitments for Children
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CFS	Child-friendly school
CO	Country Office (of UNICEF)
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRIN	Child Rights Information Network
CSO	Civil society organisation
CSP	Civil society partnership
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
ECHUI	Ending Childhood Hunger and Under-nutrition Initiative
ECPAT	End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes
EFA	Education for All
EO	Evaluation Office (UNICEF)
EPI	Expanded programme on immunization
FGM	Female genital mutilation
GMC	Global Movement for Children
GPF	Global Partnership Forum (HIV/AIDS)
HQ	Headquarters (New York)
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee (United Nations)
IDP	Internally displaced persons
INGO	International nongovernmental organization
LFA	Logical framework analysis
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MOU	Memorandum of understanding
MTSP	Medium-Term Strategic Plan
NCCM	National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (Egypt)
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (United Nations)
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OPP	Office of Public Partnerships (UNICEF)
PCA	Project Cooperation Agreement
PROMS	Programme Manager System
PRSP	Poverty reduction strategy paper
RAAAP	Rapid Assessment, Analysis, and Action Planning (for HIV/AIDS)
RBM	Results-based management
SG	UNICEF Steering Group for the CSP Review
SSA	Special Services Agreement
SWAP	Sector-wide approach to programming or planning
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization



# Executive Summary

## CSP Review perspectives

UNICEF bears responsibility for enhancing the quality of its partnerships with civil society organizations (CSOs) if it is to realize its mandate as lead agency for ensuring the protection and promotion of children's rights around the world. Consonant with overall UN reform, UNICEF has made a strategic commitment to such partnerships.<sup>1</sup> However, while its commitment is clear, the effectiveness of its partnership policies and practices is less so. For this reason, and as contribution to an overall review of the organization, the Offices of Public Partnerships (OPP) and Evaluation Office (EO) commissioned a 'diagnostic' review of its civil society partnerships, from the perspectives of partners themselves.

## Review methods

The CSP Review asked, "How well is UNICEF performing as a partner organization against principles and standards of good practice in partnership, as perceived by its civil society partners?" Conducted by two external consultants, and coordinated by OPP and EO.

## Strengths and challenges related to partnership with UNICEF

Synthesized from across the Review methods, a list of the most frequently mentioned strengths and challenges related to partnership with UNICEF was generated:

CSO PERCEPTIONS OF UNICEF AS A PARTNER	
Strengths	Challenges
1. Reputation and reach	1. Administrative demands
2. Promoting children's rights agenda	2. Lack of resources for CSO capacity development
3. Convening and brokering role	3. Competing agendas and alliances
4. Information and communication resources	4. UNICEF's capacity for coordination
5. Reliability of UNICEF as an organization focused on children	5. Lack of a longer-term and context specific perspective on development

## Civil Society Organizations and partnership contexts

**Civil society and CSOs:** The nature and role of CSOs are complex and changing, as bilateral donors, UN agencies and NGOs create global alliances and realign agendas with governments and the private sector. Large volunteer communities appear to be active among UNICEF's CSO partnerships. Partners stress the importance of focusing on their respective strengths and building on synergies and shared resources, and not simply funds. They urge UNICEF to work towards harmonizing multiple partnership agendas and alliances in the interest of children's rights.

<sup>1</sup> United Nations 2006 A/60/692. March 2006. *Investing in the United Nations: For a Stronger Organization Worldwide. Report of the Secretary-General.* United Nations General Assembly. Sixtieth session, Agenda items 46 and 120; UNICEF Medium-Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) for 2006-2009.

**Context matters:** The four country studies emphasize how much ‘context matters’ in terms of the imperatives and strategies for UNICEF-CSO partnerships. The challenge for UNICEF in Egypt and the Philippines is to establish new types of partnerships that can move initiatives to wider scale, establish others to fill particular strategic gaps, and continue to mature current linkages. In Zimbabwe, UNICEF-CSO partnerships face the challenges of rapidly deteriorating social and economic development conditions as the work of CSOs on rights and governance becomes increasingly restricted. Partnerships in Liberia are dealing with a country moving from war to peace, the role and capacity of relatively new local CSOs, and the approaches and agendas of INGOs in peace building and national rebuilding.

**Building partnerships for rights and empowerment:** The ultimate goal of UNICEF-CSO partnerships is to move beyond the organizations to involve civil society as a whole in acting to realize child rights. This requires ensuring that partnerships have legitimacy with the communities they serve; build on ongoing civil society activity; help strengthen the demand-side of human rights; promote community capacity and social capital; and assess partnerships against user-defined outcomes. As yet, UNICEF-CSO partnerships are not seen as strong in developing this level of partnership.

### **What CSOs mean by ‘partnership’**

Overall, there was agreement and validation in this Review of the definition of partnership proposed by the United Nations Secretary-General:

“Partnerships are voluntary and collaborative relationships in which all parties agree to work together to achieve a common purpose or undertake a specific task and to share risks, responsibilities, resources, competencies and benefits. In priority, principles of priority to partners are shared values, clear expectations, defined roles, specified contributions, joint decision-making, and mutual monitoring, evaluation and opportunities to learn.”

*Kofi A. Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations, Toward Global Partnership (A/57/817)*

CSOs tend to frame their partnerships with UNICEF around four main expectations; that partnerships will: i) evolve progressively into collaborations akin to communities of practice; ii) strengthen CSO capacities as change agents, individually and collectively; iii) commit to joint monitoring of, and learning from, partnership processes and results; and iv) lead to positive, measurable and sustainable realization of the rights of children.

### **What influences partners and partnerships**

#### **Strengthening the CRC as the basis for UNICEF-CSO partnerships**

The strongest mobilizing factor for CSOs in partnering with UNICEF is mutual commitment to the CRC; a shared commitment that draws them in and keeps them engaged. Partners organize around the basics of work on children’s rights (health, education, protection), not the specifics of the MTSP per se, but adapt their language to the specifics of 5-year Country Programmes as required for project proposals and planning.

As the ‘global custodian of the CRC’, UNICEF is most criticized as a partner where it does not follow through on CRC monitoring and reporting’ where it lets the momentum of advocacy dissipate by not following through with implementation, and where it does not follow up on CRC Committee Concluding Observations by reflecting them in country programming and partnerships.

## **Partnerships for capacity and capacities for partnership and change**

UNICEF continues to be perceived as weak in terms of its in-house capacity for: assessing partner strengths and designing partnership strategies to address deficiencies; selecting the 'right' partners and avoiding the 'wrong' ones as the field changes or new agendas evolve (e.g. working with the private sector); and for convening and building bridges between CRC-oriented CSOs that are able to present a strong collective voice for children. UNICEF needs to strike a balance between inclusiveness in reaching out to diverse CSOs, and exclusivity in nurturing select relationships.

## **Politics, culture and accountability**

The inherently political nature of the Global Movement for Children pushes UNICEF towards a stronger, more knowledgeable and, some CSOs suggest, more courageous position in support of at-risk children. UNICEF needs more effectively to balance global agendas and language with local priorities and voices.

UNICEF-CSO partnerships also face multiple accountability demands: to and from donors, partners, their own organizations and constituencies. Increasingly, accountability is seen to be driven by donor demands and many CSO partners noted the lack of partnership resources processes to provide feedback to local constituencies as a problem.

## **Partnership governance and administration**

UNICEF's administrative processes are seen by most partners as more appropriately designed for large government bureaucracies than for their own smaller, more flexible and resource-strapped administrative systems. Slow, opaque contracting processes, coupled with overly detailed, receipt-based reporting characterize UNICEF systems.

## **Partnership typologies**

Typologies are useful to guide partnership design, resource and monitoring decisions and strategic action. Two main typologies are developed from the CSP review data based on:

**i) Mode of engagement/ Relationship**, indicating five different partnership relationships and their contractual implications:

- Capacity-building/Support & grants.
- Contracted/Fee for services.
- Cooperation/ Resource-sharing.
- Collaboration/ Synergistic.
- Community of practice/ Co-evolution.

Partnerships may operate across these partnership modes concurrently or at different stages in order to meet different partnerships needs.

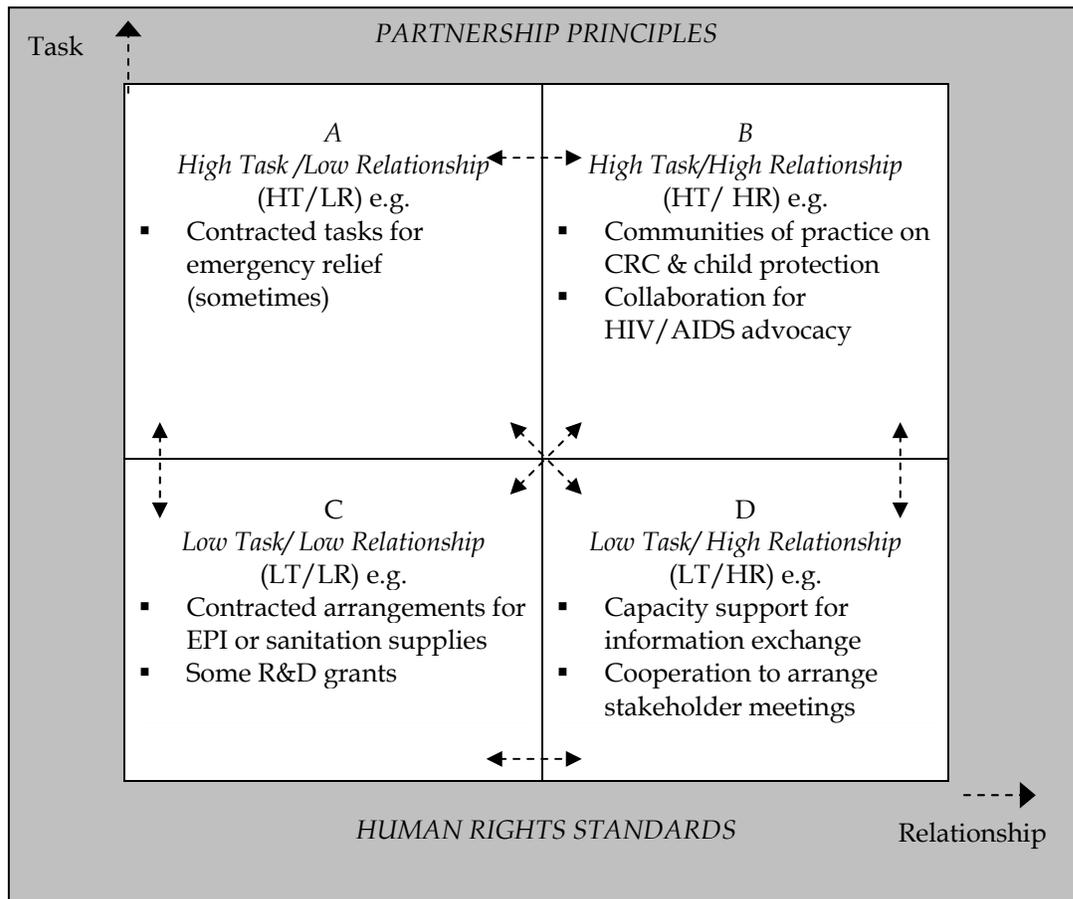
**ii) Partnership purpose/ Task**, based on partnership objectives to:

- Catalyze/mobilize.
- Promote intellectual exchange.
- Develop capacity.
- Increase reach.
- Respond to emergency.
- Promote CRC monitoring and reporting.

There are many ways in which these or other typologies may be combined and applied. The example presented here relates to the challenge for UNICEF in ascertaining the right balance between managing a partnership relationship and implementing a partnership task; as both considerations have strategic and resource implications:

The data of this Review, suggest that most 'partnership arrangements' move across quadrants as circumstances, needs and resources and relationships change. Most CSO partners in this Review would prefer their partnerships with UNICEF to be in the two 'high relationship' quadrants (B and D).

**'Partnership Location' grid: Locating partnerships by relationship and type**



## **Recommendations**

There are six main sets of recommendations resulting from the CSP Review related to clarifying UNICEF's mandate for CSOs, partnership strategy and process, implications for UNICEF's Organization Review process and next steps. Specific action points related to each of these are set out in the main report.

### **Mandate for UNICEF-CSO partnerships**

1. Establish a clear mandate for UNICEF's partnerships with CSOs, and get Executive Board support for this.

### **Partnership strategy**

2. Design UNICEF-CSO partnerships strategically, based on policy analysis and partnership assessment.
3. Leverage the comparative strengths of UNICEF and CSOs and build on other key partnership principles.
4. Develop an evidence-database on 'what works' in UNICEF-CSO partnerships, informed by results realized and the conditions influencing them.

### **Implications for UNICEF's Organizational Review and other ongoing reviews of UNICEF's organizational performance**

5. Integrate the CSP Review findings into UNICEF's overall Organizational Review with a view to strengthening in-house capacities to develop and support effective CSO partnerships.

### **CSP Review follow up**

6. Follow up this CSP Review with workshops with CSO partners to facilitate further research, planning and action to move these partnerships forward in realizing the rights of children around the world.



## Résumé Analytique

### Perspectives de l'Examen des partenariats avec les organisations de la société civile

Il incombe à l'UNICEF d'améliorer la qualité de ses partenariats avec les organisations de la société civile (OSC) si elle veut pouvoir s'acquitter de sa mission en tant qu'organisme chef de file pour la protection et la promotion des droits des enfants à travers le monde. Dans l'esprit de la réforme générale des Nations Unies, l'UNICEF a pris l'engagement stratégique d'appuyer ce type de partenariats<sup>2</sup>. Si son engagement est clair, cependant, l'efficacité de ses politiques et pratiques en matière de partenariats l'est moins. Pour cette raison, et pour contribuer à l'examen de l'ensemble de l'organisation, les Bureaux des partenariats publics (OPP) et de l'évaluation (EO) ont commandé un examen « diagnostic » de ses partenariats avec la société civile, du point de vue des partenaires.

### Méthodes utilisées pour l'Examen

Pour l'Examen des PSC, les auteurs ont posé la question suivante : Dans quelle mesure l'UNICEF est-elle performante en tant qu'organisation partenaire par rapport aux principes et normes des pratiques optimales pour les partenariats, de l'avis de ses partenaires de la société civile? L'Examen a été mené par deux consultants externes et coordonné par le OPP et le EO.

### Partenariats avec l'UNICEF : Forces et défis

À partir de la synthèse des résultats obtenus au moyen des différentes méthodes ci-dessus, une liste des forces et défis qui ont été mentionnés le plus souvent au sujet des partenariats avec l'UNICEF a été préparée :

PERCEPTIONS DES OSC SUR L'UNICEF EN TANT QUE PARTENAIRE	
Forces	Défis
1. Réputation et influence	1. Exigences administratives
2. Promotion de l'ordre du jour pour les droits de l'enfant	2. Manque de ressources pour le renforcement de la capacité des OSC
3. Rôle de facilitateur et d'intermédiaire	3. Ordres du jour et alliances se faisant concurrence
4. Ressources en matière d'information et de communications	4. Capacité de coordination de l'UNICEF
5. Fiabilité de l'UNICEF en tant qu'organisation se consacrant aux enfants	5. Perspective sur le développement ne tenant pas suffisamment compte du long terme et du contexte

### Organisations de la société civile et contextes des partenariats

**Société civile et OSC :** La nature et le rôle des OSC sont complexes et en train d'évoluer, les donateurs bilatéraux, les organismes des Nations Unies et les ONG forgeant des alliances mondiales et harmonisant leurs programmes d'action avec ceux des gouvernements et du secteur privé. De grandes

<sup>2</sup> Nations Unies 2006 A/60/692. mars 2006. *Investir dans l'organisation des Nations Unies pour lui donner les moyens de sa vocation mondiale. Rapport du Secrétaire général.* Assemblée générale des Nations Unies. Soixantième session, points 46 et 120 de l'ordre du jour; Plan stratégique à moyen terme de l'UNICEF (PSMT) pour 2006-2009.

communautés de bénévoles semblent actives au sein des partenariats de l'UNICEF avec des OSC. Les partenaires insistent sur l'importance de se concentrer sur leurs forces respectives et sur l'exploitation des synergies et des ressources communes, pas simplement sur les fonds. Ils demandent instamment à l'UNICEF de faire le nécessaire pour harmoniser les multiples ordres du jour et alliances des partenariats dans l'intérêt des droits des enfants.

**L'importance du contexte :** Les quatre études de pays font ressortir l'importance du contexte en termes des impératifs et des stratégies pour les partenariats UNICEF-OSC. En Égypte et aux Philippines, le défi pour l'UNICEF consiste à forger de nouveaux types de partenariats pour faire passer les initiatives à une plus grande échelle, créer de nouveaux partenariats pour combler des lacunes stratégiques et continuer d'entretenir les liens actuels. Au Zimbabwe, les défis auxquels sont confrontés les partenariats UNICEF-OSC sont la détérioration rapide de la situation sociale et du développement économique, le travail des OSC dans les domaines des droits et de la gouvernance étant de plus en plus contrôlé. Les partenariats au Libéria doivent composer avec un pays qui est en train de passer de la guerre à la paix, des OSC locales relativement nouvelles au rôle et à la capacité encore vagues et des ONG internationales oeuvrant pour la consolidation de la paix et la reconstruction nationale, avec chacune leur approche et leur ordre du jour.

**Forger des partenariats pour les droits et l'autonomisation :** Le but ultime des partenariats UNICEF-OSC est d'aller au delà des organisations pour faire participer la société civile dans son ensemble à la défense des droits de l'enfant. Il faut pour cela faire en sorte que les partenariats aient une certaine légitimité auprès des collectivités qu'ils desservent : (a) qu'ils tirent parti des activités de la société civile; (b) qu'ils contribuent au renforcement de la demande en matière de droits de la personne; (c) qu'ils soient propices au capital social et à la capacité de la communauté; et (d) que leur travail soit évalué en fonction des résultats tels que définis par les utilisateurs. Pour le moment, le sentiment est que les partenariats UNICEF-OSC ne sont pas efficaces pour parvenir à ce niveau de partenariat.

### **Ce que les OSC entendent par « partenariat »**

En règle générale, la définition des partenariats proposée par le Secrétaire général des Nations Unies et validée par le présent rapport fait l'unanimité :

Les partenariats sont des relations de collaboration voulues entre diverses parties, États et autres acteurs, dans le cadre desquelles tous les participants acceptent de travailler ensemble à la réalisation d'un même but ou de s'engager dans une tâche bien précise en partageant les risques, les responsabilités, les ressources, les compétences et les avantages. Les principes primordiaux pour les partenaires sont des valeurs communes, des attentes claires, des rôles bien définis, des décisions prises conjointement ainsi qu'un suivi et une évaluation mutuelles et des occasions d'apprendre les uns des autres. [Traduction].

*Kofi A. Annan, Secrétaire général des Nations Unies, Towards Global Partnerships (A/58/227)*

Les OSC tendent à articuler leurs partenariats avec l'UNICEF en fonction de quatre grandes attentes – que ces partenariats i) évoluent progressivement pour devenir des collaborations s'apparentant à des réseaux de praticiens; ii) renforcent les capacités des OSC en tant qu'agents de changement, individuellement et collectivement; iii) pratiquent systématiquement une surveillance conjointe; et iv) amènent à la défense positive, mesurable et durable des droits des enfants.

### **Ce qui influe sur les partenaires et les partenariats**

#### **Renforcer la Convention relative aux droits de l'enfant en tant que base des partenariats**

Le facteur qui mobilise le plus fortement les OSC dans leur désir d'oeuvrer en partenariat avec l'UNICEF est l'adhésion commune à la Convention relative aux droits de l'enfant. C'est cet engagement commun

qui les attire et soutient leur fort intérêt. Les partenaires s'organisent en fonction des éléments de base de la défense des droits des enfants (santé, éducation, protection), pas des composantes spécifiques du PSMT, même s'ils adaptent leur langage en fonction des éléments des programmes de pays sur cinq ans, comme requis pour les propositions de projets et la planification.

En tant que « gardienne mondiale de la Convention relative aux droits de l'enfant », c'est lorsqu'elle n'assure pas correctement le suivi et les activités de rapport en ce qui concerne la Convention, lorsqu'elle laisse faiblir l'enthousiasme pour la défense des droits des enfants en ne passant pas à sa mise en oeuvre ou encore lorsqu'elle ne donne pas suite aux observations finales du Comité de la convention des droits de l'enfant, que l'UNICEF est le plus vivement critiquée en tant que partenaire.

### **Des partenariats pour contribuer à la capacité et des capacités pour contribuer au partenariat et au changement**

L'UNICEF continue d'être perçue comme faible en termes de sa capacité interne pour évaluer les forces de ses partenaires et concevoir des stratégies de partenariats permettant d'y remédier; pour sélectionner les « bons » partenaires et éviter les « mauvais » compte tenu de l'évolution du contexte et des nouvelles priorités (la collaboration avec le secteur privé, par exemple); et pour réunir les OSC travaillant dans le sens de la Convention relative aux droits de l'enfant et capables de constituer ensemble une voix forte pour la défense des enfants. L'UNICEF doit trouver un équilibre entre l'inclusivité (la collaboration avec des OSC diverses) et l'exclusivité (l'entretien de relations privilégiées avec certaines organisations).

### **Politique, culture et responsabilité**

La nature fondamentalement politique du Mouvement mondial en faveur des enfants pousse l'UNICEF vers une position plus énergique, plus informée et, comme le suggèrent certaines OSC, plus courageuses, pour le soutien des enfants à risque. L'UNICEF doit parvenir à un meilleur équilibre entre les programmes d'action et le discours mondiaux et les priorités et les voix locales.

Les partenariats UNICEF-OSC doivent par ailleurs faire face à des obligations multiples en termes de responsabilité : celles par et pour les donateurs, leur organisation et leur public. De plus en plus, la responsabilité est perçue comme étant dictée par les exigences des donateurs et de nombreuses OSC partenaires ont cité au nombre des problèmes le manque de ressources et de processus au sein des partenariats pour fournir une rétroaction aux parties intéressées au niveau local.

### **Gouvernance et administration des partenariats**

Les processus administratifs de l'UNICEF sont perçus par la plupart des partenaires comme convenant mieux à de grandes bureaucraties gouvernementales qu'à leurs systèmes administratifs plus petits, plus souples et manquant de ressources. Des processus lents et opaques pour la passation de contrats, combinés avec l'exigence de rapports induement détaillés et accompagnés de pièces justificatives, sont caractéristiques des systèmes de l'UNICEF.

### **Typologies de partenariats**

Les typologies sont utiles pour orienter la conception des partenariats, décider des ressources et du suivi, et intervenir de façon stratégique. Deux grandes typologies ont été identifiées à partir des données de l'examen des partenariat avec les organisations de la société civile, en fonction des éléments suivants :

**i) La forme d'engagement/la relation**, qui indique cinq relations de partenariats et leurs implications pour les contrats :

- Renforcement de la capacité/appui et subventions
- Contrat/honoraires

- Coopération/partage des ressources
- Collaboration/synergie
- Communauté de pratique/évolution conjointe.

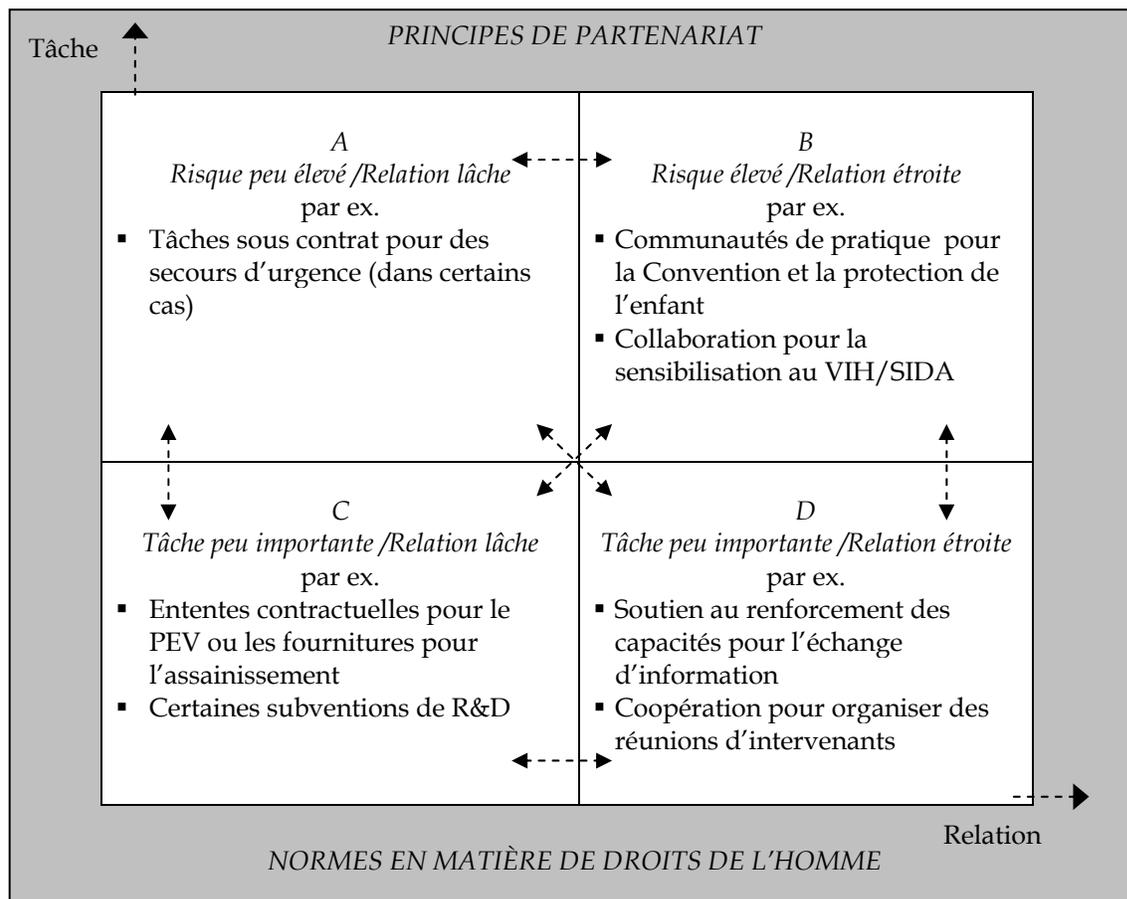
Les partenariats peuvent fonctionner selon ces différents modes simultanément ou à divers stades de leur existence, pour répondre aux différents besoins en matière de partenariat.

ii) **Raison d'être/Tâche du partenariat**, en fonction des objectifs :

- Catalyser/mobiliser.
- Promouvoir l'échange d'idées
- Renforcer la capacité
- Augmenter la portée
- Intervenir suite à une urgence
- Promouvoir le suivi et le rapport en ce qui concerne la Convention relative aux droits de l'enfant.

Ces typologies peuvent être combinées entre elles ou avec d'autres, puis appliquées, de nombreuses façons différentes. L'exemple présenté ici porte sur les difficultés rencontrées par l'UNICEF pour déterminer le bon équilibre entre la gestion d'une relation de partenariat et la mise en oeuvre d'une tâche en partenariat, les deux considérations ayant des implications distinctes en termes de stratégie et de ressources :

Grille de classement des partenariats en fonction des types de relation et de tâche type



Les données ressortant du présent Examen suggèrent que la plupart des ententes de partenariat circulent entre les différents quadrants au gré des changements au niveau des circonstances, des besoins, des ressources et des relations. La majorité des OSC partenaires qui ont participé à l'Examen préféreraient que leur partenariat avec l'UNICEF soit dans l'un des quadrants « relations étroites » (B et D).

## **Recommandations**

L'examen du partenariat avec les organisations de la société civile comporte six séries de recommandations visant à préciser le mandat de l'UNICEF dans le cadre de ses partenariats avec des OSC, les stratégies et les processus pour ces partenariats, les implications pour le processus d'examen organisationnel de l'UNICEF et les prochaines étapes. Des points d'intervention spécifiques pour chacune de ces séries de recommandations sont présentés dans le rapport complet.

### **Mandat pour les partenariats UNICEF-OSC**

7. Définir clairement le mandat pour les partenariats de l'UNICEF avec des OSC et obtenir l'appui du Conseil d'administration à ce sujet.

### **Stratégie pour les partenariats**

8. Concevoir les partenariats UNICEF-OSC de façon stratégique, en se fondant sur une analyse des politiques et sur une évaluation des partenariats.
9. Tirer parti des forces comparatives de l'UNICEF et des OSC et mettre à profit les autres principes clés des partenariats.
10. Créer une base de données des éléments de preuve sur ce qui marche dans les partenariats UNICEF-OSC, à partir des résultats obtenus et des conditions qui influent sur eux.

### **Implications pour l'examen organisationnel de l'UNICEF et les autres examens continus de la performance organisationnelle de l'UNICEF**

11. Intégrer les conclusions de l'Examen des partenariats avec les organisations de la société civile dans l'examen organisationnel global de l'UNICEF dans le but de forger et appuyer des partenariats efficaces avec des OSC.

### **Donner des suites à l'Examen des PSC**

12. Donner des suites à cet Examen des partenariats avec les organisations de la société civile en organisant des ateliers avec les OSC partenaires pour faciliter d'autres recherches, la planification et des mesures pour que ces partenariats contribuent davantage à la défense des droits des enfants à travers le monde.



## Resumen Ejecutivo

### Perspectivas de la revisión de asociaciones con la sociedad civil

UNICEF tiene la responsabilidad de fortalecer la calidad de sus asociaciones con organizaciones de la sociedad civil (OSC) si ha de llevar a efecto su mandato como organización líder orientada a garantizar la protección y la promoción de los derechos de la infancia en todo el mundo. En consonancia con la reforma del Sistema de las Naciones Unidas, UNICEF ha asumido un compromiso estratégico con dichas asociaciones.<sup>3</sup> Sin embargo, si bien el compromiso asumido es claro, la eficacia de sus políticas y prácticas de asociación con OSC no lo es tanto. Por esta razón, y como un aporte a la revisión general de la organización, la Oficina para Asociaciones Públicas y la Oficina de Evaluación encargaron una revisión tipo “diagnóstico” de sus asociaciones con la sociedad civil desde la perspectiva de las propias OSC asociadas.

### Métodología

El análisis de las asociaciones con la sociedad civil intentó responder a la pregunta: “¿Cuán bien se está desempeñando UNICEF como organización asociada de acuerdo a los principios y estándares de buenas prácticas en materia de asociaciones, según la percepción de sus asociadas de la sociedad civil?” El análisis fue ejecutado por dos consultoras externas y coordinado por la Oficina para Asociaciones Públicas y la Oficina de Evaluación.

### Fortalezas y desafíos de la asociación con UNICEF

Consolidando las respuestas obtenidas por la totalidad de la gama de métodos empleados en el análisis, se confeccionó la siguiente lista de las fortalezas y desafíos más frecuentemente mencionados en relación con la asociación con UNICEF:

PERCEPCIONES DE LAS OSC SOBRE UNICEF COMO ASOCIADA	
Fortalezas	Desafíos
1. Reputación y cobertura	1. Las exigencias administrativas que mantiene.
2. Promoción de la agenda de los derechos de la niñez	2. Falta de recursos para desarrollar capacidades entre las OSC
3. Un rol de convocatoria e intermediación	3. Agendas y alianzas que compiten entre sí
4. Recursos de información y comunicación	4. Limitada capacidad de coordinación que muestra UNICEF
5. Credibilidad de UNICEF como organización centrada en la infancia	5. Falta de una perspectiva de desarrollo de más largo plazo y condicionada al contexto

<sup>3</sup> Naciones Unidas, 2006, A/60/692. Marzo de 2006. *Invertir en las Naciones Unidas: el pro del fortalecimiento de la Organización en todo el mundo. Informe del Secretario General.* Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas, 60° Período de Sesiones, Temas 46 y 120 del programa; Plan Estratégico de Mediano Plazo (PEMP) de UNICEF para 2006 - 2009.

## Organizaciones de la sociedad civil y contextos de la asociación

**Sociedad civil y OSC:** La naturaleza y el rol de las OSC son complejos y se encuentran en proceso de transformación, a medida que las instituciones financieras bilaterales, organizaciones de las Naciones Unidas y ONG establecen alianzas globales y realinean sus programas con los de los gobiernos y el sector privado. Grandes comunidades de voluntariado parecen participar activamente en asociaciones entre UNICEF y OSC. Las organizaciones asociadas hacen hincapié en la importancia de poner el acento en sus respectivas fortalezas y aprovechar las sinergias y recursos comunes, y no simplemente los fondos. Instan a UNICEF a trabajar en la armonización de las múltiples agendas de las asociaciones y alianzas, en el interés de los derechos de la infancia.

**La relevancia del contexto:** Los cuatro estudios realizados a nivel de país hacen hincapié en cuán relevante es el contexto para los imperativos y estrategias que rigen las asociaciones entre UNICEF y las OSC. El desafío para UNICEF en Egipto y Filipinas estriba en: establecer nuevos tipos de asociaciones que puedan llevar las iniciativas a una escala más amplia, forjar otras asociaciones para llenar vacíos estratégicos específicos y continuar madurando los lazos actuales. En Zimbabwe, las asociaciones entre UNICEF y las OSC enfrentan los desafíos que entraña el rápido deterioro de las condiciones sociales y económicas en un contexto en que el trabajo de las OSC en derechos y gobernabilidad es sometido a crecientes restricciones. Las asociaciones en Liberia están lidiando con un país en transición de la guerra a la paz, el rol y la capacidad de OSC locales relativamente nuevas y los enfoques y agendas de las ONG internacionales en los procesos de construcción de la paz y reconstrucción nacional.

**Construyendo asociaciones orientadas a los derechos y el empoderamiento:** La meta final de las asociaciones entre UNICEF y las OSC es ir más allá de las organizaciones e involucrar a la sociedad civil en su conjunto, en acciones para hacer realidad los derechos de la infancia. Para ello es necesario asegurar que las asociaciones posean legitimidad frente a las comunidades a las que sirven; aprovechar las actividades que ya están en marcha en la sociedad civil; ayudar a fortalecer el lado de los derechos humanos que tiene que ver con la reivindicación de los mismos; promover la capacidad y el capital social de las comunidades; y evaluar las asociaciones con base en indicadores de efectos directos definidos por los usuarios/as. A la fecha, las asociaciones entre UNICEF y las OSC no son consideradas fuertes en términos de desarrollar este tipo de asociación.

### Qué entienden las OSC por “asociación”

En general, en este análisis se aprobó y validó la definición que sobre asociación ha sido propuesta por el Secretario General de las Naciones Unidas:

“Asociaciones son relaciones voluntarias y de colaboración en las cuales todas las partes acuerdan trabajar juntas para alcanzar un propósito común o emprender una tarea específica y compartir los riesgos, responsabilidades, recursos, competencias y beneficios. Como prioridad, los principios prioritarios para los asociados son: valores comunes, expectativas claras, roles definidos, aportes especificados, toma de decisiones conjunta, así como seguimiento, evaluación y oportunidades de aprendizaje mutuos.”

*Kofi A. Annan, Secretario General de las Naciones Unidas, Hacia una Asociación Global (A/57/817).*

Las OSC tienden a estructurar sus asociaciones con UNICEF alrededor de cuatro grandes expectativas: que las asociaciones i) evolucionarán progresivamente hasta convertirse en colaboraciones semejantes a comunidades de práctica; ii) fortalecerán las capacidades de las OSC para actuar como agentes del cambio, a nivel tanto individual como colectivo; iii) se comprometerán a realizar un seguimiento común y un aprendizaje conjunto de los procesos y resultados de la asociación; y iv) conducirán a la realización positiva, mensurable y sostenible de los derechos de la infancia.

## **Qué factores influyen en los asociados y las asociaciones**

### **Fortalecimiento de la Convención sobre los Derechos del Niño/a (CDN) como la base para la asociación entre UNICEF y las OSC**

El factor más fuerte en movilizar a las OSC para establecer asociaciones con UNICEF es el compromiso mutuo con la CDN, un compromiso compartido que las motiva a asociarse y mantenerse involucradas. Las OSC asociadas se organizan alrededor del trabajo básico en los derechos de la niñez (salud, educación, protección) y no en las especificidades de los PEMP en sí, pero adaptan su lenguaje a las particularidades de los programas de país de cinco años, tal como se exige en el caso de propuestas de proyectos y de la planificación de los mismos.

En su calidad de “custodio mundial de la CDN”, UNICEF recibe las críticas más fuertes como asociada ahí donde no cumple con el seguimiento y la presentación de informes sobre el cumplimiento de la CDN, cuando permite que se disipe el impulso del trabajo de abogacía al no complementarlo con la ejecución de acciones y cuando no cumple con las Observaciones Finales del Comité de la CDN, reflejándolas en las programaciones y asociaciones nacionales.

### **Asociaciones para capacidades y capacidades para la asociación y el cambio**

UNICEF continúa siendo percibida como débil en términos de su capacidad interna para: evaluar las fortalezas de las organizaciones asociadas y para diseñar estrategias de asociación orientadas a subsanar deficiencias; seleccionar las organizaciones “correctas” para asociarse con ellas y evitar las “no correctas” a medida que las condiciones en el campo varían o se desarrollan nuevas agendas (por ejemplo, colaboraciones con el sector privado); y convocar a y construir puentes entre las OSC dedicadas a la CDN que están en capacidad de presentar una fuerte voz colectiva en favor de la infancia. UNICEF tiene que establecer un equilibrio entre la inclusividad en el sentido de estirar los brazos a diversas OSC y la exclusividad, en el sentido de cultivar relaciones selectas.

### **Política, cultura institucional y rendición de cuentas**

La naturaleza inherentemente política del Movimiento Mundial en favor de la Infancia presiona a UNICEF a tomar una posición más fuerte, informada y – según sugieren algunas OSC – valiente, en apoyo de la niñez en riesgo. UNICEF tiene que establecer un equilibrio más eficaz entre las agendas globales y el idioma global, de un lado, y las prioridades y voces locales, del otro.

Las asociaciones entre UNICEF y las OSC enfrentan, además, múltiples exigencias en términos de rendir cuentas: ante y de las instituciones financieras, los asociados, sus propias organizaciones y sus bases de apoyo social. Existe la percepción de que la rendición de cuentas se orienta cada vez más a satisfacer las exigencias de las instituciones financieras, y muchas OSC asociadas mencionaron como un problema la falta de recursos y procesos, dentro de la asociación, para ofrecer retroalimentación a su audiencia local.

### **Gobernabilidad y administración de las asociaciones**

Los procesos administrativos de UNICEF son considerados, por la mayoría de las OSC asociadas, como más apropiados para grandes burocracias estatales que para sus sistemas administrativos los cuales son más pequeños y flexibles y con recursos más limitados. Los sistemas de UNICEF se caracterizan por mantener procesos de contratación lentos y opacos e informes exageradamente detallados y además, respaldados por recibos.

## Tipologías de asociación

Las tipologías resultan útiles para orientar el diseño, las decisiones sobre recursos y seguimiento y las acciones estratégicas de las asociaciones. De la información obtenida de la revisión de ASC emergieron dos tipologías principales, basadas en:

i) **La modalidad de colaboración / relación**, revelando cinco tipos diferentes de relaciones como base de la asociación y sus implicaciones contractuales:

- Construcción de capacidad / Apoyo y subvenciones y/o donaciones
- Contratación / Honorarios por servicios
- Cooperación / Compartir recursos
- Colaboración / Sinergia
- Comunidad de práctica / Co-evolución

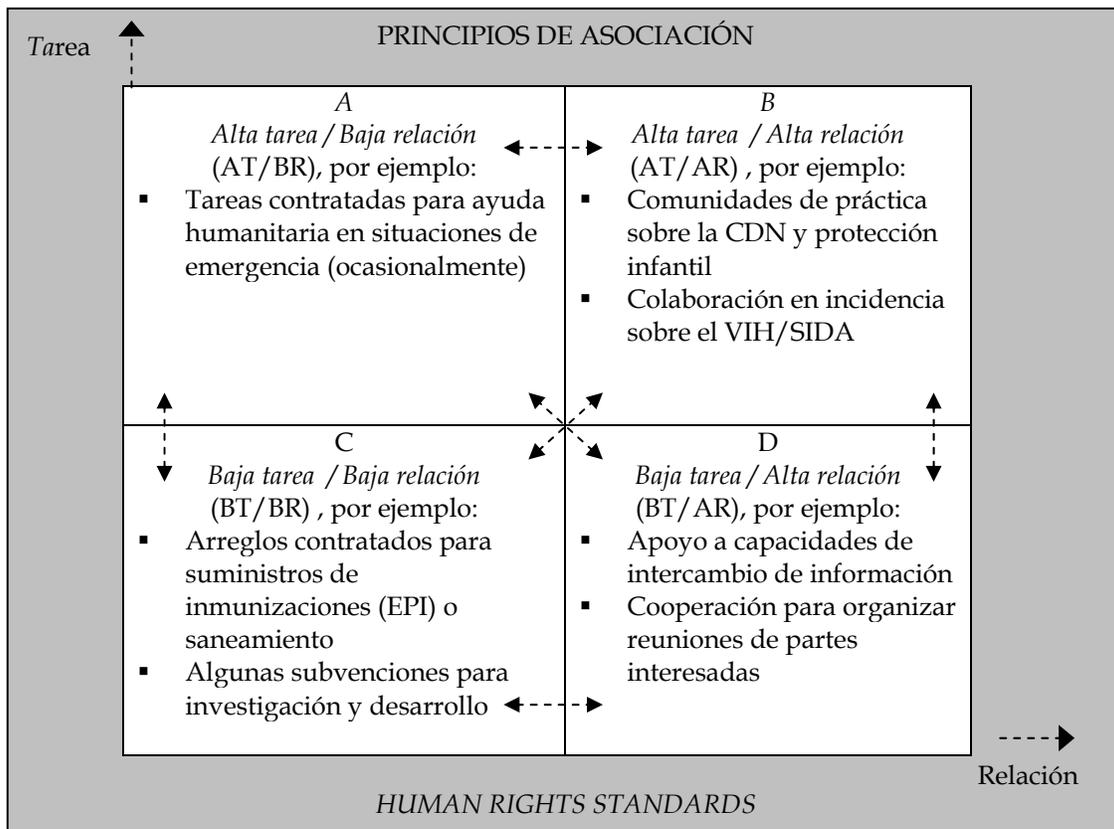
Las asociaciones pueden operar de acuerdo con varias de estas modalidades de asociación ya sea simultáneamente o en diferentes etapas, a fin de satisfacer distintas necesidades de la asociación.

ii) **El propósito / la tarea de la asociación**, de acuerdo a los objetivos de la asociación, a saber:

- Catalizar / movilizar
- Promover el intercambio intelectual
- Desarrollar capacidades
- Aumentar el alcance
- Responder a una emergencia
- Promover el seguimiento y la presentación de informes sobre la CDN

Hay muchas formas de combinar y aplicar estas y otras tipologías. El ejemplo que aquí se presenta, se

*Malla de ubicación de asociaciones: Ubicación de asociaciones por relación y tipo*



refiere al desafío que representa para UNICEF establecer el balance correcto entre gestionar una relación de asociativa y ejecutar una tarea en el marco de una asociación, ya que ambas consideraciones tienen implicaciones estratégicas y de recursos:

La información que arrojó este análisis sugiere que la mayoría de las “modalidades de asociación” se desplazan por los cuadrantes a medida que van cambiando las circunstancias, las necesidades, los recursos y las propias relaciones. La mayoría de las OSC asociadas consultadas en el marco de este análisis prefiere que sus asociaciones con UNICEF se ubiquen en los dos cuadrantes de “alta relación” (B y D).

## **Recomendaciones**

Las recomendaciones que surgen del análisis de ASC se dividen en seis grupos, relacionados con: definición del mandato de UNICEF en materia de asociaciones, estrategia y proceso de asociación, implicaciones para el proceso de revisión organizacional de UNICEF, y pasos a futuro. En el informe principal se consignan puntos de acción específicos en relación con cada una de las recomendaciones.

### **Mandato para asociaciones entre UNICEF y OSC**

13. Establecer un mandato claro para las asociaciones de UNICEF con OSC y conseguir el apoyo de la Junta Ejecutiva para ello.

### **Estrategia de asociación**

14. Diseñar estratégicamente las asociaciones entre UNICEF y OSC, sustentadas en un análisis de las políticas y una evaluación de las asociaciones.
15. Capitalizar sobre las fortalezas comparativas de UNICEF y las OSC y apoyarse en otros principios clave relacionados con asociaciones.
16. Desarrollar una base de datos de evidencias sobre “lo que funciona” en las asociaciones entre UNICEF y las OSC, sustentada en los resultados logrados y las condiciones que influyen en ellos.

### **Implicaciones para la revisión organizacional de UNICEF y otras revisiones en ejecución, sobre el desempeño institucional de UNICEF**

17. Integrar los hallazgos de la revisión de ASC en la revisión organizacional general de UNICEF, con miras a fortalecer las capacidades internas de la organización para diseñar y apoyar asociaciones efectivas con OSC.

### **Seguimiento ex post de la revisión de ASC**

18. Hacer un seguimiento ex post de este Análisis de ASC, en forma de talleres con las OSC asociadas a fin de facilitar nuevas investigaciones, planificaciones y acciones para sacar adelante dichas asociaciones con miras a la realización de los derechos de la niñez en todo el mundo.



## SECTION I: Purpose And Background Of The CSP Review

Developing partnerships with civil society organizations (CSOs) is a key focus of UN reform overall<sup>4</sup> and a core strategic commitment of UNICEF. However, a series of studies and consultations within UNICEF<sup>5</sup> have consistently shown that, while UNICEF-CSO partnerships are a priority on both sides, effective partnering faces challenges: highly varied and unpredictable operating environments; an increasingly wide and complex range of current and potential partners; differences in respective organizational cultures and administrative processes; and diverse expectations and approaches. A 1994 Booz-Allen study concluded that these “partnerships tend to be superficial or patronizing and fail to exploit their full potential.”<sup>6</sup>

UNICEF’s Office of Public Partnerships (OPP) and Evaluation Office (EO) undertook a review of UNICEF’s policy and practice as a partner based on the experiences, views and recommendations of CSOs. From November 2005 to April 2006, two external consultants, coordinated by OPP and EO and overseen by a senior-level Steering Group at UNICEF, conducted this review, asking: “How well is UNICEF performing as a partner organization against principles and standards of good practice in partnerships, as perceived by its civil society partners?” Specifically, it aimed to:<sup>7</sup>

- a) Generate a practice-based definition of partnership by documenting existing UNICEF-CSO “partnerships.”
- b) Help UNICEF understand the nature of its collaboration with CSOs from the perspective of CSO partners: what they perceive to be the purposes, value and benefits for children of partnership with UNICEF in the context of the CRC and Millennium Development Goals (MDG).
- c) Identify key conditions and factors that influence the strengths, weaknesses and, in particular, the outcomes of UNICEF-CSO partnerships.
- d) Provide guidance to UNICEF on the implications of its CSO partnership experience for improved organizational policy and practice in the creation, management and realization of development outcomes of these relationships.

The following methods were used for the review:

- Country-based analyses of UNICEF-CSO partnerships in Egypt, Liberia, the Philippines and Zimbabwe, providing a range of geopolitical and MTSP focus area perspectives.
- A global survey of CSO experiences and attitudes related to working with UNICEF, available online and in Word format in Arabic, English, French and Spanish.
- Reviews of previous UNICEF-CSO partnership analyses, those of other international agencies and foundations, and literature on civil society and partnership best-practice.
- Key informant interviews on partnership policy and practice, including the ‘state of play’ of UNICEF-CSO partnerships in the MTSP focus areas.

Quality assurance steps were taken to assure validity, acceptability and generalizability of the review data and analysis, including measures for respondent confidentiality.

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<sup>4</sup> UN 2006; 2004

<sup>5</sup> Tacon 2004, UNICEF 2004

<sup>6</sup> Quoted in UNICEF 2004: 2

<sup>7</sup> Bernard & Kuruvilla, 2006: 2



## Section II: UNICEF's Strengths And Challenges As A Partner

### CSO Perceptions of UNICEF as Partner

#### Strengths: Where UNICEF actions as a partner are succeeding

##### 1. Global reputation and reach<sup>8</sup>

- “Working with UNICEF gives us a ‘positive face’ because everyone is familiar with... the UNICEF brand”; “UNICEF’s name allows us to get past local communities’ scepticism of our interventions.”
- “Working with UNICEF gives us a voice (...with government, UN agencies, other CSOs, communities...)”; “We get relatively little funding, but a lot of recognition.”
- “UNICEF has a country presence and particular type of access to governments and policy forums that CSOs cannot match. We have community links, the flexibility to innovate and the ability to mobilize – by working together we could make a real difference for children.”

##### 2. Promoting children’s rights agenda

- “We are more aware of children’s rights issues because of working with UNICEF.”
- “We now know what it means to take a child-rights approach (beyond the jargon). We are able to focus more on vulnerable children and look at their needs.”
- “UNICEF may not always get deeply involved in a problem, but it is there as the only organization that consistently defends children’s rights.”

##### 3. Convening and brokering role

- “UNICEF brings to the table its particular capacity as a ‘knowledge broker’. Together we look for ways to avoid reinventing the wheel, but instead to make the wheel bigger; to synchronize our efforts in moving an initiative forward.”
- “UNICEF provides a good catalytic role as part of the different committees for children in the country.”
- The partnership “galvanized our various efforts around children in the justice system issue” before “we were more scattered.”

##### 4. Information and communication resources

- “We really value getting UNICEF publications - they are very good.”
- “UNICEF is the only partner that works with us to develop ideas together. For others, we send proposals and get money. With UNICEF, it is a learning experience in thinking, planning, executing.”
- “When UNICEF does standardizing [of guidelines, codes of conduct...] we find it very useful.”

##### 5. Reliability as an organization focused on children

- “With UNICEF, sometimes we start work before the contract is signed because we know we won’t be cheated.”
- UNICEF ‘held the fort’ for children when the government crumbled and everyone else (e.g., international non-governmental organizations (INGOs)) went away.
- “When we have shortages in the country, UNICEF is able to get needed supplies somehow.”

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<sup>8</sup> CSO partners expect and appreciate the opportunity to build upon the UNICEF brand as a major part of the arrangement. Failure of this expectation to be realized – when UNICEF takes proprietary ownership of the brand – produces frustration and disillusionment.

## Challenges: Where UNICEF's actions as a partner are falling short

### 1. Administrative demands

- “There is unrealistic administrative burden for a very small project...this takes us away from our real work”; “Partners trust each other – when we are criticized to find receipts for a bus ticket or a bottle of Coca Cola, I wonder if they trust us.”
- “There are lots of delays [in decisions, supplies, disbursement...]; “UNICEF supplies sometimes even come after the project date is over...they are not meeting their side of the agreement.”
- “We cannot negotiate on contracts with UNICEF. The processes are fixed and there is no flexibility on timelines even if they are the ones who delay.”

### 2. Lack of resources for CSO capacity development

- “UNICEF has to realize that activities are run from an institutional context and institutions have to be supported”; “Other donors (who invest in organizational capacity) are actually paying for all the administration and staff development work we do for UNICEF.”
- “NGOs are becoming more involved in development and donor funding ...but they may not have management or technical capacity.”; “UNICEF provides training for government staff, why not for CSOs?”
- “UNICEF was responsible for setting up our organization, but they do not have more funding. Not a single staff has taken salary since December (2005)... it is only strong will that is making me go on.”

### 3. Competing agendas and alliances

- “The network is getting squashed between UNICEF and the government ... Maybe for UNICEF it is the weight of the MDGs...”; “Too frequently governments are responsible for main violations of children's rights...”; “(There is) too much dependence on the stance of working with the government leading to dilution of the vision.”
- They (INGOs, UN...) tell donors that local NGOs don't have capacity and then get the money themselves. If we had money we could build our capacity.”
- “In collaboration, UNICEF still wants to carry on doing things in their own way, even if this is not what other partners agreed on. They go on their own maverick way that detracts from common goals and resources.”
- “Instead of being the coach and coordinating the game, UNICEF keeps getting onto the field, trying to be the fastest player...acting like an NGO...it often drops the ball...” CSO partner

### 4. UNICEF's capacity for coordination

- “UNICEF is under-resourced or over-committed and staff are too overloaded to give considered time to the task at hand.”” They live in crisis.”
- “Many staff at UNICEF feel they are 'better,' more 'civilized' ... POs (Programme Officers) need to be sensitized (to work with CSOs).”
- “In the community people say UNICEF already came this week... but that was a different UNICEF (on separate projects from HIV/AIDS, child protection, education teams...);
- “Every time a staff changes it is like working with a new organization, even if we have been working with UNICEF for 10 years.”

### 5. Lack of a longer-term and context-specific perspective on development

- “UNICEF has established itself as being able to influence government policy changes, but the actual outcome of such is yet to be seen.”

- “UNICEF should take up projects with a long term vision in mind (at least 3 to 5 years) rather than just to disperse funds...they also need to follow up on the projects they fund, often these projects are conducted but there is no follow up of the outcome. Their approach should be towards sustainability.”<sup>9</sup>
- “They do not understand field realities, do not understand the processes of working with children; children's participation is very *pseudo*; more worried about statistics than real outcome and impact.”

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<sup>9</sup> While UNICEF's Medium Term Strategic Plans (MTSP) are formulated for 3 to 5 years, its collaborations and contracts with CSOs may be as short as 3 to 6 months and may not be integrated into longer-term planning and evaluation. This is seen by CSOs as a disconnect, given that CSO partnerships are a core component of the MTSP.



## SECTION III: Civil Society Organizations And Partnership Contexts

### The nature and role of civil society and its organizations<sup>10</sup>

“Civil society is generally defined as the social space between the citizen, the state and the private sector, where the will of citizens is manifested and mobilized outside these structures.”<sup>11</sup> Thus, CSOs are the “organisations that work in an arena between the household, the private sector and the state to negotiate matters of public concern.”<sup>12</sup>

There are concerns, however, over increasingly blurry “lines separating civil society organizations, national governments, the business sector and a range of other sub-national, national and global actors involved in development and human rights.”<sup>13</sup>

UNICEF’s partners are also concerned over arrangements (among bilateral donors, UN agencies and INGOs, and between all of these and the business community) that can significantly realign influence within the development community, leading to, and flowing from, the generation of major global commitments (e.g., support of the CRC, EFA and immunization; or against HIV/AIDS and sex tourism).

In one case, UNICEF’s focus on strengthening local governance through providing CSO input to local government as members of “technical working groups” was proving “disappointing” for some CSOs. They were “happy to help out,” but did not consider themselves partners. “We are more like fringe collaborators, not recognized as having a distinct man-date and perspective. We are ready to work with government, but not as an extension of it.”

For example,

- UNICEF’s increasing involvement with the private sector could lead to new ideas and resources but involves working with an unfamiliar organizational culture.
- Alliances have become instrumental to realizing the MDGs, reflecting a shift in thinking (“universal and equitable” development requires “multi-dimensional and multi-sectoral interventions”) and in strategy (away from “one-off support to individual projects” to “integrated programmatic support”).<sup>14</sup>
- At national level, shifts have increased emphasis on multi-partner arrangements that engage government, donors, CSOs and the private sector in joint action, sometimes with mixed results.<sup>15</sup>

Expectations for CSOs vary:

- The World Bank aims to reduce poverty by using CSOs’ capacities in “promoting public consensus and local ownership for reforms...creating knowledge-sharing networks ... diffusing tensions; giving voice (to the) poor and marginalized... strengthening and leveraging impact of development programmes by providing local knowledge, identifying potential risks, targeting assistance and expanding reach...and improving (their) public transparency and accountability...”<sup>16</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Unless otherwise specified, ‘CSO’ refers to civil society organizations in general. “A civil society organization can be defined as an NGO that has as one of its primary purposes influencing policy. Thus not all CSOs are NGOs.... A purely service-oriented NGO (say, in the health sector) could become a CSO if it added policy advocacy to its agenda, and by the same token a CSO could become an NGO if it dropped its advocacy activities to concentrate solely on service delivery.” (Blair 1997 p. 24). Since UNICEF’s partnerships have an advocacy and policy focus, we assume that the majority of NGOs in partnerships with UNICEF are CSOs.

<sup>11</sup> UNDP 2003: 21; WHO. 2002: 4

<sup>12</sup> ODI 2005 a

<sup>13</sup> Hulme & Edwards 1997; Howell and Pearce 2001

<sup>14</sup> Rao. 2005: 5, 2

<sup>15</sup> Ibid: 2

<sup>16</sup> World Bank 2005: 5

- USAID expects them to “help governments to identify needs and implement community programmes, (to) build social capital (and) encourage a greater degree of accountability from state officials.”<sup>17</sup>

Other concerns include:

- Turning CSOs into service providers ignores the innovative approaches and local solutions they can bring: e.g., serving as instruments for state and market accountability could detract from CSOs defining what the state and market *should* be.<sup>18</sup>
- CSOs are traditionally seen to “represent the interests of the poor and marginalized” but they are also “extraordinarily diverse, (in) reflecting the societies in which they are rooted”<sup>19</sup> and may not always, or equally, represent all citizens, especially those marginalized or excluded.
- CSOs are sometimes overly accountable to interests other than those of local communities, especially those of donors.<sup>20</sup>

### Changing power and resource dynamics

An official of the Ford Foundation explicitly avoided partnership language because it “somewhat disingenuously” obscures power differentials. Others referred to funding differentials that allowed donors – including UNICEF – to withdraw from “uncomfortable” relationships that have not yet matured or realized their objectives, leaving more vulnerable implementing partners to carry on the work and answer to their constituencies.

Similar observations were echoed in a synthesis of ‘partnership working’ that identified several key challenges related to power (Balloch and Taylor 2002: 8):

- Partnerships tend to leave existing power relationships intact, taking place at the margins of larger participating agencies, focusing on specific initiatives or objectives.
- More powerful partners lay out the ‘rules of the game’, while others legitimize, rather than make, decisions.
- Smaller partners may not have the financial resources to engage effectively in partnerships (through they often have other types of resources); they often lack the fall back room that bigger partners take for granted.
- Time spent at the mechanics of partnership takes smaller partners away from their constituencies and frontline work.
- There are power issues in the way funding relationships place smaller groups in an inevitably dependent position, one in which they may not feel like equals around the table.

These issues were visible also in the CSP Review. Participants in the CSP Review frequently used partnership terminology, but less frequently were relationships defined or differentiated: most would have fallen into the categories of service provider, grant recipient, or ‘associate’, but few participants questioned how power, risk and resources were shared, how a particular level of sharing affected those involved, or how a different arrangement might realize better results.

Changes in funding patterns have also changed the power dynamics of traditional partnerships. A significant proportion of aid is now being channelled through larger INGOs, there is increasing competition for funds between larger NGOs and UNICEF, and among NGOs themselves.

Significantly, even small national CSOs are able to hook into global and regional networks, levelling the playing field somewhat. These CSOs are able to “weigh the relative benefits” of working with larger INGOs versus UN agencies “given the frustrations that always come with working with the UN.”<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> USAID. 2002: 2

<sup>18</sup> Howell and Pearce 2001

<sup>19</sup> UNDP. 2003:21

<sup>20</sup> Howell and Pearce 2001

CSOs feel that partnership with UNICEF and other agencies works better when focussing on shared strengths rather than simply on funds. For most, the principal partnership conditions were time, mutual commitment and complementary abilities to act. UNICEF recognizes CSOs' power to influence public opinion and shape global public policy and CSOs recognize that UNICEF brings unmatched access to governments, country and global presence, technical capacity and convening power. Generally, both recognize that together they can best ensure children's rights. Expert opinion, UNICEF staff and CSOs all agree that partnership should achieve a 'third way' - positive change in organizations themselves and in how they address their mutual agendas.

### **Building partnerships for rights and empowerment**

UNICEF operates within an overarching human rights framework under which all members of society have the right to participate in decisions and interventions affecting them, and to demand accountability.<sup>22</sup> UNICEF's rights-based approaches to programming<sup>23</sup> therefore reflect related international human rights standards<sup>24</sup>:

- Participation.
- Self-determination.
- Freedom of expression and access to information.
- Freedom of assembly and association.
- Effective remedy.
- Access to independent and impartial tribunals.
- Progressive realization of rights.

How well are these standards being met? Again, the answer appears mixed, even in seemingly routine activities:

One CSO working with UNICEF to build latrines explained how the community needed convincing on the benefits. But UNICEF had a strict, donor-established construction target, which it transferred to the CSO. Community ownership and participation suffered as the CSO attempted to convince the community amidst frantic digging of latrines.

Happily, some partnerships do achieve greater community empowerment:

In Zimbabwe, where education is highly valued and community involvement is considered critical to keeping children in school, the government, European Commission and UNICEF supported Community School Development Committees that encouraged participation of Student and Parent Teacher Associations, heads of schools, local government authorities, tribal chiefs and CSO members. They discussed school needs, harmonizing policies and practice, deciding on contracting of services and "even managing the finances."

Strategies crucial to empowering civil society, and which UNICEF is only partly applying, include:

a) **Ensuring that communities consider CSOs to be legitimate.** Important in partner assessment and selection but missing in UNICEF practice, legitimacy should be determined using the following criteria:<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> INGO respondent

<sup>22</sup> UN 2006 A/60/692; Rozga 2001

<sup>23</sup> Singh 2005

<sup>24</sup> International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966; International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966; International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 1965; Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979; Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989; International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, 1990.

<sup>25</sup> ODI 2005 c

- Rational-legal: formal or legal provisions for CSO activity in a community.
- Traditional: customary, religious, or socio-historical bases for involvement.
- Charismatic: compelling leadership and communication.
- Moral: a shared base of values and ethics with the community.
- Technical: recognition of specialised functions performed.
- Political: persuasive political action and influence in the community.
- Representative: explicit commitment to represent the interests of specific groups and recognition by these groups for doing so.

b) **Building on ongoing civil society activity.** This adds value, enabling innovative approaches and allowing for local solutions. Unfortunately, studies<sup>26</sup> and UNICEF's own experience show this isn't happening: "When we identified youth groups who were already doing HIV/AIDS prevention activities, we were able to really make a difference to their projects by supporting them with a small amount of money. These groups still carried on after our funding was over. When we spent a lot of money to set up new youth groups these were not as successful and many of them stopped when the funding was over."<sup>27</sup>

c) **Strengthening the demand-side of human rights.**

"People have to strongly demand their rights; this will create a demand on the government and the legal system to deliver."<sup>28</sup> This means viewing communities not as passive recipients but as central to the action, strengthening awareness, skills and involvement in evaluating interventions.<sup>29</sup> UNICEF partnerships' success was mixed in this area, apparently depending more on the CSO initiating this approach rather than UNICEF directing it.

In Liberia, UNICEF-CSO partnerships were critical to peace building: Communities were trained to monitor borders to prevent child recruitment and provide early warning of conflicts; conflict resolution and reconciliation skills training were provided in schools and youth groups. Because neither UNICEF nor the CSOs could be present all the time, communities themselves had to have the capacities to build their own peace.

Also, a strong demand side requires social capital at community level: UNICEF-CSO partners described supporting 'internal lending' projects where communities pool money for loans to create and improve businesses, which then return profit to the community, enabling members to support and learn from one another.<sup>30</sup>

d) **Enabling user-defined outcomes.** Respect for the rights of people to participate in and direct development is reflected in the degree of community control over 'what matters'. Partnerships should be evaluated against outcomes defined by the communities they serve, but such 'community-based RBM'<sup>31</sup> is not visibly happening.

<sup>26</sup> Ford Foundation, Van Rooy, 1998, cited in Howell and Pearce, 2001

<sup>27</sup> CO staff

<sup>28</sup> CSO respondent

<sup>29</sup> ODI 2005 a, c

<sup>30</sup> These internal lending projects were noted as a contrast to the more common micro-credit schemes which were seen to be external to the community and created new hierarchies, even if in the form of powerful CSOs..

<sup>31</sup> Results-based Management

## Section IV: What Partnership Means To UNICEF's CSO Partners

### Country partnership contexts

Country contexts influence partnerships by determining the nature of civil society and what the role of CSOs is. For example, the case countries share a respect for the rights framework and an appreciation for the need for coherent capacity development. They also share administrative overload. However, their emergency, development and child protection agendas differ, and increasing external funding has a different impact on their CSOs' ability to remain independent and adapt their global agendas. (For detailed analysis of context relating to case study countries, see Annex 5.)

Country contexts are also significant in how they interact with global agendas. UNICEF is part of an integrated UN mission and its partnerships must be viewed in terms of its relationships with other agencies, bilateral agencies and the private sector. Working effectively in different contexts requires establishing good partnerships with all key groups. Country offices, therefore, must be able to effectively select partners and tailor management, develop partnership skills together with partners, and facilitate multi-partner policy and programme dialogue. Finally, UNICEF must develop consistent CSO-friendly partnership policies tailored and implemented according to context.

### Partners' perspectives on partnership

Partners recognized three categories of principles integral to partnerships. However, these are not being consistently applied:<sup>32</sup>

- Core principles: e.g., common values, trust, transparency, respect comparative advantage, shared risk-taking.
- Operational principles: e.g., mutual accountability, fair attribution of credit, shared investment, ongoing dialogue, joint monitoring and evaluation.
- Management principles: e.g., consistency, commitment to standards and principles, constancy of involvement.<sup>33</sup>

All CSOs expressed a desire to be more than conduits: "We are not a tool to implement what UNICEF wants." They also emphasized joint action: "We are not simply contractors or service providers; we share the same goals as UNICEF – to support children – and so we work together, whether there is money or not."

For both CSOs and UNICEF sustained benefit for children should be the end point of all action, including partnership. CSOs noted that a strengthened civil society is a necessary condition to realizing this end, and that UNICEF's collaboration with CSOs should be managed in such a way as to make them stronger, more sustainable organizations.

However, some CSOs noted UNICEF's failure to consistently take partners into its 'policy confidence' and long-term development agenda. Partners want acknowledgement when UNICEF formulates policy and programmes, a permanent place in UNICEF's agenda, and credit for results achieved through partnerships:

"What makes a partnership, what brings you to the table, is the commitment to 'do development' in culturally attuned ways. But to get to real partnership, you need to get to know each other, align your visions and experience implementing something. You both need to have a capacity to collaborate, to take a participatory approach in making decisions, organizing, mobilizing."<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> These principles were agreed to at an earlier UNICEF multi-stakeholder meeting (UNICEF 2005/d:4).

<sup>33</sup> Other similar lists of partnership principles and best practices are available in both academic and donor literature (see examples Annex 4).

<sup>34</sup> CSO partner

The sense of growing a good partnership was a consistent theme in the majority of CSO advice on managing these relationships and one they felt should serve as a core criterion by which the effectiveness of UNICEF as a CSO-friendly development agency is judged.

### **CSO expectations of UNICEF as a partner**

CSOs tend to have four main expectations for partnerships with UNICEF, that they:

- Be truly collaborative, with shared decision-making and mutual learning;
- Provide opportunities to strengthen UNICEF and CSO capacities as change agents, individually and collectively;
- Have joint monitoring of the partnership process and results; and
- Lead to positive, measurable and sustainable changes in realizing the rights of children.

Unfortunately, while some expectations can be codified (financial inputs, reporting requirements) most are ambiguous (negotiating priorities, communicating values, giving and taking criticism, assessing progress).

Concerns were more often expressed over the mechanics of arrangements, especially with hard-to-quantify criteria of quality, appropriateness and scope of actions taken.

Apparently, clear expectations matter more to some partners, especially small, fragile CBOs, which are typically closer to communities and likelier directly to affect, and be affected by, their social, cultural and economic realities. They are more aware than CSOs of the impact of their interventions. CBOs value their partnerships but expect UNICEF to attempt to be a genuine partner.

“Building a partnership takes time. Some of our current partners were just donors in the beginning. Once they got to know us and we got to know them, then we interacted as equals, asked each other for advice – only then we were partners.”  
CSO partner

UNICEF-established CSOs were even more vocal about mutual expectations because of the considerable risk they faced in losing UNICEF support.

Other partners needing reliable UNICEF support and ‘presence’ include those working in particularly difficult conditions:

- One peace-building association of CSOs is happy with UNICEF’s involvement but is concerned that UNICEF might withdraw before achieving sustainable outcomes if expectations become too politicized.
- A women’s group in Liberia involved in training young girls in life skills, expected donors like UNICEF to see the “bigger picture” in the “need to rebuild our country.” It is “dangerous if [as was happening] our young girls only learn crochet and make-up,” when the country needs doctors and lawyers.
- Others contrast UNICEF’s MTSP-focused, vertical approach to programming to their own holistic approach: “We cannot tell children we will work on your nutrition on Monday and someone else will look at your education on Wednesday” because that is when the respective UNICEF teams visit.

Concerns at a more strategic level include:

- UNICEF’s arbitrary and transient involvement in core activities, or consultation in decision-making. Partnering seems “almost fully dependent” on the country representative’s (or sometimes

senior programme staff's) priorities, and it is unclear whether partnership will be a "policy priority of [UNICEF], or just the interest of an individual."<sup>35</sup>

- UNICEF's unwillingness to openly deliberate as a team player, an issue stemming partly from UNICEF trying to dominate the partnership agenda: It is "rather intimidating to be one of 3 or 4 NGO representatives facing 10 or more UNICEF staff," and typically on agendas that appeared "largely pre-determined on the basis of UNICEF's priorities."
- UNICEF's tendency to pursue its own strategy regardless of partnership decisions.<sup>36</sup> National CSOs also expect UNICEF to be more inclusive and to engage not only with governments in situation analyses, processes that should be "an open market forum in which all could have a voice." UNICEF also should be "more humble in promoting ideas with potential CSO partners [to] involve them in development of the ideas and approaches." This includes getting input from communities: "if UNICEF says it is going into the community, it should go."
- UNICEF's over-protection and promotion of its brand. For UNICEF "Everything must be coloured blue. That's not partnership." Another partner expressed disappointment that "UNICEF likes to get publicity, but they sometimes miss out saying others have worked with them." For some, it is a proprietary issue: UNICEF insists on "control over the dissemination" of reporting data on children at risk and restricts the CSO's access to its own "usual channels" of communication with other agencies and the public.

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<sup>35</sup> This is not an issue unique to UNICEF. According to the World Bank, "the most important factor" in determining the success of its CSO involvement was "the nature of the task manager's belief in, and experience with, participation" (World Bank/OED. 2002: 4-5).

<sup>36</sup> See discussion Section VII of problems at the 2006 Global Partners Forum as a case in point.



## SECTION V: Key Partnership Processes And Influences<sup>37</sup>

### 1. Strengthening the CRC as the basis for UNICEF-CSO partnerships

Most CSOs were either unfamiliar with the specifics of the UNICEF Medium Term Strategic Plan or did not frame their work according to it, casting partnerships with UNICEF under the plan's broader rights and development context. However, they noted the importance of UNICEF sticking to the basics: "Even if some of the programme labels change," as they do annually, UNICEF will "always support [things like] emergency services, education and health."

Partners generally recognized the need to "fit into UNICEF's Country Programme and the planning cycle." Despite frustration over revising proposals to fit the new language of UNICEF MTSP and annual plans, apparently this was not a serious problem. Nor were partners greatly concerned with the MDGs, which were mostly referred to in terms of donor aid becoming increasingly structured around them. However, partners and the literature (e-Civics 2004) did raise some concerns about the MDGs' implications for CSOs' work.

Where CSOs most related to UNICEF was on the CRC, expressing the highest expectations in terms of UNICEF's fidelity to the mandate, reliability in the partnership and quality of professional input.<sup>38</sup> UNICEF was generally accepted as the "global custodian of the CRC."<sup>39</sup>

Two key children's rights platforms provide a strong foundation for UNICEF to strengthen its CSO partnerships: the Global Movement for Children (GMC), which united UNICEF with 10 child rights organizations<sup>40</sup> and launched the Say Yes for Children campaign in 2001;<sup>41</sup> and the World Fit for Children Declaration,<sup>42</sup> signed by over 180 countries and designed to integrate global commitments and goals, especially the legal standards set by the CRC and its Optional Protocols and the targets set in the UN Millennium Declaration.<sup>43</sup>

### 2. Partnership for change and capacity for partnership

The following is a three-track strategic partnership framework for promoting changes in children's rights through CSO partnerships and strengthening the capacity of those partnerships.

**i. Strategic capacities:** UNICEF is not identifying the partnerships needed to advance the country's CRC agenda as effectively as it could. According to one country programme evaluation, policy and planning documents failed to "elaborate in any strategic manner on how such partnerships and alliances should be articulated or how existing partnerships could be optimized."<sup>44</sup> There was "little explicit reference ... to strengths and weaknesses of programme partners and (their) resulting roles and

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<sup>37</sup> Data for this section come from all levels of CSO partnership, global through to sub-national; often, though not always, the source of the comment is indicated. However, because the point of departure for this Review was on UNICEF partnering practices rather than partnership type as such, the analysis is not presented expressly by level.

<sup>38</sup> At both country and global levels, by far the most frequently referenced shared vision underlying CSO partnerships with UNICEF was their mutual commitment to CRC. It was what drew them in, and kept them engaged in the face of the various policy, administrative or resource challenges they experienced in the arrangements.

<sup>39</sup> INGO respondent

<sup>40</sup> GMC is made up of BRAC, CARE, ENDA, Latin American and Caribbean Network for Children, NetAid, Oxfam, Plan, Save the Children, UNICEF, World Vision and the Alliance of Youth CEOs. The mobilizing power of this initiative literally broke world records.

<sup>41</sup> The Say Yes to Children campaign has signed up more than 94 million people and the biggest global campaign ever of its kind and the winner of a Guinness World Record. (GMC 2004)

<sup>42</sup> The Say Yes for Children campaign was based on 10 core points in The World Fit for Children Declaration.

<sup>43</sup> UN 2002: A/RES/S-27/2

<sup>44</sup> UNICEF. 2002/a: 23

responsibilities.” Both focus and clarity as to optimal approaches to managing for results were lacking,<sup>45</sup> a conclusion generally consistent with this review. (See Annex 4 for a chart showing areas where UNICEF is seen as making the most difference through partnering.)

Related to this, issues of inclusivity and exclusivity in UNICEF’s partner selection process were recurrent themes—i.e., how to balance competing benefits of inclusion (support of the many) with persistence (support of a core few). For some, evolving relationships with relatively few partners were important and efforts to be more inclusive had been counterproductive. Partners with “good potential” were considered to have failed to fully mature because of too limited attention from UNICEF.<sup>46</sup> For others, “exclusivity” was the problem, noting “... a perception in many countries that UNICEF has favourites,” and that its field is “too closed.”

UNICEF in Zimbabwe provided a unique example of an effort to strategically map partnership activity by goals: a Water Environment and Sanitation Atlas developed using DevInfo<sup>47</sup> to map CSO partner headquarters and programme activity. A similar exercise was planned for programmes related to children affected by HIV/AIDS.

All of the above suggests an approach that emphasizes strategic, well-managed inclusion of multiple capacities for reaching complex ends, consistent with UNDP principles, which recognize “the rich diversity within civil society” and a commitment “to understand better, and engage with, a broad cross-section of (it)” (UNDP. 2003: 21). Inclusion is a basic principle in building multi-sectoral networks, create bridges across communities of practice and mitigate the twin risks of overlooking the ‘right’ partners and selecting the ‘wrong’ ones.

**ii. Partner capacities:** UNICEF/Liberia had taken a lead in systematically assessing partner capacity using an NGO profile form followed by a visit from programme staff. This process was driven by the proliferation of NGOs during and after the war, a lack of information about them, a lack of regulatory mechanisms and the total dependence of some CSOs on UNICEF funding.

CSOs are aware of UNICEF’s assessment dilemma, several in Egypt cautioning UNICEF about entering the country’s “current CSO explosion.” One partner noted that “many of these groups may use the right language” but not all “have a genuine development commitment or capacity.” Similarly, a private sector partner warned about getting into a “different kind of organizational culture” than UNICEF was used to, where development credentials were limited and interest in “gaining access to the UNICEF brand” considerable. Cautions from fairly large, independent and knowledgeable CSOs with long histories with UNICEF suggest that UNICEF needs to build its in-house commitment to knowing its partners better and collaboratively assessing their strengths and weaknesses.

In all cases, CSO partners would appreciate the same kind of attention given to UNICEF’s partnerships with them as it has with governments and other types of partners (e.g. donors, UN agencies). They expressed regret that there were few if any provisions for systematic, forward-looking organizational capacity assessment in the ways in which UNICEF approached its agreements with them.

**iii. Development capacities:** It is recognized by many in UNICEF and by partners themselves that developing CSOs as a means of strengthening civil society overall is a ‘good’ in itself; a valid and necessary means of adding to the resources a country has to promote and protect the rights of children and to sustain and drive development outcomes. Partnership design and management should foster civil societies’ capacity for self-reliance, technical proficiency, institutional governance and community ownership.

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid

<sup>46</sup> CSO partner

<sup>47</sup> A UNICEF tool for development mapping, monitoring and analysis and the official tool for UN MDG monitoring.

Large INGOs increasingly depend on government funding. Southern NGOs are funded by government donors, UN agencies, member subscriptions and fund raising activities – their own governments being either unwilling or unable to provide financial support.<sup>48</sup> In-kind support from CSOs' volunteer base is also critical.

Similar funding sources for northern and southern CSOs means competition, with implications for capacity development. As one southern CSO noted, it could be in the interest of northerners to gather funds based on weak southern capacity and then sub-contract those same local groups.

According to several COs, building a capable CSO base requires a stronger mandate from the UNICEF Executive Board. "For NGO partners, support in terms of logistics, supplies and funding is important, but, CSOs voiced expectations of a more sustained relationship in which they are strengthened as NGOs, through UNICEF's experience in other countries or pointed support to the development of their capacities."<sup>49</sup>

Enabling CSOs to become stronger as organizations means going beyond the occasional workshop or study visit to take a more holistic approach to sustaining a learning process: strengthening capacities to "catalyze change" by helping them measure their programme performance and impact; to "(set) standards" by helping them "to deliver state-of-the-art interventions"; and to encourage "decision-making based on data and analysis" by promoting more active CSO management of the "research and development agenda."(USAID. 2002: 5-6)

### 3. Politics, culture and accountability<sup>50</sup>

**i. Political environments:** The CRC and GMC require political action in advocacy and protection, making the partnership environment political on several levels: UNICEF's primary partners are governments; UNICEF is part of an increasingly integrated UN; and UNICEF partners with bilateral donors, foundations and the private sector – all of these relationships are conditioned by political processes, imperatives and agendas. In some countries the legitimacy and roles of northern and southern NGOs is subject to political debates. In all this, UNICEF is often caught between conflicting agendas and alliances.

UNICEF's management of these complexities got mixed reviews:

- For one CSO partner working on HIV/AIDS, UNICEF did "not always balance the national and global agendas in a good way...but then maybe only one country in this region has the same [priorities as the global] ones. It is a problem for CSOs when a country's problems are not part of the global agenda."
- UNICEF was commended elsewhere, however, for facilitating a more integrated and holistic national agenda for children, and for convening CSO partners, government counterparts, community representatives and other partners around joint activities in developing Child Friendly Budgets and National Action Plans.
- In Egypt, many national CSOs saw UNICEF's fostering a greater CSO involvement with the Egyptian National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) as critical in reflecting CSOs work on the policy level. So, too, was UNICEF's own participation on NCCM committees, where it "always mentions the work of NGOs; people hear of us."<sup>51</sup>

<sup>48</sup> ODI 1995; Hulme and Edwards 1997

<sup>49</sup> UNICEF. 1996: A-86, 88

<sup>50</sup> Balloch and Taylor 2002; Garza 2005; ODI 2005 b

<sup>51</sup> The NCCM had recently received EC funding to support CSO activities with vulnerable children and many saw this as an occasion for UNICEF more explicitly to promote synergies in monitoring capacity, standards and tools.

**ii. UNICEF's partnership culture:** UNICEF's complex bureaucracy does not work easily with CSOs' more informal organizational arrangements. UNICEF may need to make some changes and to reflect on the convergence between its existing policy and work culture and its partnership goals.

*Working with diversity and change:* Partnership requires mutual respect, openness to different perspectives, the ability to 'think outside the bureaucratic box' and commitment to a common cause rather than individual agendas. Many UNICEF officers displayed these qualities, but not all.

*Institutional incentives and reporting:* A lack of adequate institutional arrangements and incentives has resulted in UNICEF officers having to go "outside the system" to support their partnership and getting into trouble as a result. Also, the formal reporting system requires enumerating partnerships, but does not require partnership terms to be defined or assessed. Partnering is seen as instrumental to MTSP or MDG goals rather than as a valued goal in itself, failing to credit the effort necessary to create and manage it.

*Organizational identity and value-added:* CSOs invariably reported their most positive contacts being with individuals; trust is established at the individual level, leading to a readiness to negotiate, create, adapt and take risks. However, when partnerships do not extend beyond the individual to involve the whole office, critical opportunities are missed.

*Consistency and integration:* When working with several UNICEF sections, CSOs had trouble establishing good communication across them, having to learn different programme 'languages'. Problems are exacerbated when UNICEF staff are transferred. Partners note the lack of "alignment between officers" and "almost no institutional memory" to enable cross-referencing of CSOs or their projects, or of lessons learned: "Every time staff change it is like working with a new organization, even if we have been working with UNICEF for 10 years!"

*Building trust, communication and mutually beneficial relationships:* CSO partners with drastically different cultures from UNICEF's (e.g., rural, indigenous CSOs) were especially concerned about UNICEF's not making it clear that it expected the relationship to be mutually beneficial. The onus is on UNICEF to ensure that the individuals involved and their organizations benefit. Lack of open exchange undermines joint goals by denying partners the opportunity to work things through. CSOs noted secretive or opaque systems and maze-like decision-making that are left unexplained: "even though I said 'tell me, give me a session on how processes work here', they haven't."

*Socio-cultural sensitivity and pace:* While one national HIV/AIDS network in Egypt appreciated UNICEF's support establishing the network, these CBOs struggled with UNICEF's focus on 'vulnerable' groups including "gays, sex workers and drug-users." This was "too much, too quickly" for many CBOs and the communities they worked with, which had trouble with messages that "seem to condone a life-style that is, to them, morally and socially wrong." As one CSO partner in Zimbabwe put it, "For development, people's minds have to be developed, then development can progress and be maintained...but this takes time."

**iii. Accountability in partnerships:** Within UNICEF-CSO partnerships, different types of accountability came into play.

- South to north/upwards accountability: The control-orientation of administrative systems appeared to be at odds with principles of equal ownership over partnering processes and CSO accountability to local constituencies.
- North to south/downwards accountability is often very weak. UNICEF and other UN agencies, donors and INGOs are not as transparent to southern partners as they expect them to be in return. UNICEF appeared to have few established processes for reporting or providing feedback to CSO partners, although both were common in its government partnerships.
- Organizational/inwards accountability recognizes that, in an equitable partnership, each partner remains accountable to its own organization; that "each party has different objectives, brings different capacity to the partnership, and will each learn something from it. This highlights the need for mutual

respect of each partner organization's mission and values as well as agreement on the terms of the relationship."<sup>52</sup> UNICEF has a ways to go in viewing CSOs as more than implementing tools or extensions of its programmes.

- Shared/partnership accountability: In most cases it is clearly difficult to ignore the different power, influence and financial balances between UNICEF and its partners. How each represents itself as an organization versus itself as a partner was rarely articulated, creating the potential for negative impact on the reputation of each.
- Constituency/local accountability is crucial but neglected. Several UNICEF partners cited lack of resources and processes for reporting to/consulting with constituencies as problematic because of tight timelines, administrative overload, reporting demands and shifting priorities.

Regulation and redress of accountability gaps in UNICEF-CSO partnerships were generally ill-defined, existing primarily in the context of financial and contractual control from UNICEF's side. CSO partners expressed a need to establish mechanisms to address their grievances and negotiate solutions with UNICEF.

#### 4. Partnership governance and administration

**i. Structural challenges:** Separate physical locations limit regular communication, inhibit development of a shared working culture and typically require revised information and communication systems.<sup>53</sup> Partners in Manila agreed with UNICEF's move from what was considered a 'CSO-friendly' building to a high-security one<sup>54</sup> but it was nonetheless proving for some "hard to be a partner through all these police checks." They would have preferred UNICEF officers coming more often to them for meetings.

Structural challenges are also issues of process and not a simple matter for UNICEF or partners trying to work out mutually friendly governance arrangements given their mix of formal and informal structures. This is proving especially true for sub-national CSOs or CBOs with their often very loosely coupled staffing arrangements and iterative links to unstable communities or unsettled children, and UNICEF's intricate, inflexible and often poorly-communicated systems. There is no single 'right' governance model for these partnerships, as it depends on partnership goals, capacities and contexts: a transparent, responsive and equitable 'match' must be worked out each time, something UNICEF is not always getting right.

WHO noted in a 2002 review that gaps in communication at various levels were a recurrent constraint to effective partnering, with "lengthy, onerous and rigid procedures" sometimes too inflexible to bring in new CSO voices and perspectives. The World Bank similarly described its "ad hoc institutional approach to consultations" as being a "source of friction" between itself and its partners; that the quality of these consultations "remains uneven"; that they "often occur in an arbitrary fashion with very short notice and/or very late in the process rather than as a systemic opportunity to learn and help shape policies and programmes before they are finalized (and) little or no feedback is provided on the comments received from CSOs."

Here, leadership is also important. In multiple-member, global partnerships or alliances with shared tasks, leadership is typically formal, through committees or boards. More than token inclusion is essential to involving southern partners, which feel that UNICEF sometimes treats northern CSOs and INGOs "as more equal" than southern ones. National and global CSOs felt strongly that UNICEF needs to help facilitate their partnering horizontally, within and across sectors, particularly in support of CSO

<sup>52</sup> ODI 2005 b

<sup>53</sup> Balloch and Taylor 2002

<sup>54</sup> Following overall heightened security concerns, all UN and several donor/embassy offices moved into the same heavily guarded building in Manila. CSOs obviously recognized the importance of protecting UN staff, but were somewhat frustrated by the number and extent of security provisions and the time it could take to go through them.

“networking platforms” and “government-CSO bridges” to strengthen a broader CSO leadership voice, and enable sustainable “systemic” change.

**ii. Decision-making:** There were three consistent themes in this area:

- Involving all partners at all stages of decision-making;
- Using evidence to inform decisions and strategies; and
- Sharing information in an accessible and timely manner.

Regular communication and ‘being at the table’, even informally, when UNICEF thinks through policy and strategy mattered more to CSOs than regular funding – even small and otherwise dependent partners: “If UNICEF really considers us a long or even medium-term partner, then it should share at least the broad-brush of what will happen; give us a ‘heads-up’ through more engagement, informal exchange.”

Several partners were concerned about lack of evidence and data informing strategic partnership decisions. Assessment and evaluation are necessary to measure impact and establish process data on which to make decisions for advancing joint programme goals. Towards this end, making links with academic institutions and research organizations is a key missing element for UNICEF in its CSO partnerships.

Partners need consistent access to UNICEF’s thinking, expressing frustration at UNICEF’s often hidden policy and approval processes, and failure to be open and inclusive, leaving partners to find out too late about changes to priorities or approaches that affected them.

**iii. Administration:** A number of specific administrative issues were raised by partners, cutting across levels, types and tasks.

- Partners wanted UNICEF to give them “enough time” to complete their advocacy, community learning and child protection work; to allow them flexibility with their communities, and to allow monitoring and managing for sustainable outcomes.

Even in partnerships considered to be “very strong...very effective”, overly-bureaucratic procedures for things like procurement and salaries were described as “irritating and not really understandable.”  
CSO partner from UNICEF Taliban-era Afghanistan programme

Short-term contracts were a recurrent issue for many CSOs, especially when an initiative clearly required longer to complete. Contracting and reporting took time and broke the workflow. Reformulating reports to fit changes in UNICEF priority or planning terminology and accounting for inputs often replaced a sustained, collaborative analysis of actual outcome quality and diminished a sense of stability and forward-looking coherence for both the CSO and the partnership: “Three-year funding would give us security to plan and establish our work and look for ways to support ourselves.” The stop-start thinking associated with short-term contracts diminishes trust, too, between UNICEF and CSOs, and between CSOs and their communities, especially the more fragile CSOs and communities. “In short-term projects we raise community expectations, but are not in position to fulfil them.” Partners need time to reflect, negotiate and adapt, and genuine partnerships necessarily change over time: “We expect the partnership to evolve; if we do not see changes, we suspect something is wrong.”<sup>55</sup>

- A common annoyance in partnering with UNICEF was the extensive administrative and reporting requirements.

The severity of the problem varied according to the manner in which the UNICEF office – and especially officer - managed the process; the geographical and social context of the partner (e.g., isolated CSOs suffer most in terms of access to administrative support), and the history of the relationship (e.g., long-

<sup>55</sup> Garza. 2005: 18

term, professionally satisfying experiences increase trust, tolerance and skills at 'working the system'). Generally, partners were unhappy with the amount of time that had to be spent on administrative rather than substantive tasks. UNICEF requiring original receipts for everything is a major problem in all countries, raising administrative costs (cheaper outlets and suppliers of home-made products do not typically give receipts) and causing humiliation at having to prove seemingly insignificant expenses (e.g., bus tickets).

Most partners acknowledged the need for financial probity and many welcomed the mentoring support from UNICEF administrative officers as a further training opportunity. Several partners, especially larger NGOs, recognized UNICEF's introduction of log frame planning and 'reporting by results' helped them "become more disciplined as organizations." Still, these procedures were unnecessarily onerous and increasingly complicated, sometimes leading to delayed payments that are disruptive or even fatal to projects. While established partners could absorb payment delays, smaller ones struggled.

While partners appreciated the need for financial accountability, they expected this to happen in a more balanced manner. Several CSOs, including CBOs, now had their own internal audits and external audit processes "by reputed international firms" and suggested that UNICEF build on, rather than replicate existing accounting processes in partner organizations.

The problem: UNICEF does not systematically make administration and management part of its capacity development and is rarely open to tailoring its requirements to the specific capacity, context or task of the partner.

- Several NGOs questioned whether UNICEF understood that contracting standards suitable for well-supported government structures might not work for them.

Theoretically, UNICEF recognizes that CSOs function differently from government but its contracts are still defined by linear, procedure-heavy administration rather than flexibility, iterative implementation and open-endedness—criteria important to CSOs.

- CSO partners had mixed reactions on contracting procedures but generally the message was to simplify them, tailor them to context and expedite confirmation.

Some partners expressed few problems with administrative arrangements, many not knowing the type of contract they had, particularly those involved in several initiatives or initiatives with multiple components. Others had fairly loose arrangements: one, a broad "advocacy plan" of action, each task within it separately contracted; another, "an official letter" agreeing to what would be done. For partners looking for flexibility, particularly in more institutionally fragile CSO environments, contracting issues were much more serious: "We cannot negotiate on contracts with UNICEF. There is no flexibility even if they are the ones who delay." When working with high inflation, for example in Zimbabwe, CSOs wondered why UNICEF did not allow payment in foreign currency like other donors, noting: "If you have a competition between the government and UNICEF, the government may be better!"

## 5. Monitoring and learning in partnerships

Partnership, according to one analysis, is important because it "allows all partners to learn from each other's experience for the benefit of the client group" (Alexander et al. 2001:1). This is the theory. In practice, the systematic monitoring that is needed to capture these experiences and realize this learning is generally failing to happen across UNICEF-CSO partnerships and, in consequence, an important key to mitigating risks and capturing the benefits of partnership is being lost.

Partnerships fall short of expectations when core monitoring questions are not consistently discussed: What are the critical experiences of the arrangement? Are they equally positive and negative for each partner? Are outcomes being realized, are they appropriately satisfying and relevant for each partner and is each partner contributing equally to them?

Working through these questions together differentiates a partnership from the less interactive and interdependent contractual agreement and allows both partners to recognize problems, build on successes and, as needed, redirect activity. They are also key to organizational learning, programme adaptation and the generation of lessons.

- Working through these questions means meeting two other partnership criteria: regular and open communication about the processes of implementing the work of the partnership, and systematic joint reflection on the implications of practice.

These criteria are not being substantively met. Several partners noted efforts to identify challenges, risks and limits, and to capture them in reports. Unfortunately, the forecasting and mitigation of partnership constraints are at best done partially. Most reports focus on inputs and actions completed rather than outcomes realized and factors influencing them.

Inconsistent and unrecorded monitoring data can have negative implications beyond the immediate partnership or programme. One international partner became sceptical of UNICEF's commitment to partnering when it received no feedback on its contribution to the MTSP development process, wondering if its investment of time and experience had made any difference. National partners expressed similar frustration about their contributions to Country Programme consultations. At one level such lack of acknowledgement is a problem of partnership ethics, of not giving due respect to contributions made. It is also a problem of monitoring and, thus, good partnership management. When UNICEF formulates its planning and review documents, does it actually consider the assumptions, guidance and best-practice recommendations of current and potential partners?

- Systematic monitoring as a joint reflection process is particularly critical – and difficult – in multi-partner relationships.

According to one donor agency respondent while “such arrangements tend to produce more interesting results than bilateral ones, they are much more difficult to negotiate. There is usually clarity about the task but considerable complexity and uncertainty in implementation. People lose their way and forget why they are collaborating in the first place.”

UNICEF's new HIV/AIDS network partner in Egypt agreed with this message:

So far there are “no problems... everyone is happy to learn and no one is dominating.” UNICEF, as a partner, was proving “flexible; ... activities are clearly broken down; ...the budget is fungible; [they had had] a good training orientation.” The coordinator did note, however: “the network is still immature. Some members will become stronger, more ready to move on their own,” at which point “they may not want to do things the same way...” Without the expressed intention, supported by a strategy and work plan (with resources) to track the evolution of the partnership array *per se*, she doubted that the strengths of the network would be adequately encouraged, capacities built or problems effectively identified and addressed.

## **6. Partnership factors that matter: CSO survey results**

In the CSP review survey, CSOs rated UNICEF's performance as a partner against a series of partnership principles and best practice dimensions. Analysis of the CSO responses revealed seven

statistically significant partnership characteristics (in descending order of influence) as the most important factors influencing UNICEF partnership ratings:<sup>56</sup>

- **Length of collaboration.** Partnerships of over one year reported improved advocacy and technical capacity, new/improved children's rights policies and more accessible services for vulnerable and excluded children, and resulted in lasting positive impacts. But these longer collaborations also reported administrative processes becoming a burden, dependency on UNICEF for funding, and occasionally feeling restricted in speaking out against rights violations (because of UNICEF's caution).
- **Geopolitical context/region.** CSOs in Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS), Western Europe, and West and Central Africa (WCARO) reported significant dissatisfaction with UNICEF as a partner in a number of areas, noting a lack of trust or shared common values; that UNICEF did not treat them as equals; and that partnership roles, responsibilities and results were not clearly defined. CSOs from South Asia (ROSA) noted shared values with UNICEF, but felt their organizational autonomy had decreased as a result of partnering with UNICEF.
- **Type of contract.** Significant numbers of CSOs with Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and Project Cooperation Agreements (PCA) thought trust had been eroded, that UNICEF did not keep promises or treat partners as equals, and that the CSOs competed with UNICEF for funding or status. CSOs with PCAs felt more dependent on UNICEF for funding. However, both MOU- and PCA-based partners noted improvements in services for vulnerable and excluded children and improved policies on children's rights. Significantly, CSOs without formal agreements or with relatively flexible ones, noted that the partnership improved their children's rights advocacy with governments and other UN agencies.
- **Number of volunteers.** CSOs with over 500 volunteers were more likely to feel that expectations were clearly defined, that partners trusted each other and that they were able to successfully negotiate differences. They also appreciated that UNICEF took the lead in bringing together partners, gave partners sufficient time to provide information and provided CSOs with needed information. However, CSOs with fewer volunteers (51 to 100) noted that trust in the partnership was eroded, that UNICEF did not keep promises and did not effectively use CSO strengths.
- **Number of employees.** Mid-size organizations (26 to 50 staff) were more likely to feel that UNICEF's caution sometimes restricted their ability to speak out. Larger organizations (500+ staff), the least dependent on UNICEF funding, felt they competed with UNICEF and, as in the case of MoUs, that they often had to change priorities to match UNICEF's.
- **Type of CSOs.** Youth groups and organizations were critical of partnerships with UNICEF, feeling that they could not negotiate differences, were not given fair credit and that these partnerships did improve their advocacy abilities. However, professional associations were more likely to see that respective roles were clearly defined in their partnerships with UNICEF. Social welfare organizations also tended to rate UNICEF positively as a partner compared with other types of CSOs.
- **Respondents' rank/position.** The position of respondents in their organizations also affected how they rated UNICEF. Significantly, those in management positions were more likely to feel that UNICEF treated them as equals.

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<sup>56</sup> Two main questions guided analysis of these ratings: Which factors (partnership and organizational characteristics) appear to influence how CSOs rate their partnerships with UNICEF? And how do these partnership factors matter in UNICEF-CSO partnerships?



## SECTION VI: UNICEF-CSO Partnerships In The MTSP Focus Areas

### 1. Young Child Survival and Development

Special reference: nutrition and health in emergencies

According to one HQ officer, UNICEF in the 1990s was “able to move mountains in the area of nutrition.” But this is no longer the case and it is likely not “far enough ahead of the curve” in knowledge and skills to effectively fulfil its recently-appointed role as lead agency for “nutrition in emergencies” within the Cluster Leadership Framework of the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee.

INGOs and academic/research institutions, under the Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response project, have done considerable work in key areas relevant to UNICEF, which must now work with these partners to coordinate and expand a sustained, emergency-capable CSO partnership base, within the framework of the Cluster. This means linking these organizations with government agencies and beneficiary communities in ways seen by all as legitimate and effective.

Unfortunately, partners “do not always see us as fully invested,” according to UNICEF officers, who think that the reason in part is the small number of field/emergency-trained professionals at country level. Many INGOs have such field expertise and “do not take kindly to us purporting to provide technical leadership or direction with only our global perspective,” while others report feeling “marginalized” by the UN-based cluster framework.<sup>57</sup>

While UNICEF-CSO partnerships in emergency nutrition have yet to be fully established, important advances are being made through the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE). Coordinated through UNICEF, INEE is a loosely coupled global partnership of UN agencies, INGOs, education researchers and practitioners that has already proven valuable in coordinating action to re-establish basic education provision in Aceh, Indonesia, following the 2004 tsunami. Consistent with the plans for the nutrition-in-emergencies cluster, INEE is also developing capacities for action at local and regional levels through a series of on-site training workshops on the application of its Minimum Standards Handbook.

Only one nutrition-in-emergency partnership was underway in the case study countries,<sup>58</sup> suggesting that UNICEF needs to improve its surveillance of at-risk communities. The CSO itself proposed the intervention, based on its analysis of children’s poor nutritional status and concern over lack of attention to this problem. Other country data tended to reinforce the message of UNICEF’s still-limited partnership outreach in this area.

Institutionalizing emergency preparedness for nutrition, and integrating emergency interventions into sustained food security development strategies, are complementary themes underlying the MTSP, the Core Commitments for Children (CCC), the Ending Childhood Hunger and Under-nutrition Initiative (ECHUI) and the IASC. Based on their own CSO experience, UNICEF staff believe this requires a long-term strategic and capacity-oriented focus to develop:

- A comprehensive, cross-sectoral strategic policy and minimum standards framework to help CSOs address nutrition in emergencies as a multifaceted socio-economic, food and systems issue, and not just part of a medical model.

<sup>57</sup> UNICEF/HQ officer

<sup>58</sup> While around 10 per cent of survey respondents indicated working with UNICEF on hunger elimination, none indicated that this was in the context of emergency support.

- Nationally-relevant nutrition in emergency protocols and guidelines to promote local CSO ownership, move beyond topic/geographic 'boxes' and take a rights-based approach in analyzing nutrition vulnerability of children.
- Systemic capacity within the CSO community at regional and national levels to apply best practice standards of emergency nutrition intervention.
- Flexible MOUs with CSO partners, adapting 'off the shelf' generic versions to enable country-tailoring as conditions and capacities warrant.
- Up-to-date databases of available CSOs and procedures for seconding them as resources where and when needed.

## 2. Basic Education and Gender Equality

Special reference: girls education and UN Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI)

UNICEF continues to give high priority to gender equality in education, and especially to girls' education. The rationale is uncontested, but linking gender equality to inclusive basic education does not appear to be an especially powerful way for UNICEF to partner with CSOs, at least in terms of the formal system, partly because Ministries of Education (the primary UN partners in UNGEI) are not readily accessible to CSOs (other than large INGOs). Also, CSOs tend to take a holistic and community-based approach to education initiatives, and most examples of UNICEF-CSO partnership in the formal school system were focused in this direction.

UNGEI's lack of clarity about its mandate, goals and how best to interact with agencies beyond government and UN circles impedes greater CSO involvement, according to one UN partner. As long as UNGEI is perceived as a UN-government body, "it is difficult for NGOs to find a way into UNGEI; to see a role for themselves." UNGEI is pushing for gender equality in education issues to be reflected in forums such as PRSP development and SWAPs but there is little evidence this is happening. Although some INGOs are somewhat involved, their involvement in South-East Asia was "not very active" and a senior education advisor to UNESCO in Egypt considered UNGEI effectively "invisible; never mentioned." UNGEI remains a UNICEF priority, however, and the appointment of UNGEI focal points in UNICEF Regional Offices, the creation of regional 'peer support groups' and the mobilization of national-level UNGEI groups in countries like Viet Nam are "looked forward to" by some UN partners as ways to enhance the relevance and activate the initiative's agenda.

## 3. Child Protection

Special reference: children affected by armed conflict, sexual exploitation and abuse

INGOs and national CSOs questioned UNICEF's readiness to use its considerable advocacy power in holding governments to account for the status of war-affected and otherwise exploited children. UNICEF is generally perceived as overly concerned with losing government cooperation on development programmes if it presses too hard.

One INGO noted UNICEF's tendency to leave local partners to 'limp along' with inadequate human and financial resources and training for programme implementation. Local partners also noted UNICEF's reluctance to 'tailor to context' by not adapting global terminology and its own administrative criteria to local conditions. In the

The situation of child soldiers in Northern Uganda was raised by some international partners as a particular example of UNICEF's being too long "missing from the frontline", when it should have been engaged as a partner with human rights and other NGOs in using its "political leverage and programmatic capacity" to mobilize action. UNICEF's success at putting the issue on the media map was noted and welcomed, as was the apparent increase in numbers of staff and activity on the ground, but "the delay has mattered; it was not partnership."

Philippines, for example, CSOs were urging UNICEF to drop the 'child soldier' label, saying that in some cases it was dangerous to use the term in monitoring and evaluation reporting activities that could result in children being arrested.

Another issue was delimited boundaries. Although child recruitment occurred across borders, UNICEF maintained a primarily national focus, hampering an integrated regional response with CSO partners with operational regional networks. However, internal boundaries were also an issue: Trafficking interventions were constrained when UNICEF funding and technical inputs "stopped at the point where a child is taken" in one province, but were unavailable in the next "when she is delivered."

Sustainability of UNICEF action was also raised with respect to disseminating, consolidating and institutionalizing results of child protection advocacy and pilot interventions. Many commended the increased role of the Communications Section in pursuing child rights issues globally and locally, but also urged that it work closer with governments and CSOs in tracking and "making more visible" their joint successes, again raising UNICEF's tendency to protect its brand.

Institutionalizing child protection action was a contentious area for some CSOs unsure about UNICEF's staying power. Partners in the Philippines welcomed UNICEF's support in collaborating with dock-worker unions to identify trafficked children, and in helping to push the juvenile justice agenda directly with legislators, but were frustrated when UNICEF was unwilling to take the "next logical step" in helping establish transition hostels and training centres for rescued children.

Partners also felt that UNICEF should ensure application of child protection standards in-house. One INGO noted UNICEF's failure to "implement a protection policy inside (the) organisation" despite being a lead agency to promote it. Bulletin 2003/13 requires UN agencies to set up protection and complaint systems, but this had not been done in that country. "When UNICEF signs a contract with a local implementing partner, there is no article mentioning the need for the partner to have a protection policy in place. We are all lobbying for the different governments to have an action plan on reducing violence and to do so we should be an example."

#### **4. HIV/AIDS**

Special reference: the Global Partners Forum

In 2006, the Global Partners Forum was co-hosted by UNICEF and DFID, and preceded by a first-ever global-level Technical Consultation attended by around 150 representatives of civil society, governments, bilateral and multilateral donors, UN agencies and academics. The Forum reconfirmed the importance of partnership at all levels and among all CSO types, including affected communities, and pointed to the weakness of the first phase of the Rapid Assessment, Analysis, and Action Planning (RAAAP) Initiative in having had only token CSO involvement and little or no child and community participation.<sup>59</sup>

The Forum also revealed CSO concerns about UNICEF as a 'team player', noting its single-minded promotion of its own agenda and failure to promote local ownership while not sharing credit for partnership actions. Despite the range of other donors and CSOs working on HIV/AIDS programmes, CSOs felt that the Forum remained overly UNICEF-centric in both its production of documents and interaction with the media. CSOs were critical, for example, of a UNICEF 'closed door' press briefing about which other partners were not informed and, together with staff of its National Committee, of its breaking from agreed partnership plans to pursue independent – to some "maverick" actions with the UK government, "wasting [the] time" of other partners and diverting resources and focus from the joint partnership task.

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<sup>59</sup> UK Consortium on AIDS and International Development, 2005

Partners believe UNICEF could improve action in the Forum by:

- Ensuring officers have appropriate technical and professional competence in their sectors and as partners.
- Giving officers space to exercise capacities responsively and responsibly with partners.
- Developing and using, globally and nationally, publicity protocols for collaborative work.
- Giving greater attention to evidence-based policy in technical areas, particularly through more consistent linkages with academic/research organizations (also recommended by child protection and nutrition partners).

## 5. Policy advocacy and partnerships for children's rights

Specific reference: monitoring and reporting on the CRC

CSOs expressed concern that by not consistently supporting and engaging with CRC monitoring, reporting and implementation, UNICEF is not building on the strong history of UNICEF-CSO partnership in the evolution of the CRC. Others thought UNICEF should facilitate more national CSO participation at the Day of General Discussion (now attended largely by governments and INGOs) and support both national government and CSO participation in CRC Committee pre-sessions. The meaningful participation of children in the CRC process is also seen as critical and an area where UNICEF's much more visible commitment is required.

Through strong links to communities, CSOs extend government data collection for national reports to the CRC Committee and perform a checks-and-balances function through NGO alternative reports. However, one partner "didn't know that NGOs submit alternative reports on the CRC" and another noted that UNICEF was "not playing a visible role; PLAN is seen as a more major player."

According to another, UNICEF provided money to prepare the first alternative report "but no technical support," then "opposed the alternative report publicly, in support of the government."<sup>60</sup> This supports one CSO's description of UNICEF as "not much involved" in supporting the work of NGO CRC monitoring and reporting, or involved in the "wrong way" And reinforced the conclusion of this Review that its support to CSOs in this area is somewhat conflicted.

As a result of UNICEF's variable support to CSOs in the CRC process, both national and international CSOs noted in this Review that they contacted UNICEF only as a "last resort" on CRC monitoring and reporting, when other more neutral/ CSO-supportive options were unavailable.

UNICEF's support of CSOs' work is a necessary part of its responsibility to help countries comply with the CRC, but having governments as its primary reference means that when CSOs oppose government positions, they tend to see UNICEF as being in opposition to them. However, CSOs also note that in countries where the UNICEF Country Representative understands the value of CSO contributions to the CRC process, its support is considered invaluable.

Here, too, UNICEF's 'brand promotion' emphasis with regards to the CRC is seen as inappropriate: some CSOs saw UNICEF's recent commissioning of a report on how it had influenced the CRC Concluding Observations as "top-down...manipulative ...and not in the spirit of the CRC process." Instead, UNICEF should develop stronger links with national and international experience, legislative mechanisms and policy analysis and, from that, support mutual development and exposure of better child rights strategies and CRC treaty body reform. According to one CSO, UNICEF should "work with both government and civil society to empower and support each other in a common cause to ensure sustainability of actions for children," in ensuring that "joint success stories of UNICEF-CSO progress on the CRC [are] tracked more carefully and disseminated."

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<sup>60</sup> UNICEF did not have the same recollection of this event, but acknowledged that relations with this CSO were not good.

Fundamentally, CSO's had doubts about the extent to which the CRC was integrated into and defined UNICEF's policy, programming and practice. Within UNICEF, the Executive Board formally adopted the rights-based approach for the organization's work in 1999; The Executive Director's 2006 Report to the Board notes that the percentage of UNICEF's country programme documents referring to observations of the CRC and CEDAW Committees has increased from 31 per cent in 2002 to 89 per cent in 2005 and 2005 UNICEF programming instructions direct that "major recommendations or observations by the Committee on the Rights of the Child on the most recent State Party Report on the implementation of the CRC also be mentioned," and that the expected results should include progress on the implementation of the CRC. However, these steps were still considered quite amorphous by many CSOs.



## SECTION VII: Two Typologies Of Partnership And Implications For UNICEF Contracts And Programming

One objective of this Review was to develop a practice-based description of the range of UNICEF-CSO partnerships. Typologies serve this purpose by helping to map a range of different UNICEF-CSO partnership arrangements, highlighting key issues related to them, and identifying conditions necessary to supporting or expanding them.

The two typologies generated here were developed based on the criteria of being reasonably representative of the partnerships identified in this Review, sufficient to display the main features of these partnerships, and use-oriented.

The first typology categorizes UNICEF-CSO **partnerships by mode of partnership engagement/relationship**. This typology identified five partnership arrangements UNICEF has with CSOs with respect to type of interaction and contractual implications:

<i>Capacity-building/ Support &amp; grants</i>	<i>Contracted / Fee for services</i>	<i>Cooperation/ Resource- sharing</i>	<i>Collaboration/ Synergistic</i>	<i>Community of practice/ Co-evolution</i>
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The second typology categorizes **partnerships by purpose/task** and illustrates some of the main types of activities or tasks expected to be undertaken through the partnership arrangements that currently exist between UNICEF and CSOs:

(vii) To catalyze and mobilize
(viii) Intellectual exchange
(ix) Development of capacity
(x) Increase reach
(xi) Respond to emergency
(xii) Promote CRC monitoring and reporting

For a detailed breakdown of both typologies, see Annex 2.

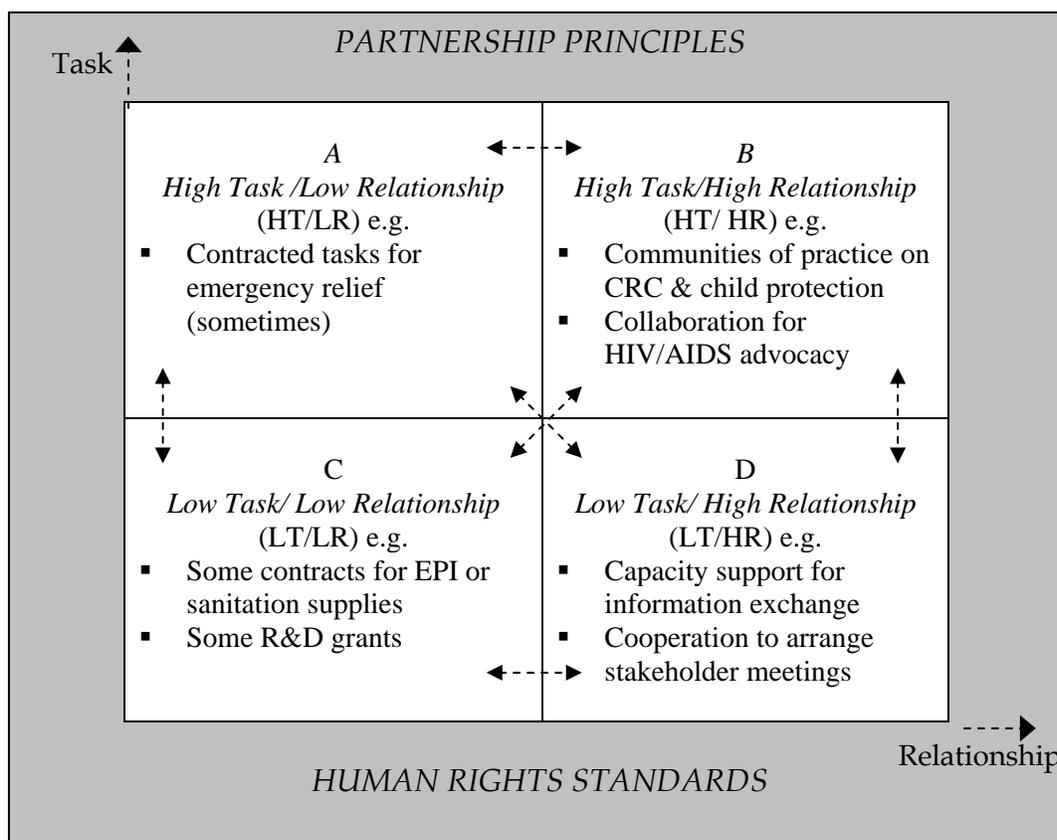
### Implications of partnership typologies for UNICEF programming

There are many ways in which these or other typologies may be combined and applied. One example is presented here with respect to the challenge facing UNICEF in ascertaining the right balance between managing a relationship and implementing a task in partnerships, as both considerations have strategic and resource implications.

One way to analyse these implications is to use a '2x2' table, structured along axes of high-to-low 'relationship' and 'task' dimensions:<sup>61</sup>

As illustrated in Figure 5, a particular partnership might be placed within one of four self-contained cells or

**Fig 5. 'Partnership Location' grid: Locating partnerships by relationship and type**



quadrants according to its principal characteristics. The data of this Review suggest that most 'partnership arrangements' move across quadrants as circumstances, needs and resources change.

Also suggested by the Review data is that while no one partnership quadrant is inherently 'better' than the others, in terms of actions taken or results realized for children, most CSO partners in this Review would prefer their partnerships with UNICEF to be in the two 'high relationship' quadrants (B and D).

A number of CSO partners in such arrangements, across all levels and types, indicated their tendency to move between B and D in UNICEF partnerships, but nevertheless considered the strength of the relationship to be their primary defining criterion of success. Less financially secure CSOs appeared to be more concerned about balancing the relationship with budgeted tasks, but there was no indication that to do this they would have preferred moving to cell A. Nor would this be the ideal arrangement for UNICEF; to have a "high task/ low relationship" situation, given the related financial and reputational risks, and most importantly the risk to the protection of vulnerable children and communities.

<sup>61</sup> Based on suggestions by UNICEF's Director, Programme Division and Director, Evaluation Office commenting on earlier drafts of this report.

This 'partnership location' grid is included here because it provides a basis or a helpful point of reference for UNICEF and its partners to i) further explore the findings of this present analysis; ii) plan and evaluate partnership arrangements going forward; and iii) from there, evolve and assess a viable CSO partnership policy.

Further, this grid would allow focusing discussion on the level of investment UNICEF is making, and needs to make, in framing partnership tasks and building partnership relationships by addressing three inter-related partnership questions:

- In which quadrants do UNICEF's various partnerships fall?
- Are these partnerships where they should be, based on the objectives of the tasks involved and UNICEF's commitment to establishing sustainable relationships with the CSO community?
- What are the resource and results implications of either keeping partnerships where they are or moving them to different quadrants?

For example, R&D grants to support local research and innovation may imply a relatively low-requirement partnership relationship, one of grant provider and grantee, and thus fall in the lower left (LT/LR) quadrant. But, while this may be appropriate in involving neither significant investment from UNICEF in partnership task nor relationship, this position may not be satisfactory if the long-term goal is to generate cutting-edge knowledge, skills and standards that can be applied to UNICEF's work, for example developing guidelines for emergency nutrition. On the other hand, this lower left quadrant is probably exactly where limited task contracts for supplies should fall.

This grid also allows consideration of capacity-building issues insofar as capacity development is often needed to move a CSO partnership to a higher cell in terms of either more effective action or a stronger relationship. Where UNICEF determines that its long-term interest lies in furthering the work of the CSO, and in developing synergies between itself and the CSO, it needs to provide the appropriate amount and type of resources required to develop relevant capacities, for example technical skills, governance capacities, and capacities for forging CSO-government, CSO-CSO or CSO-UN linkages.



## SECTION VIII: Recommendations

### MANDATE FOR UNICEF-CSO PARTNERSHIPS

#### 1. Establish a clear mandate for UNICEF's partnerships with CSOs and get Executive Board support for this.

1.1 Make the children's rights movement the basis of partnerships with CSOs and explicitly reflect this in UNICEF's partnership policies and practice. The MDGs and MTSP are important frameworks for UNICEF but the details of both are recent and mainly relevant to partners inasmuch as they are linked to the broader child rights agenda and donor funding. A much richer history of strong UNICEF-CSO partnerships exists in relation to the CRC, the World Fit for Children and the Global Movement for Children. But to make a real difference in children's lives, UNICEF must provide stronger leadership in the coordination of global partnership efforts.

1.2 Stand up against children's rights violations. CSOs perceive that UNICEF does not adequately oppose these violations or government failures to meet rights. UNICEF is also seen as sometimes watering down CSO partners' criticism of violations for fear of damaging its relationship with governments and other parties. CSOs see this as a breach of trust of UNICEF's role as lead agency on the CRC. They request that UNICEF commits to consistently and strongly speaking out against violations, or when this is difficult, supporting CSOs who can.

1.3 Develop child protection standards for UNICEF and the UN system. The lack of such standards, particularly within UNICEF, goes against its position as the lead agency for the protection of children's rights. A recently published INGO coalition 'toolkit' of child protection standards for INGOs working with children, for example, could have wider application through UNICEF's partnerships.<sup>62</sup>

1.4 Follow through on the CRC Committee Concluding Observations in UNICEF country plans and partnerships. CSOs would like to see UNICEF make better use of these observations, which are based on in-depth analysis of reports provided by governments, NGOs and UNICEF on the children's rights situation in each country. Specific suggestions include translating and widely disseminating the observations in each country, and using them as the basis for negotiating and developing its country plans and partnerships and for monitoring and evaluating their implementation and results.

1.5 Raise public awareness of rights and encourage demand for action and improvement. UNICEF has traditionally worked to good effect on the 'supply side' of rights and development, shaping policies and supporting government provision of services. CSOs note, however, that policies can remain on paper and government service capacities may not always be satisfactory. Catalyzing change also requires that communities are aware of their rights and able to demand that these are met, creating a demand for government implementation of policies and/or improvement of services for children.

1.6 Make provisions to build CSO capacities through UNICEF-CSO partnerships. To realize the CRC, CSOs must increase their analytical, operational and advocacy capacities, and those for managing financial, technical and political tasks. This means explicitly including this as part of UNICEF's planning and operations. Additionally, when UNICEF helps establish CSOs, adequate and long-term commitment are required to ensure their viability and sustainability. UNICEF could also form alliances with the bigger INGOs to help build capacity of local NGOs.

1.7 UNICEF needs to use its unparalleled convening power to regularly bring together main partners and keep this momentum going. Specifically, UNICEF HQ should hold meetings every six months with its main INGO partners (with similar meetings held by Regional and Country offices with their main CSO partners) to help partners take stock of their work, discuss trends, define priorities, harmonize strategies

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<sup>62</sup> Christian Aid et al. 2006

and avoid duplication of effort. This approach would also help to systematically build mutual understanding and facilitate learning from partners' collective experience.

1.8 Define UNICEF's role in overall civil society development. One ultimate goal of UNICEF-CSO partnerships must be to facilitate countries' respecting, protecting and fulfilling the rights of their own children. How and when this happens and the role of CSOs in this process should be discussed. UNICEF Senior Management is unclear on how far UNICEF's responsibilities extend in developing either strong CSOs or in strengthening civil society itself. This long-term development perspective needs to be reflected better in CSOs' partnerships with UNICEF, with special focus on improving participation of children, families and communities and ensuring accountability to them.

1.9 Get Executive Board validation of UNICEF's mandate to partner with CSOs in advancing the CRC. Currently UNICEF's role and policy related to CSO partnership is not clearly defined, causing uncertainty in COs on how to approach these partnerships. Once UNICEF staff have defined both their mandate and the implications for UNICEF's policy and practice, the Executive Board should validate them. This is critical to ensure consistency in UNICEF policy and practice; to allocate appropriate, timely and adequate resources for action; and to integrate this mandate into the organization's overall culture and processes.

## **PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY**

### **2. Design UNICEF-CSO partnerships strategically, basing these on policy analysis and partnership assessment, taking into account socio-political and economic factors that influence partnership reach and effectiveness.**

2.1 Address the political aspects of partnerships for children's' rights. UNICEF should engage more effectively on a 'political' level in advocating for and protecting children's rights. This includes addressing the political nature of partnerships themselves (differential power, access to resources, and influence between partners). Tensions also should be addressed between UNICEF's INGO and national NGO partners on their respective legitimacy and capacity to work with local communities, and conflicts between government and CSOs on CRC reporting. UNICEF must become better at identifying, assessing and addressing these political issues to enable more strategic and effective partnerships.

2.2 Strengthen regional coordination mechanisms. UNICEF develops its action plans primarily at country level and its regional coordination mechanisms are weak. UNICEF must become more proactive in ascertaining regional influences on the children's rights situation in countries, and develop mechanisms to collaborate with its CSO partners across geopolitical boundaries.

2.3 Conduct national policy and systems analysis. UNICEF's country planning documents do not always include policy analysis and assessment of where and how CSOs, and partnerships with them, might be strategically aligned. Analyzing how national policies affect, and might be affected by, CSO partnerships would allow for more inclusive and comprehensive action, broader reach and greater impact. Analyzing national systems capacity and performance to provide health, education, and child protection services, for example, would enable prioritizing the work of UNICEF-CSO partnerships, avoid the risk of creating parallel structures (to the government) through them, and help prevent diverting attention and resources from already weak national systems.

2.4 Take into account socio-economic and accountability factors in partnerships. While some large INGOs get 60 to 80 per cent of funding from their governments, CSOs in poor countries do not have this option and can find themselves dependent on UNICEF in ways neither fully appreciates. UNICEF's responsibilities in these contexts need to be determined, along with the accountability of different partnership models. For example, participatory models, wherein user communities are involved in partnership decision-making and have a say in funds allocation and definition of desired outcomes, would have very different social and accountability implications than those defined by external donor priorities. CSOs are unsure whether UNICEF understands what accountability to local communities involves and this may require the development of new partnership models.

### **3. Leverage the comparative and complementary strengths of UNICEF and CSOs and build on other key partnership principles**

3.1 Avoid competition and build on complementarities with CSOs by assuming a leadership and coordination role. Whenever possible, UNICEF must address the perception that it is competing with the larger CSO/INGO partners and avoid duplicating their work and that of smaller CSO partners. UNICEF and CSOs must build partnerships on their respective strengths and identify how their priorities, resources and strategies can be best aligned. CSOs are somewhat sceptical about UNICEF taking on implementation roles that CSOs might do better, but welcome UNICEF's leadership in coordinating global, regional and national partnerships. This is key not only to enhancing the partnership but focusing coherent and coordinated partnership action and improving results.

UNICEF's partnership strengths:

- Global reputation and reach.
- Championing the children's rights agenda.
- Convening and brokering CRC and partnership action.
- Information and communication resources.
- Reliability as an organization focused on serving children.

CSOs partnership strengths:<sup>63</sup>

- Strong grassroots links.
- Field-based development expertise.
- The ability to innovate and adapt.
- Process-oriented approach to development.
- Participatory methodologies and tools.
- Long-term commitment and emphasis on sustainability.
- Flexibility and cost-efficient ways of working.

Leveraging partners' strengths requires two UNICEF actions be taken:

3.2 Map partnership requirements and activities within the context of each country and its status with respect to the CRC and core MDG priorities. Tools like DevInfo can help strategically map partnership and programme activity and coverage, and potentially categorize partnerships in terms of specific capacities, roles and requirements. The most relevant and sustainable approach to working with civil society is to identify, assess and support ongoing activity, in this case as relevant to promoting and protecting children's rights.

3.3 Incorporate capacity assessment and development into partnership strategies and agreements. UNICEF Liberia's assessment approach to new partners is a model that could be adapted by other offices. Capacity development could resemble UNICEF's partnership agreement with DFID wherein DFID has committed to address UNICEF's capacity gaps.

### **4. Develop an evidence base on 'what works' in UNICEF-CSO partnerships based on results realized and the conditions influencing them.**

4.1 Aim for intellectual leadership rather than intellectual ownership. UNICEF needs to enable its brand to promote, rather than protect, knowledge. UNICEF's access to information resources on children's rights is unparalleled and greatly appreciated by CSO partners when these resources are

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<sup>63</sup> Duke University 2004, citing World Bank analysis

shared. UNICEF's failure to share information, and its claims of ownership over joint intellectual processes and products, are seen as inappropriate and counterproductive to partnerships.

4.2 Include academia and think tanks in UNICEF-CSO partnerships. Building partnerships with academic and research institutions, national and international think tanks and 'best practice' networks would extend UNICEF's and its partners' access to relevant cutting-edge knowledge and technologies to improve partnership effectiveness.

4.3 Define and test the 'logic models' underlying UNICEF's partnership strategies for Results-Based Management. This review did not identify an explicitly drawn up UNICEF-CSO partnership logic model but UNICEF appeared to assume that there would be a 'trickle down' effect from international advocacy and resolutions to changing national policies, institutions and communities towards making real differences to children's lives. But other analyses in the literature and CSO partners' experiences suggest that sometimes it is ongoing deliberation and activity at community and national levels that ultimately lead to formalizing international policy and resolutions. Testing and understanding the implications of these and other perspectives will be key to UNICEF building effective partnerships and monitoring their results. UNICEF could build on any existing partnership analysis processes to establish a partnership research base.

4.4 Support research and development, especially of local strategies and solutions. A particular strength of CSOs is their ability to innovate and develop local solutions that are appropriate and acceptable to local communities and contexts. UNICEF needs to be more proactive in supporting such activities through research and project grants and technical assistance, either directly or by linking CSOs with relevant experts and professional networks.

4.5 Promote broad participatory processes and learning. CSO partners welcomed UNICEF's support in action-research interventions using participatory situation assessments with communities, monitoring their interventions on the basis of community-defined objectives, and evaluating long-term impacts. These were seen as both effective and useful as long-term learning and development tools. UNICEF should do more of this and get evidence of progress on CRC application.

## **IMPLICATIONS FOR UNICEF'S ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEW AND OTHER ONGOING REVIEWS OF UNICEF'S ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE**

### **5. Integrate the CSP Review findings into the overall Organizational Review and other related reviews of UNICEF's organizational performance, with a view to strengthening in-house capacities to develop and support effective CSO partnerships**

#### 5.1 Organizational Review

- a) Define an overall partnership strategy based on the CRC, Global Movement for Children and World Fit for Children, and secure a senior-level mandate for CSO partnerships within it (see recommendation 1).
- b) Harmonize this CSO partnership strategy within the wider UN reform process, strategically and logistically; and with other donors on issues such as funding and reporting in ways that avoid transferring pressures to CSOs and allow for their coherent, holistic and sustained action on the CRC.
- c) Involve genuine CSO participation in UNICEF policy processes (e.g., national programme analysis and planning, poverty reduction strategy paper, and sector-wide approach to programming or planning negotiations), as well as in mechanisms appropriate to facilitating these.
- d) Adopt an integrated approach to involving CSO partners across UNICEF programmes, especially where these involve inter-sectoral, thematic (cross MTSP) activities. This would help support

CSOs' own, inherently integrated, approach to working with communities and facilitate their more systematic participation in UNICEF decision-making.

e) Strengthen UNICEF's Office of Public Partnerships (OPP) with staff and financial capacity to promote strategic UNICEF partnerships, evaluate their process and impact, convene partners in opportunities for mutual learning, and to follow-up on recommended courses of action.

## 5.2 Business Process Review

- a) Work to find accommodations between the front and back offices, aligning business processes with the CSO partnership mandate, principles and strategies, recognizing that over-demanding contractual and administrative arrangements can undermine partner trust and divert both time and energy from partnership focus.
- b) Contracts:
  - i. Replace the Special Services Agreement (SSA) and PCA contracts with Small Scale Funding agreements, or something similar, because they are easier to administer by both UNICEF CO staff and CSO partners. Consider raising the Small Scale Funding agreement limit to \$100,000, allowing a broader scope of activities. This would also address CO staff concerns that the new UN Harmonized Approach to Cash Transaction (which should be more 'user friendly' with activity-based rather than receipt-based accounting) will only apply to contracts above \$100,000, but several CSO contracts may fall below this limit.
  - ii. Create a more systematic approach to the design and management of MOUs in partnerships. The process for drawing up MOUs with UNICEF is considered variable and these agreements are not always followed up. Specify joint monitoring and evaluations, shared decision-making and partners' contribution in partnership agreements. See Annex 7 for some Best Practices in drawing up Partnership Agreements.
- c) Include policy, socio-political and partnership analysis components in Situational Analyses (SITAN) and Country Programme consultations (detailed in recommendation section 2 above).
- d) Incorporate CSO partnership goals, resource and design inputs, risks and assumptions into all RBM and Logical Framework Analysis (LFA) models.
- e) Support and require more strategic and analytical reporting on CSO partnerships, beyond simply their numerical accounting in annual reports, and find ways of more effectively using existing planning and tracking mechanisms, such as ProMs for this purpose (e.g., using categories developed for the CSP survey as a permanent platform for CSO partner consultation and monitoring partnership evolution).
- f) Provide concise, clear programmatic and operational guidance to UNICEF staff and CSO partners on managing partnerships.
- g) Develop, test and maintain a CSO-friendly partnership dispute resolution mechanism.

## 5.3 Human Resources Review

- a) Identify CSO partnership focal points in each team; people who have successfully worked in civil society partnerships or express an interest in these partnerships. Provide learning-on-the-job opportunities to support this partnership focal point function.
- b) Provide incentives for 'good partnership action', for example by publishing success stories, including effective partnering as part of staff performance assessments, and official recognition/awards for good partnership practice by teams or individuals.
- c) Identify what in the organizational culture contributes to key stumbling blocks in UNICEF's CSO partnerships, for example, the resistance of staff to freely share information with CSO partners or to claim ownership of joint partnership products. These issues need to be addressed if partnerships are to successfully operate.

- d) Review staff rotation policies and implications for continuity of CSO partnerships. Have partnership 'hand-over' processes in place.
- e) Develop and disseminate 'partnership standards', for example in a tool-kit compiling partnership principles, ways and means of acting on them and related training materials (including communication and negotiation skills and mechanisms).
- f) Enhance the effectiveness of UNICEF's leadership role on the CRC and in the Global Movement for Children by strengthening its own policy and advocacy skills. Training programmes in policy and advocacy skills (e.g., UNICEF's collaboration with Maastricht University) should be reinforced and enabled throughout the organization.

#### 5.4 Evaluation of the Supply Function

- a) Assess CSO partners and networks to confirm the appropriateness of UNICEF providing supplies for these partnership activities. CSO partners, both local and international, may have well-established supply systems and UNICEF should build on these without duplicating them.
- b) Ensure that UNICEF supplies reach CSO partners quickly and efficiently, especially given their typically short-term contract arrangements and the importance of enabling synergies among their various components.
- c) Tailor UNICEF supplies to actual conditions and needs of the partnership task.
- d) Consider providing CSOs the option to source supplies through local businesses wherever possible. This has the added advantage of contributing to local economic development. However, UNICEF must ensure that CSOs can assess risks and have audit mechanisms in place to ensure good business practice.

### **CSP REVIEW FOLLOW UP**

#### **6. Follow up this CSP Review with workshops with CSO partners to facilitate further research, planning and action to move these partnerships forward in realizing the rights of children.**

6.1 Through HQ, actively seek out feedback from CSO partners and other key stakeholders on the CSP Review Report in terms of assessing the validity of the data and coherence and accuracy of the analysis; providing guidance on options for coordinated next steps; and committing their own human and other resources to action on improving the quality, scope and effectiveness of their partnerships with UNICEF.

6.2 Through HQ, encourage and provide technical and other resources to enable Country and/or Regional Offices to organize similar feedback sessions at local levels, designed around CSO types and/or substantive (e.g., MTSP) themes to decide key UNICEF-CSO partnership priorities and ways to take them forward.

6.3 Put into place a process for systematic and regular input 'from the field' to develop user-friendly, accessible, flexible and culturally sensitive guidelines for strategic partnership analysis and development at country and regional levels, taking into account the various recommendations above.

6.4 Undertake more research on partnerships, including case studies on specific aspects of partnerships as well as comparative, cost-effectiveness and impact analyses to explore in greater detail some of the issues raised through this Review. Further conceptual work may also be required, for example, to define what CSO capacity development should and can mean in the context of UNICEF partnerships. This would help UNICEF better understand what it means to 'sustain' a partnership, the cost-effectiveness of different partnership models and contracting arrangements, and what difference partnership makes in realizing progress on the CRC

# ANNEX 1 Terms of Reference

## Terms of Reference for the Review of UNICEF Partnerships with Civil Society – Stakeholder Survey - August 2 2005

### Background

The UNICEF Office of Public Partnerships (OPP) has decided that this is an opportune time to undertake a Review of Civil Society partnerships.

UNICEF's civil society partners are very diverse and include: national and international coalitions and networks; international, national and sub-national non-government organisations; community-based organisations; professional associations, labour groups, faith based groups; campaign groups; and groups of elected officials.

UNICEF plays a different role with each of these partners and aims to engage them strategically in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and the commitments reflected in the World Fit for Children.

Through and beyond this review, UNICEF is re-examining the meaning of partnership, and where and how UNICEF needs to adapt its guidance materials, behaviour and performance in partnerships. This stakeholder review forms the first step.

In 2002, UNICEF adopted the Medium Term Strategic Plan 2002-2005. This stated that #113. UNICEF can achieve greatest advances by working closely and effectively with partners. Partnerships allow UNICEF to gain greater leverage from the resources entrusted to it, and thus facilitate progress towards the five organizational priorities. With its partners in the Global Movement for Children, UNICEF will work to create a world where every child's right to dignity, security and self-fulfilment is achieved. UNICEF will work to broaden partnerships and deepen its cooperation with national and international organizations.

This theme is developed more fully in the latest draft MTSP for 2006-2009, under the heading 'Working with civil society partners'.

251. Since the early 1990s, the Convention on the Rights of the Child has provided the vision and common ground for collaboration between UNICEF and a wide range of NGOs and civil society organizations worldwide. These partners share the United Nations values and vision of a world in which human rights are respected and efforts are undertaken to overcome barriers to equitable development and poverty reduction.

252. For such partnerships to be meaningful, each party needs to bring relevant capacities and complementary strengths to the pursuit of well-defined results for children. Partners should also be willing to explore innovative programme approaches.

253. The result of a partnership approach to programme and advocacy work is an environment within which national authorities, civil society and others participate in the social as well as economic and political development of their countries. UNICEF, in cooperation with other United Nations agencies, will promote the quality and scope of civil society involvement in building societies "fit for children".

254. In 1980 the total investment in development by major international NGOs was estimated at around \$3.5 billion. By 1999, with increases in voluntary contributions from the general public, this figure had reached \$15 billion. Success in achieving the commitments made in the Millennium Declaration will depend very significantly on the effectiveness with which non-governmental actors

invest their financial and technical resources in Millennium Development Goal-related programmes and advocacy efforts, including those focused on children.

255. In addition, as the Secretary-General has noted, the United Nations system operates in an increasingly integrated global community where critical decisions are strongly influenced by leaders of voluntary agencies, interest groups, private companies, philanthropic foundations, and academic and research centres. It is important to mobilize, support and cultivate the energies and ideas of these non-state actors. Developing and managing strategic global, regional and country-level partnerships—and mobilizing global leadership for children—are core corporate functions for UNICEF and constitute an important element of this MTSP strategy.

### **Purpose of the Stakeholder Review**

The central question to be addressed by the Review is:

*“How well is UNICEF performing as a partner organisation against principles and standards of good practice in partnership, as perceived by its civil society partners?”*

### **Scope**

For the reasons outlined in the MTSP, the improvement of UNICEF performance in partnership is seen as a priority for the future success of UNICEF and more broadly in the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals and the World Fit For Children.

The Review will provide an analysis of UNICEF practice in partnership and invite partner proposals for UNICEF improved effectiveness as a partner. This initial stage focuses on the external view by partners and less on the UNICEF view of itself as a partner.

The Review will take into account the multicultural, multinational, and multidimensional nature of the partnership base by ensuring that a wide range of partners' views are included and surveys are adapted to the interests of different groups.

The client for the Review is the Director of OPP. The Review will serve as a resource to senior management, including the recently appointed Executive Director, in planning the future direction, strategy and resourcing of UNICEF partnerships.

### **Review Phases and Methodology**

The Review will run from late September to late December 2005 and will be conducted in five phases:

- *Inception*
- *Survey*
- *Analysis*
- *Consultation*
- *Reporting*

#### Inception

- Finalisation of TORs, based on discussion with stakeholders
- Document analysis
- Development and agreement of a typology of partnership, and standards and principles for partnership (cross-checked with Review Steering Group)
- Analysis of partner data to create a survey sample across all partner types
- Development and testing of survey tools
- Production of an inception report, including methodology, for agreement by the Steering Group

### Survey

- Key informant interviews (face-to-face and telephone) with partners, ensuring a gender-balance in interviews
- Internet based survey of partners, selected from all types and regions

### Analysis

- Systematic analysis of qualitative and quantitative data collected
- Distillation of provisional findings and recommendations
- Presentation of initial findings to the Steering Group

### Consultation

- A workshop, or series of workshops, involving UNICEF offices to share and further develop review findings.
- Presentations to management and staff.
- Feedback collated and used to prepare the draft final report.

### Draft and Final Reports

## **Reporting**

Progress reports and presentations will lead to the production of Draft and Final Review Reports, presenting findings and conclusions, and proposing specific and achievable recommendations for strengthening UNICEF partnerships

The report must conform to the UNICEF Evaluation Report Standards and UNICEF Style Guide. The UNICEF Evaluation Office will specify the report format. The final report should be provided in hard-copy and electronic version in Microsoft Word. Any survey data will be provided in Microsoft Office compatible format. All electronic files will be submitted on a CD-ROM. All review products will be wholly owned by UNICEF and cannot be used without UNICEF permission.

## **Accountability and Management**

### ▪ **Review Steering Group**

The team will be chaired by the Director of OPP and will include a range of UNICEF divisions and offices. The Steering Group will:

- Agree the final Terms of Reference and any adjustments to TOR's required
- Approve of key aspects of Review design, questions and questionnaire design
- Ensure the Review process gains internal ownership
- Decide on a post-Review dissemination strategy, prior to full completion of the report
- Approve of the final report
- Issue a management response and an action plan, with a follow-up mechanism, in response to the Review findings and recommendations

### ▪ **Management by OPP**

OPP will provide day to day management and oversight of the review, including:

- Briefing the consultants, providing documentation and working space when necessary
- Locating and ensuring access to information on UNICEF partnership base
- Making contacts with, and ensuring Regional and Country Office support to, the consultants as necessary
- With the Steering Group, providing a typology of partnership, and standards and principles for partnership, against which UNICEF performance can be assessed.

### • **Role of the Evaluation Office**

The UNICEF Evaluation Office will

- Assist with identification of consultants
- Act as the contracting office
- Provide quality assurance on the review process and reports.



## ANNEX 2 Two Typologies Of Partnership

### 1. Typology by mode of partnership engagement/ relationship

Typology by partnership engagement indicates the range of partnership arrangements UNICEF has with CSOs with respect to type of interaction and contractual implications. It aims to:

- Illustrate the range of partnership engagement modes, from supportive and task-oriented relationships to collaborative activity and on-going mutual evolution.
- Highlight the implications of UNICEF contractual arrangements, or lack thereof, associated with different partnership modes.

Five modes of partnership engagement comprise this first typology of UNICEF-CSO partnerships:

<i>Capacity-building/ Support &amp; grants</i>	<i>Contracted / Fee for services</i>	<i>Cooperation/ Resource- sharing</i>	<i>Collaboration/ Synergistic</i>	<i>Community of practice/ Co- evolution</i>
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Partnerships may operate across these partnership modes concurrently or at different stages in order to meet different partnership needs. This typology does not put forward a partnership hierarchy or progression per se, but provides a range of partnership modes that can be strategically employed to ensure that partnership needs are met. Panel 1 highlights the objective and key contractual issues for UNICEF related to these five modes of partnership engagement.

#### Panel 1. Mode of partnership engagement and contractual implications

##### CAPACITY-BUILDING/ SUPPORT AND GRANTS

- **Objective:** Build capacities and develop and support organizational synergies to meet common goals.
- **Current UNICEF contracts:** There are no UNICEF contracts exclusively for this purpose, but capacity building provisions can be built into other contracts e.g. as percentage overheads (10% to 25%). These provisions are usually both level- and time-limited and are considered insufficient for CSO organizational management and capacity building by both CSOs and UNICEF Country Office staff.
- **Recommendations:** UNICEF should make contractual provisions specifically for organizational support and capacity building (including training) based on strategic partnership assessments. Additionally, grant mechanisms to support CSO activities should be considered – including for research and development that could promote innovative solutions and locally relevant approaches that further the cause of children’s rights.

##### CONTRACTED/ FEE FOR SERVICES

- **Objective:** Implementation of a specific task using competitive tenders to select partners.
- **Current UNICEF contracts:** UNICEF uses an institutional Special Service Agreement (SSA) contract for fee for service or ‘hardware’ tasks e.g. installing water pumps. However, CSOs note that there are rarely purely ‘hardware’ tasks in these partnerships given the need to work with communities. They also find the short-term nature of these arrangements problematic in terms of the administrative burden involved, for partnership continuity and in the larger development context.
- **Recommendations:** While some may not consider fee for service arrangements a ‘true’ partnership, others note that these make for effective partnership work. There is a systematic selection process to identify new partners and select the best partner for the task at hand. Responsibilities and expected results are also clearly defined. However, a simpler system of evolving contracts should be considered to reduce administrative burden on CSOs, facilitate partnership continuity (as appropriate) and to evolve partnerships towards achieving long-term results and sustainability.

#### COOPERATION/ RESOURCE-SHARING

- Objective: Share resources and costs, usually related to a specific project/programme.
- Current UNICEF contracts: A Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) for these project or 'software' partnerships. Here too, the distinction does not work, as organizations usually need 'hardware' to carry out 'software' activities. The PCA involves a complicated administrative process primarily designed to protect UNICEF from financial risk. Non-financial resources that CSOs bring (links to the community, new approaches...) are often not taken into account. One advantage of the PCA is that all partners are involved in project planning, budgeting and reporting.
- Recommendations: Project cooperation agreements should be simplified and designed for the mutual benefit of partners. The joint development of the partnership activities should be maintained. One specific recommendation made in this context was to replace the PCA with Small Scale Funding, which is much easier to administer for both UNICEF staff and CSOs. Raising the Small Scale Funding limit to \$100,000 would have the added advantage of moving away from the tedious receipt-based accounting of the PCA. On a related note, the new UN Harmonised Approach to Cash Transaction (which would be more streamlined) is only for contracts above \$100,000 and many CSO contracts may fall below this limit.

#### COLLABORATION/ SYNERGISTIC

- Objective: Harmonize partner activities and capitalize on synergies, without financial transactions.
- Current UNICEF contracts: A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is usually drawn up to mark these partnerships. It is not clear that there is a standard process or criteria for drawing up MOUs or for following through on them. There is a perception by both CSO partners and UNICEF staff that too often MoUs are drawn up as a formality and are not followed through in the work of the partnership.
- Recommendations: Best practice 'checklists' of issues to address in partnership arrangements are included in Annex 7. This reflects CSO partners suggestions that issues such as joint monitoring and evaluation, shared decision-making and conflict resolution mechanisms are included in MOUs.

#### COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE/ CO-EVOLUTION

- Objective: Interaction based on shared values and goals for mutual learning and 'co-evolution'.
- Current UNICEF contracts: This type of partnership engagement does not necessarily lend itself to a contractual arrangement. More than any of the other modes of partnership, this one truly depends on partnership principles such as mutual respect and opportunities for mutual learning in order to succeed.
- Recommendations: UNICEF is in a unique position to bring together a range of partners working to realize children's rights as lead agency on the CRC. Supporting and building a community of practice around CRC treaty implementation, monitoring and reform could include building networks of partners and facilitating mutual learning through synthesis of information on children, providing communication tools and promoting partnership principles and best practice.

## 2. Typology by purpose of partnership/ task

The second typology of UNICEF-CSO partnerships is by partnership purpose. This categorization illustrates some of the main types of activities or tasks expected to be undertaken through the partnership arrangements that currently exist between UNICEF and CSOs. The more explicit the purpose of a partnership, the stronger the likelihood there is of ensuring appropriate design, resources and focused monitoring. Also, as UNICEF becomes more strategic in developing its CSO partnerships, the more important it will be to select and develop partners and partnerships appropriate to implementing the strategy. The most commonly stated purposes of UNICEF-CSO partnerships are:

### i) To catalyze and mobilize

Partnerships whose primary purpose is to energize and attract wide public attention or government action usually involve CSO partners working towards a common cause, but often from diverse angles. UNICEF's convening ability helps build a common platform and framework of action, bringing flexibility to working in partnerships and providing channels for new funding sources and for existing funders to coordinate approaches. CSOs are asking UNICEF to do more in this area of partnership, but it involves risk-taking and willingness to accept less than total control over the process. Coordination can be time-consuming and labour intensive.

- |       |                                      |
|-------|--------------------------------------|
| (i)   | To catalyze and mobilize             |
| (ii)  | Intellectual exchange                |
| (iii) | Development of capacity              |
| (iv)  | Increase reach                       |
| (v)   | Respond to emergency                 |
| (vi)  | Promote CRC monitoring and reporting |

### ii) Intellectual exchange

These partnerships are established as forums for exchange in developing ideas and standards. As one CSO partner noted, "We just talk and share ideas about constraints and problems for children, and how we can use the power of UNICEF or of us to deal with them." These partnerships also provide opportunities for setting agendas for action, keeping in contact with partner networks and making new contacts. While the intellectual exchange is valued, there is invariably an expectation that UNICEF will "follow up the talk with action", and channelling the process of intellectual exchange and managing partner expectations thus poses challenges for UNICEF.

### iii) Development of capacity

Developing capacity in UNICEF-CSO partnerships involves building the capacity of individuals within partner organizations or of the organizations themselves. Ideally, this is a reciprocal process as partnerships should be of mutual benefit, even where the types of capacities developed may be different. UNICEF or CSOs may bring together partners working on the same issue (e.g. girls' life-skills) or methodology (e.g. participatory action research) either formally or informally to provide more cost-effective training and mutual learning opportunities, allowing for sharing and extending the value of UNICEF partnerships and increasing the likelihood of extending programme reach and sustaining results. However, it requires UNICEF having the skills to assess capacity needs, the resources to meet them and the ability to match these with changing partner contexts and tasks.

### iv) Increase reach

Partnerships designed to extend organizational 'reach' allow UNICEF to work with a diverse range of CSOs. Partnership with larger CSOs, including INGOs, allows an interface between UNICEF and

community groups, which the larger CSOs assuming the major administrative load, cushioning delayed payments, mentoring, and facilitating access to training and information. CBOs previously unable or unwilling to work directly with UNICEF due to limited experience, expertise and/or language and cultural differences are thus supported in their partnering. UNICEF, however, needs to be proactive in identifying these type of arrangements, for example to expand and strengthen networks for emergency preparedness and to recognize and support the 'mentoring' role of larger CSOs. Tracking reach, impact and quality of the results of these arrangements can be difficult given the different 'layers' involved.

v) Respond to emergency

UNICEF is often called on to set up partnerships with INGOs, regional CSOs and local NGOs to ensure that appropriate, collaborative strategies are in place to 'pick up the ball' in complex emergencies. These partnerships facilitate the promotion of 'universal' minimum standards, the dissemination of current evidence, and working through culturally sensitive channels. They further help to build and strengthen traditional social networks, leadership and expertise structures; to enable the coordinated use of local resources and to achieve comparative advantages of partner organizations.

As is beginning to happen in its IASC 'nutrition in emergencies' cluster role, to effectively build these partnerships requires UNICEF to establish connections and coordination mechanisms with various global, national and community partners/networks; on-going appraisal and synthesis of leading-edge knowledge; and development of relevant skills and standards both in-house and with partners. Negotiating differences in approach, perspective, and leadership allocation of responsibility and credit pose particular challenges in these partnerships.

vi) Promote CRC monitoring and reporting

UNICEF-CSO partnerships are also set up to facilitate and strengthen the development of viable channels and coalitions through which implementation and monitoring of the CRC can be advocated and better sustained. These partnerships help UNICEF keep a finger on the pulse of children's rights in different national contexts through CSOs already engaged with children at risk, or with the potential to identify, assess and act in situations where children are at risk. These partnerships need to combine local priorities with the global CRC mandate and open opportunities for moving beyond advocacy on the CRC to acting on the CRC committee recommendations to implement actual change.

Effectively working in these partnerships requires UNICEF to reconcile its various roles and mandates – as part of an integrated UN mission, as lead agency for the CRC, and as a partner to governments, and the private sector, recognizing that there are situations in which these are in conflict with one other. It needs to build partnerships within the evolving community of practice on the CRC, strengthening systems for generating evidence-based analysis, advocacy, policy-development and programmes. It needs to take the time to build cross- and multi-sectoral and local-national synergies, and to convene opportunities for mutual learning and development of partners and in the CRC process.

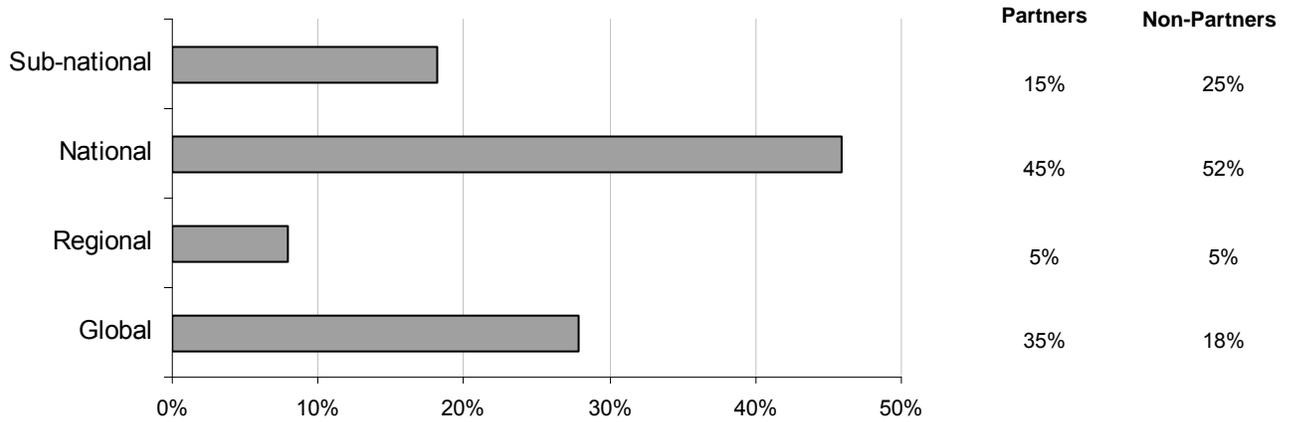
## ANNEX 3 UNICEF CSP Review: Survey Results at a Glance

### Survey response rate

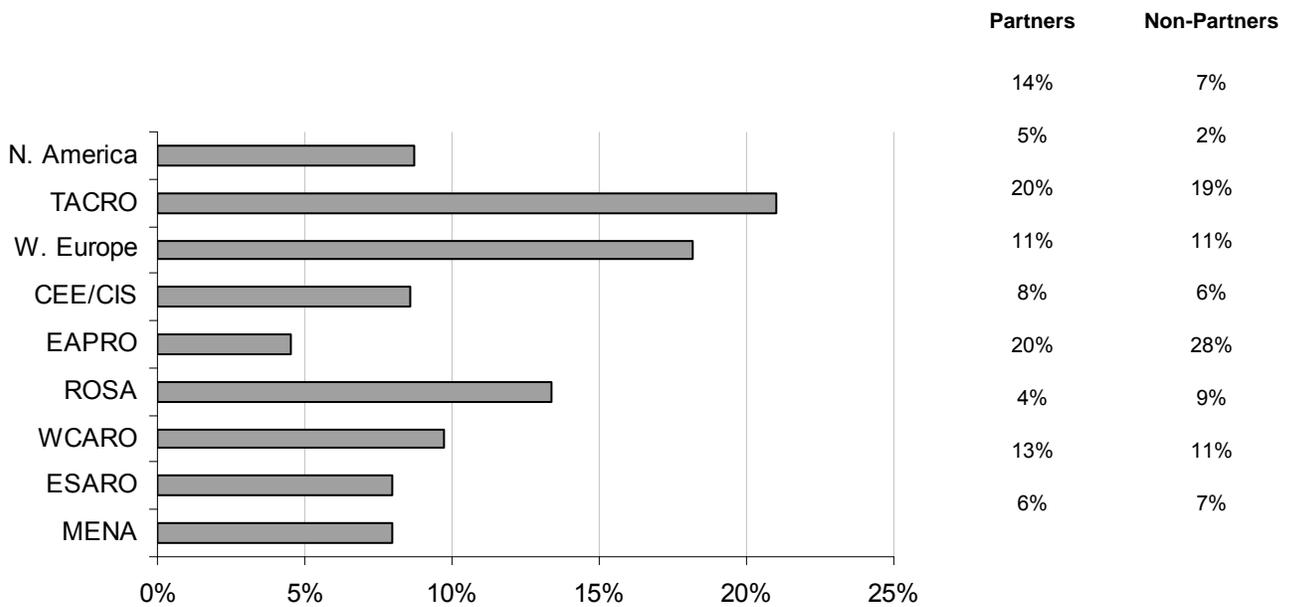
	Complete	Partial*	Total
Nber answers	455	211	666

\*'Partial' corresponds to questionnaires that have not been entirely completed, therefore at least the two first questions have been answered.

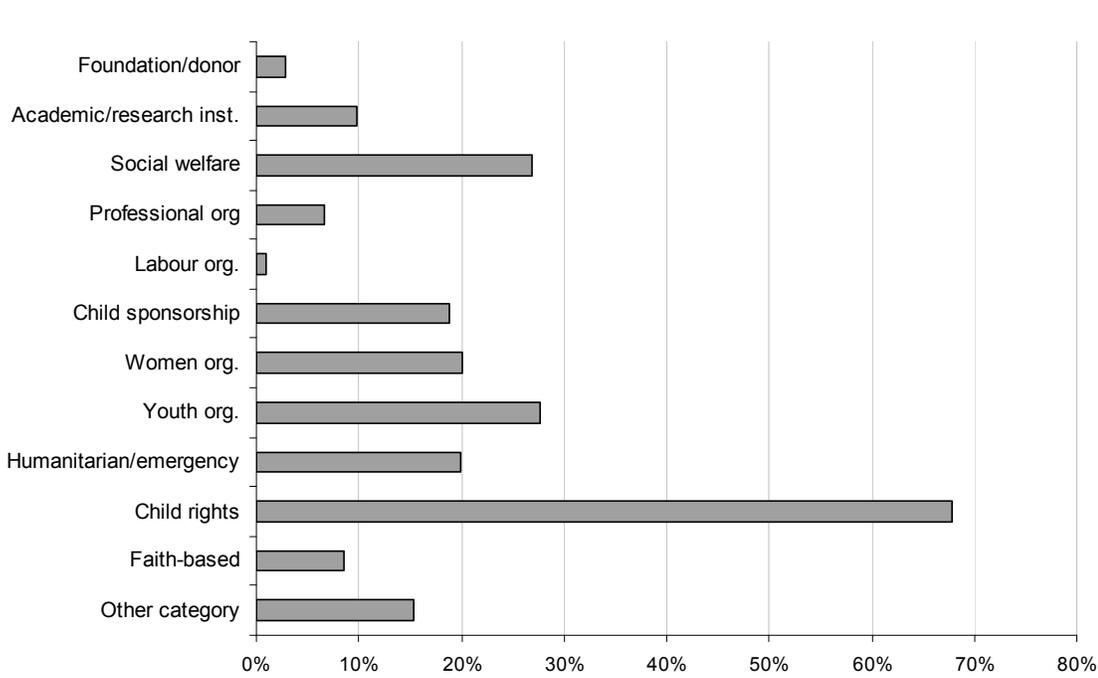
### Q1 Which level best describes the scope of your organization's work?



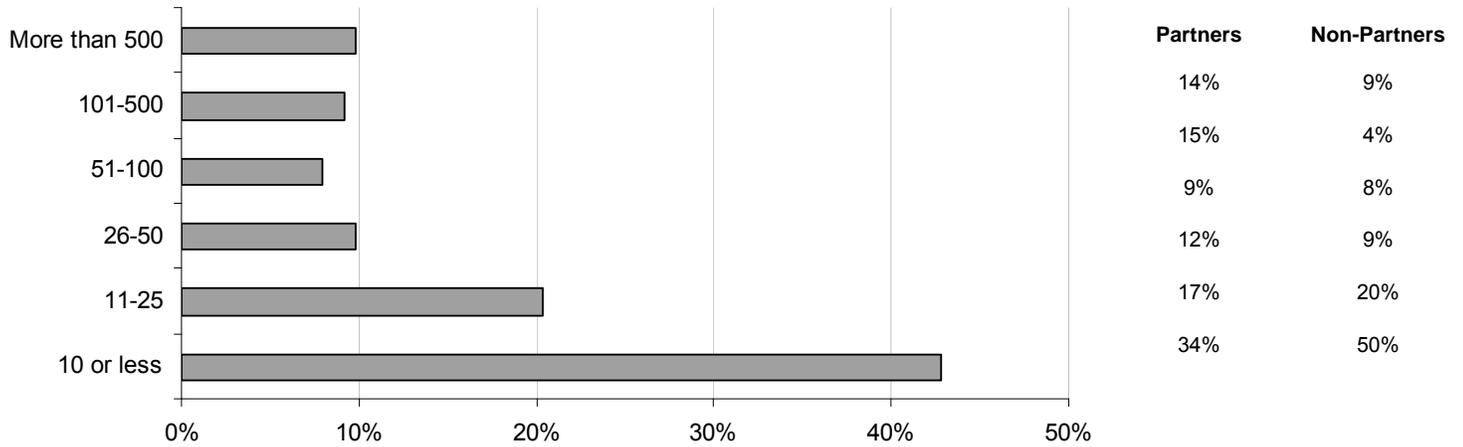
### Q2 In which region is your organization's headquarters or main office located?



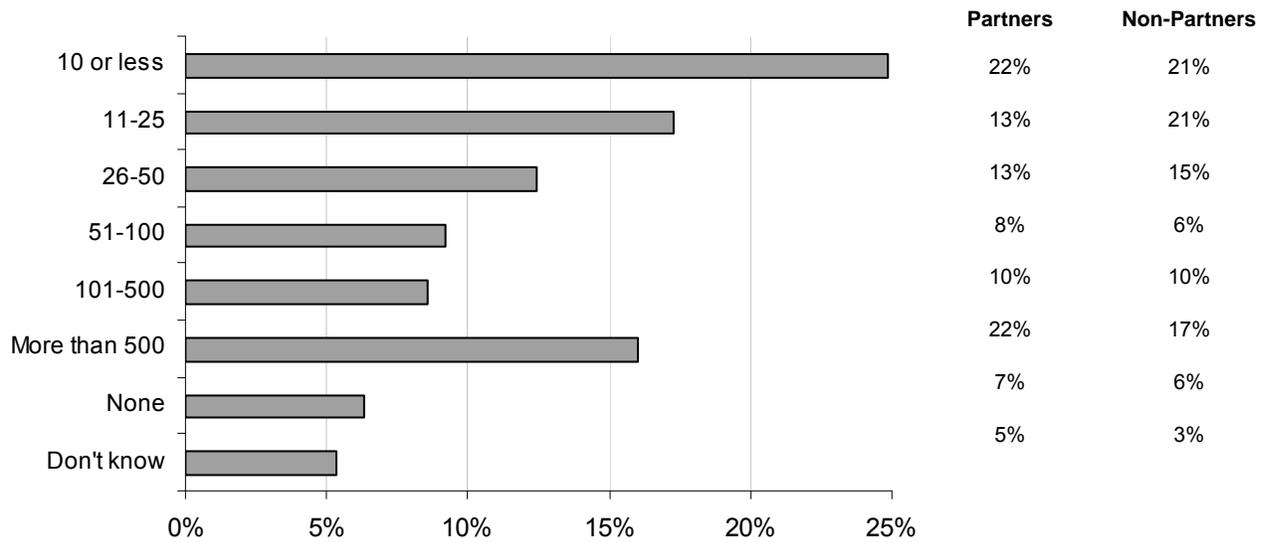
**Q3 Which category or categories best describe your organization?**



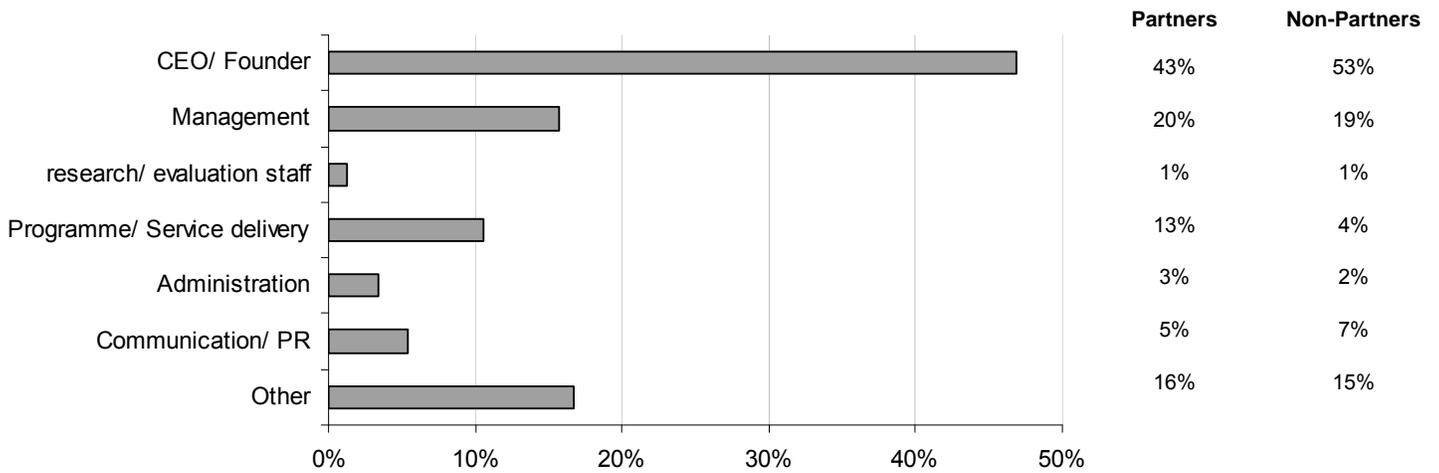
**Q4 How many staff does your organization employ in total?**



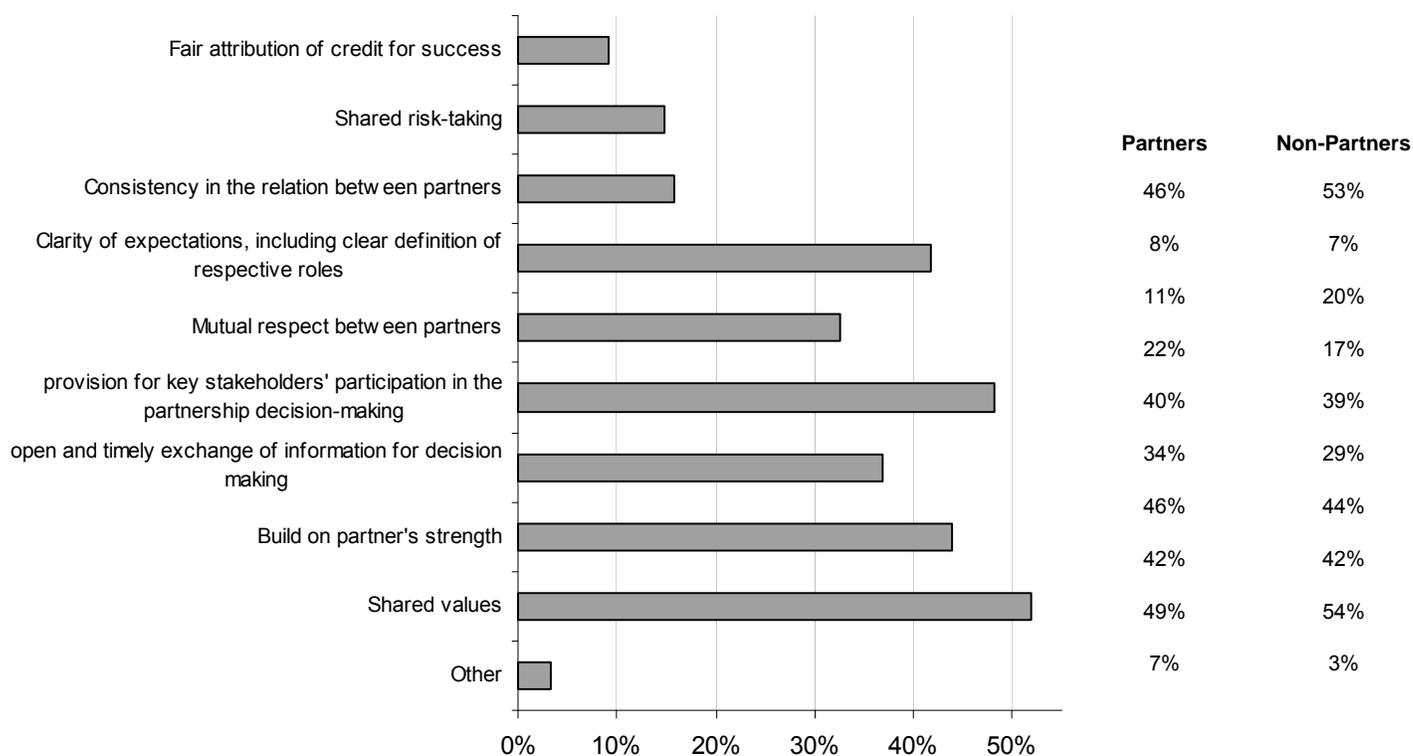
**Q5. How many volunteers does your organization have every year?**



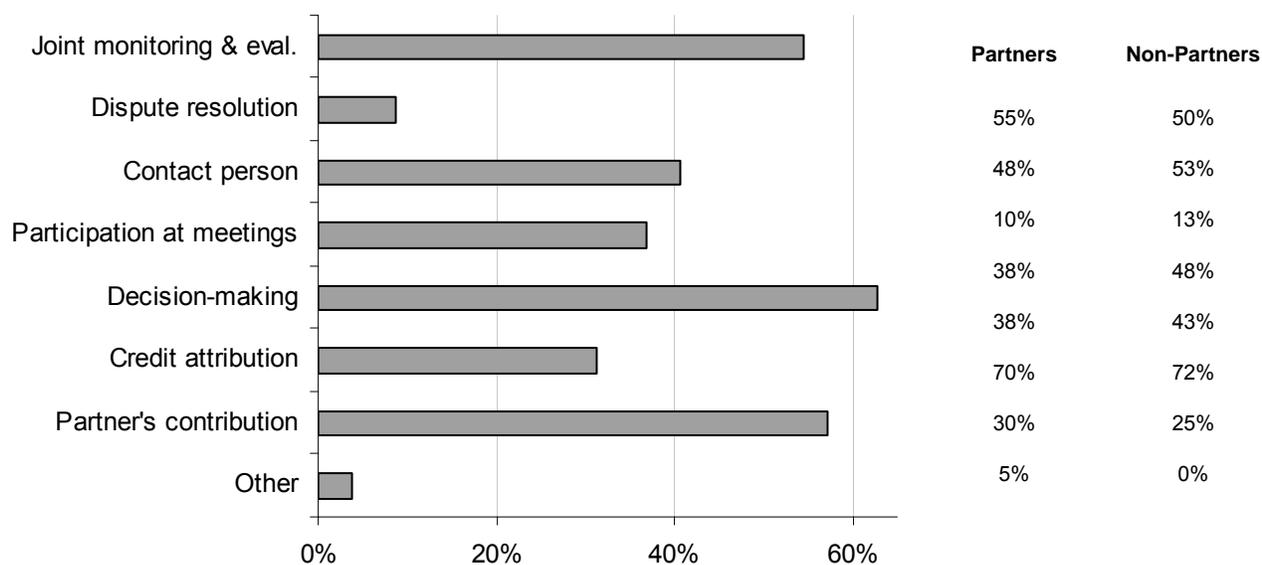
**Q6 What is your position in the organization?**



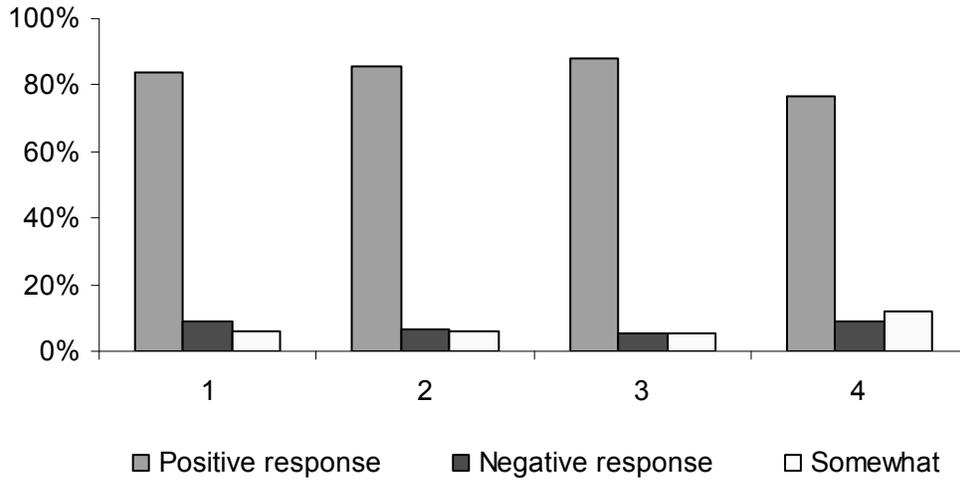
**Q7 Partnership Principles - Select what you think should be the 3 most important principles for UNICEF's policy and guidance on partnerships with CSOs**



**Q8 In formal agreements between UNICEF and CSOs, select what you think are the 3 most important factors to specify**

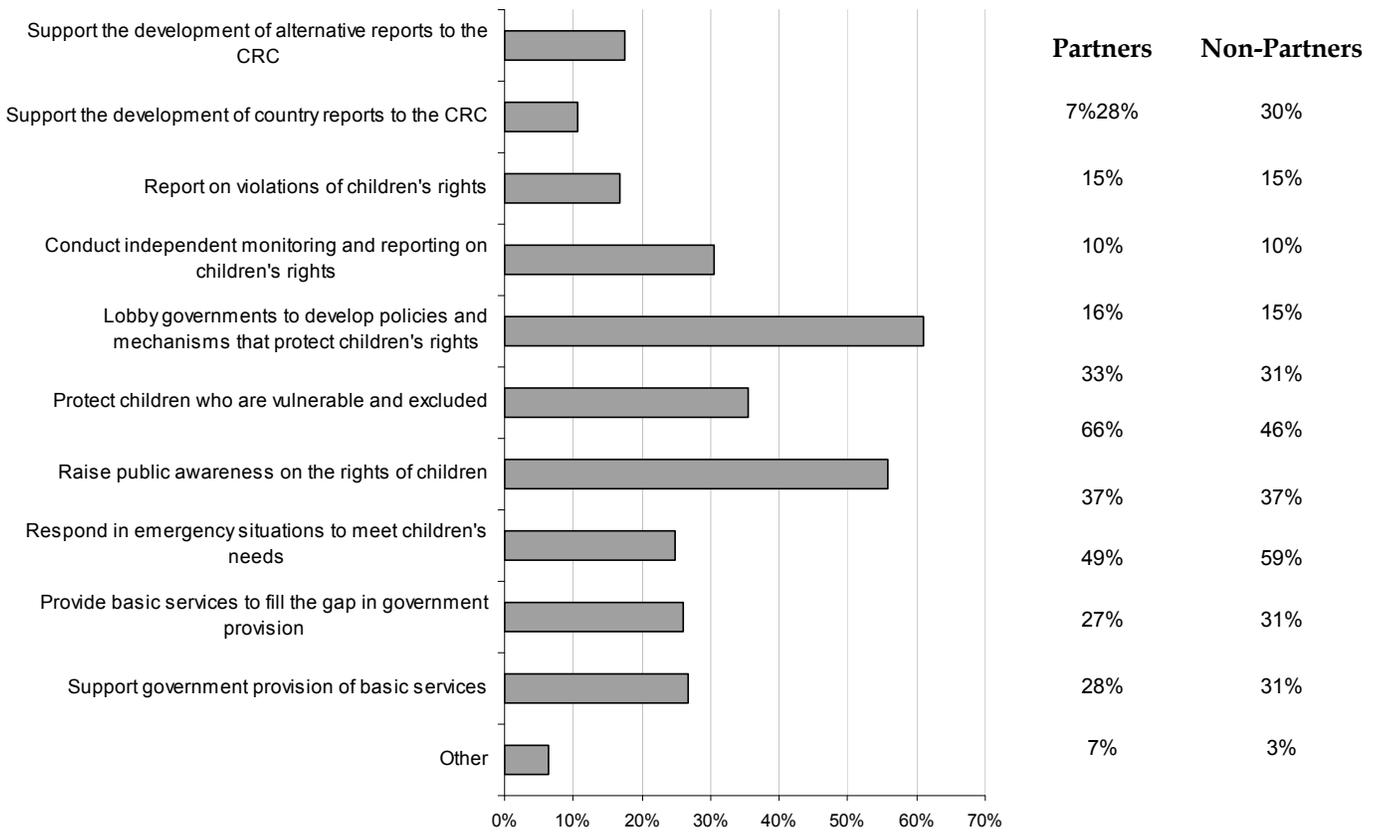


**Q9 Criteria for joining partnerships on children's rights:**

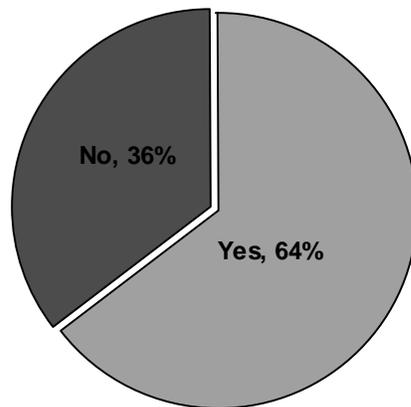


	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No opinion
1. CRC should be a foundation of the organization's work	5%	4%	1%	5%	23%	61%	1%
2. Commitment to shared goals of the child rights community	5%	1%	1%	5%	32%	54%	1%
3. The organization complies with human rights standards	5%	1%	2%	4%	20%	68%	1%
4. The organization's financial records should be open to public scrutiny	5%	3%	3%	9%	29%	48%	3%

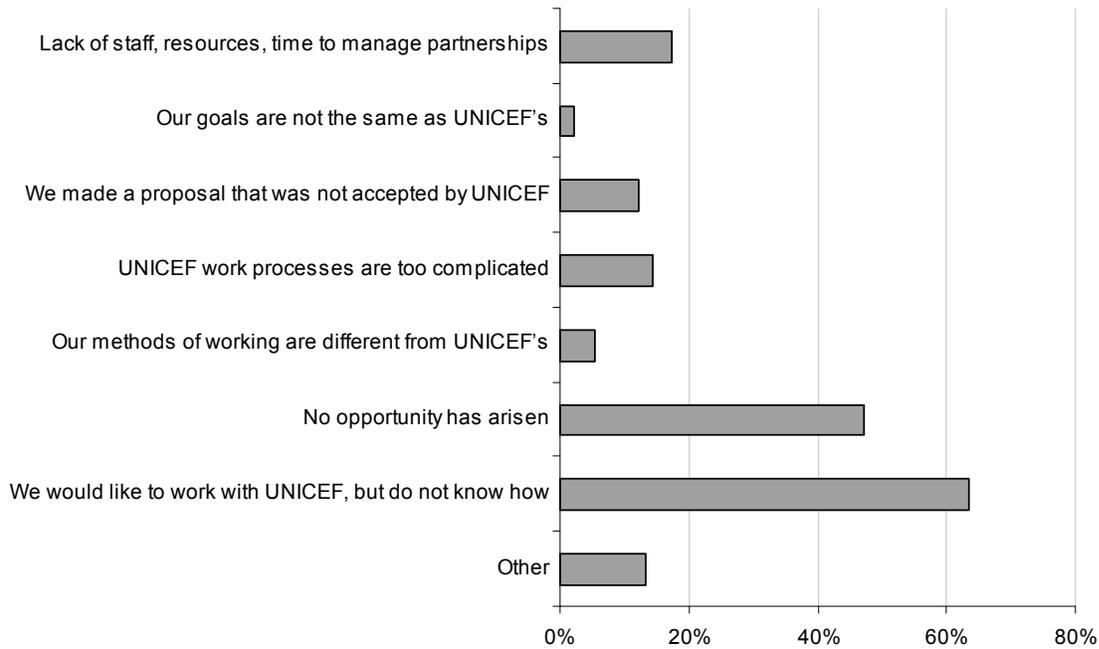
**Q10 Where can UNICEF make the most difference to children's rights by partnering with CSOs?**



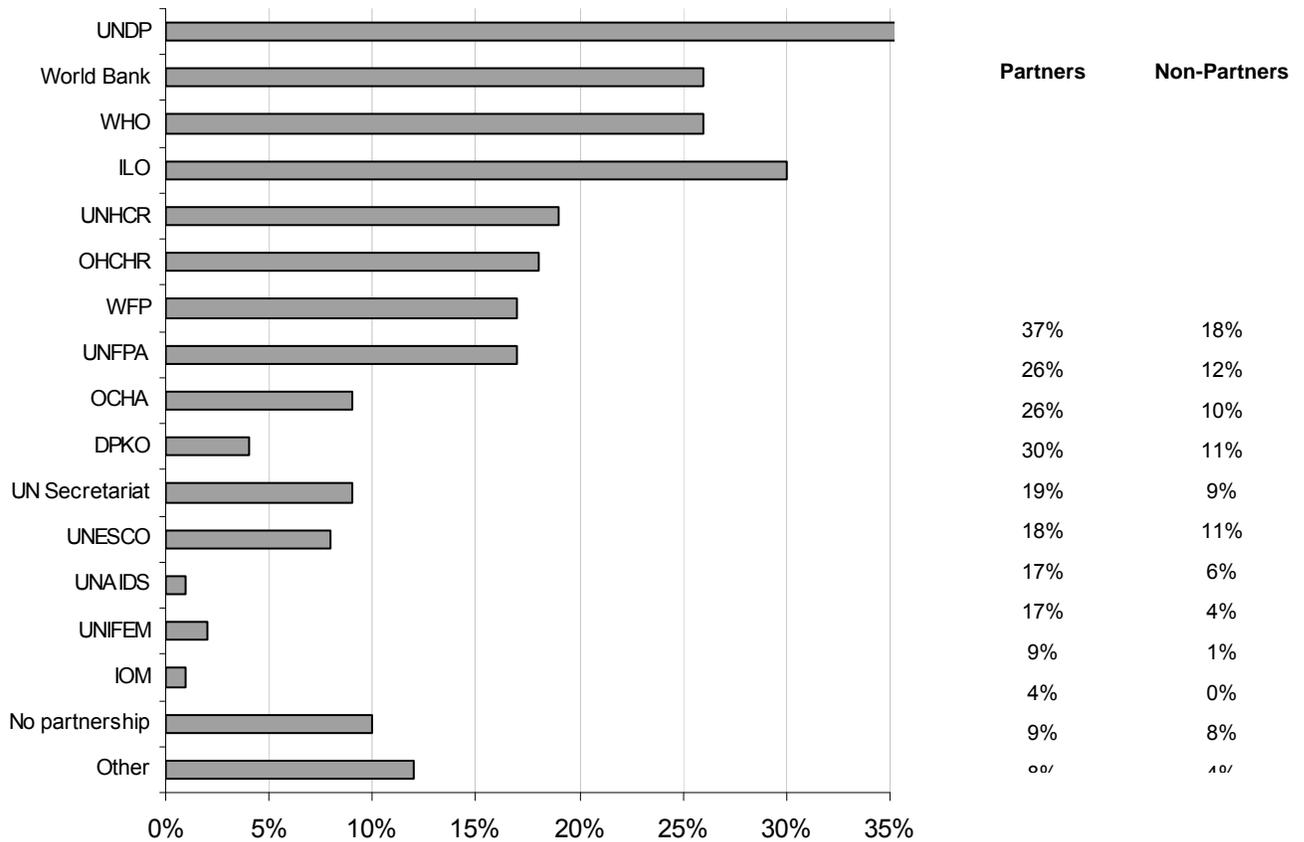
**Q11 Do you currently have a partnership with UNICEF or have you had a partnership in the past?**



**Q12 What are the reasons that you have not been a UNICEF partner?**



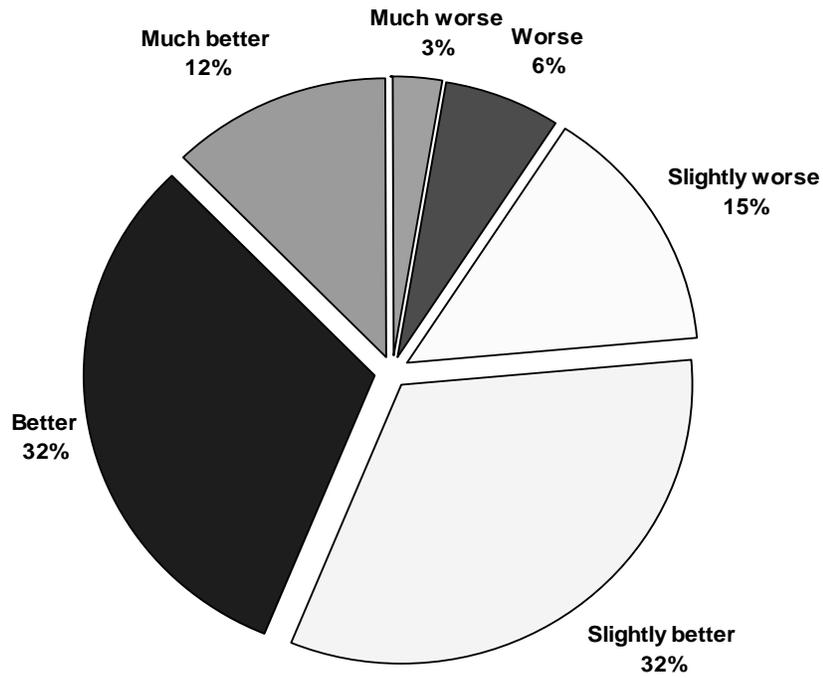
**Q13 & Q16 With which of the following UN organizations have you worked?**



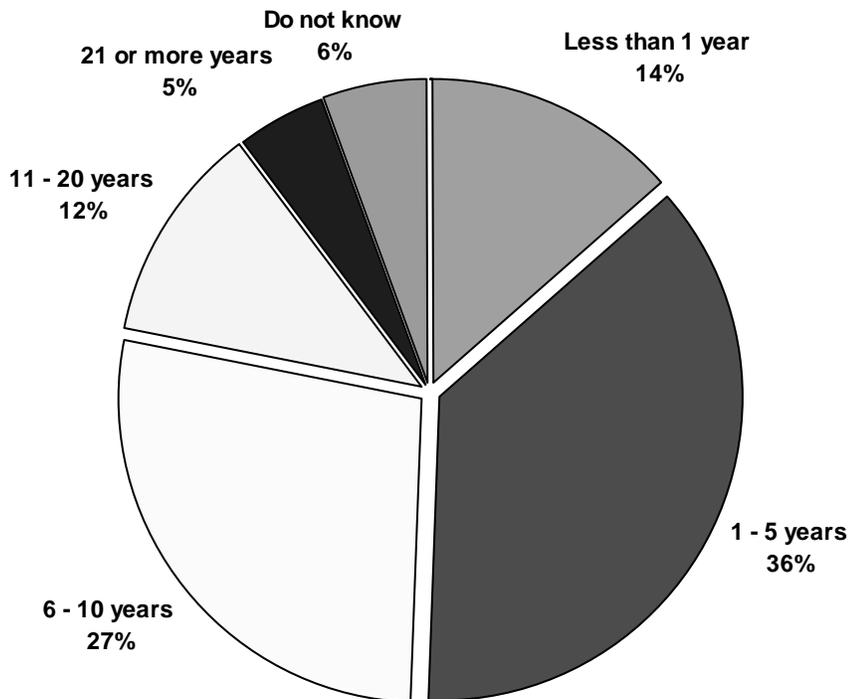
**Q14&18 Please name one UN organization with which you have had a particularly good partnership experience**

<b>UN Agencies</b>		<b>Government/ bilateral</b>		<b>CSOs and Others</b>	
UNICEF	90	USAID	6	Save the Children	7
UNDP	19	IOM	3	Plan International	3
WHO	12	EU	4	ActionAid	2
ILO	14	Council of Europe	2	CRIN	2
UNESCO	13	CIDA	2	WOSM	2
OHCHR	10	OSCE	1	Amnesty International	1
World Bank	9	Commonwealth	1	Ford Foundation	1
UNHCR	10	DANIDA	1	NGO Group on CRC	1
UNFPA	10	DFID	1	Taking IT Global	1
FAO	4			Cordaid	1
UNIFEM	5			Early Intervention Institute	1
OCHA	3				
ECOSOC	4				
UN Committee for the rights of the Child	5				
WFP	6				
UNAIDS	2				
UNODC	3				
Other	21				

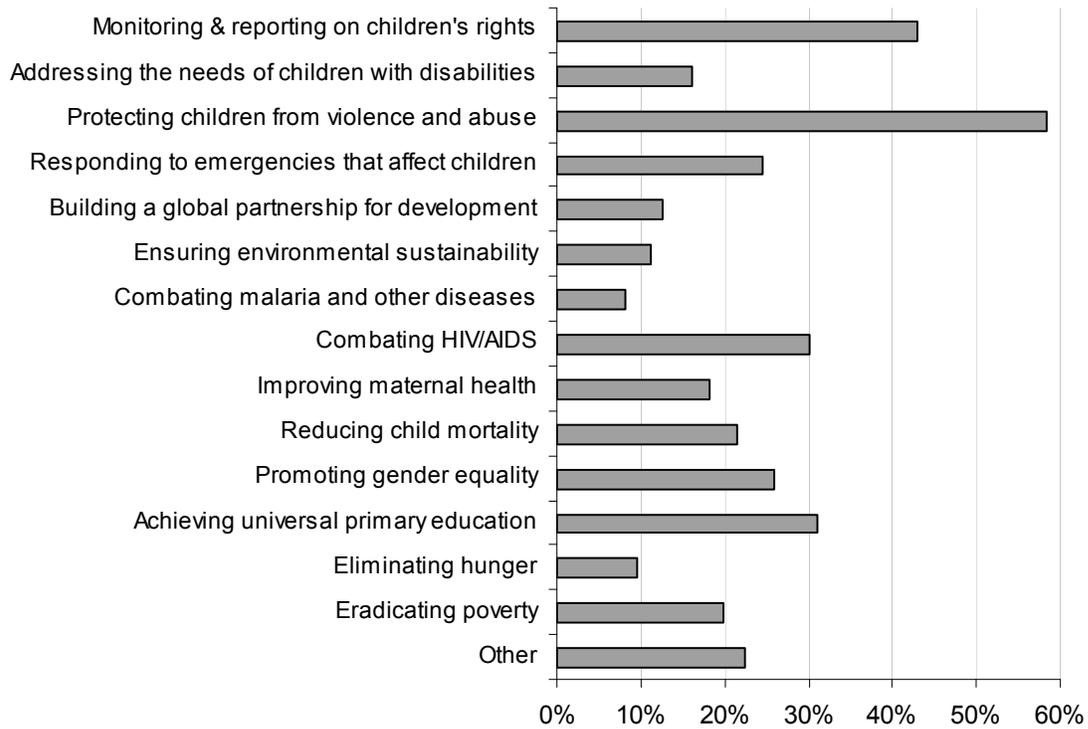
**Q17 How would you compare the quality of your working relationship with UNICEF versus other UN organizations? (PARTNERS)**



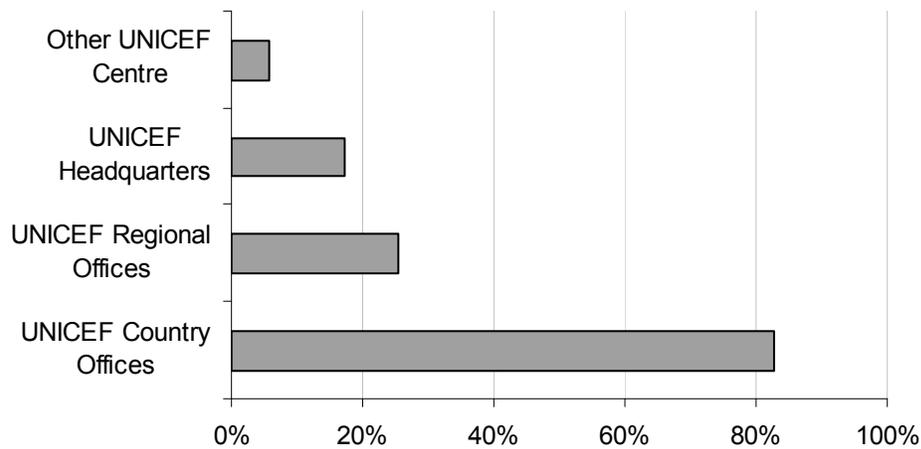
**Q20 How long has your organization collaborated/partnered with UNICEF?**



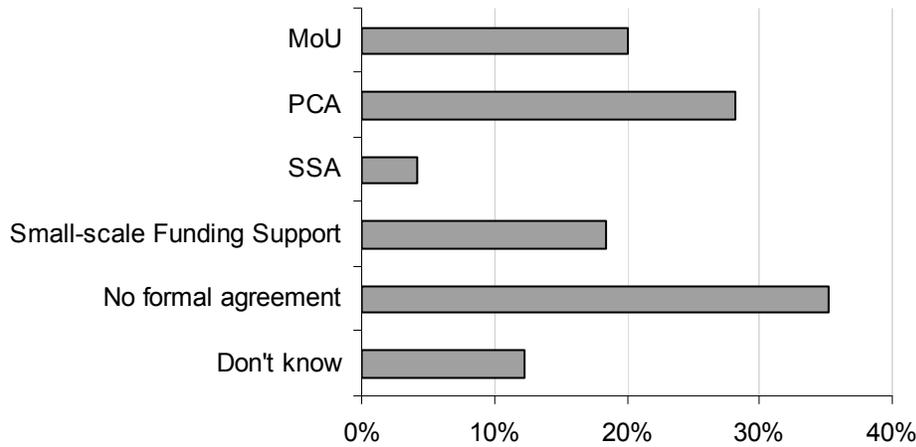
**Q21 What have been the main issues/themes of your collaboration with UNICEF?**



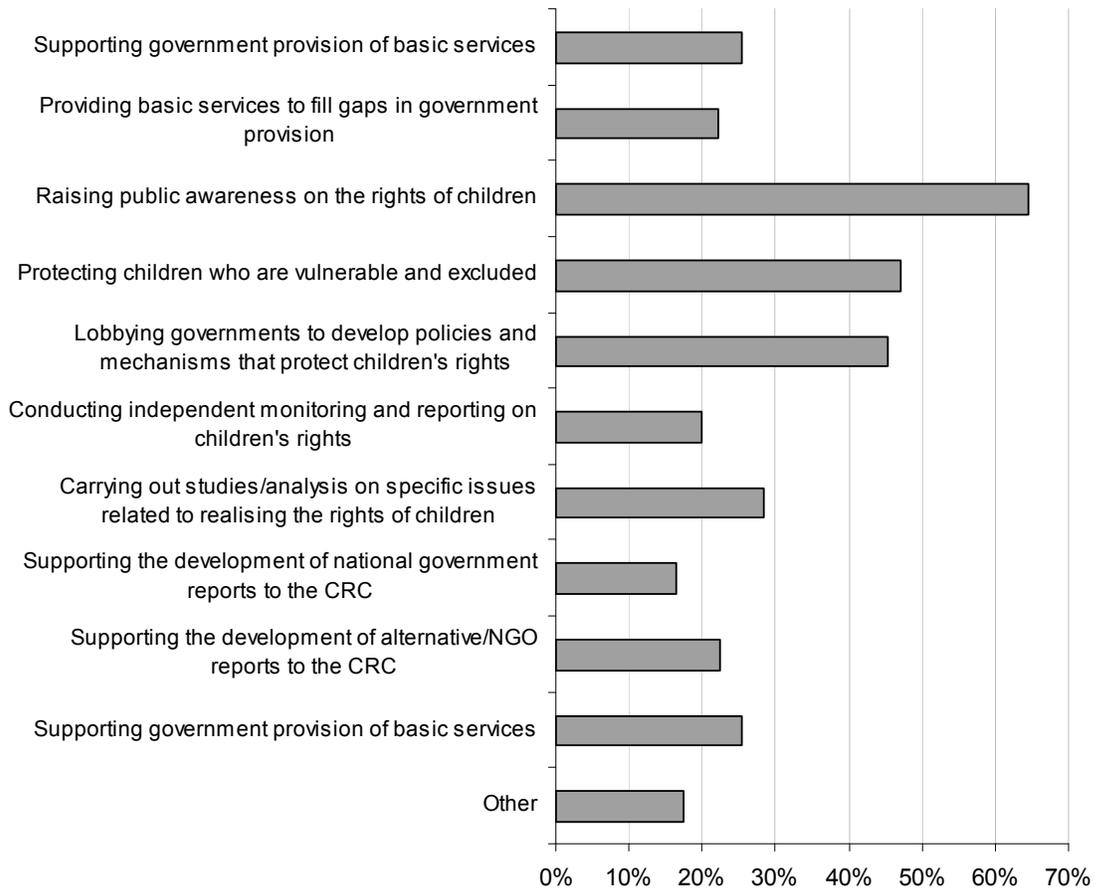
**Q22 Which parts of UNICEF do you partner with?**



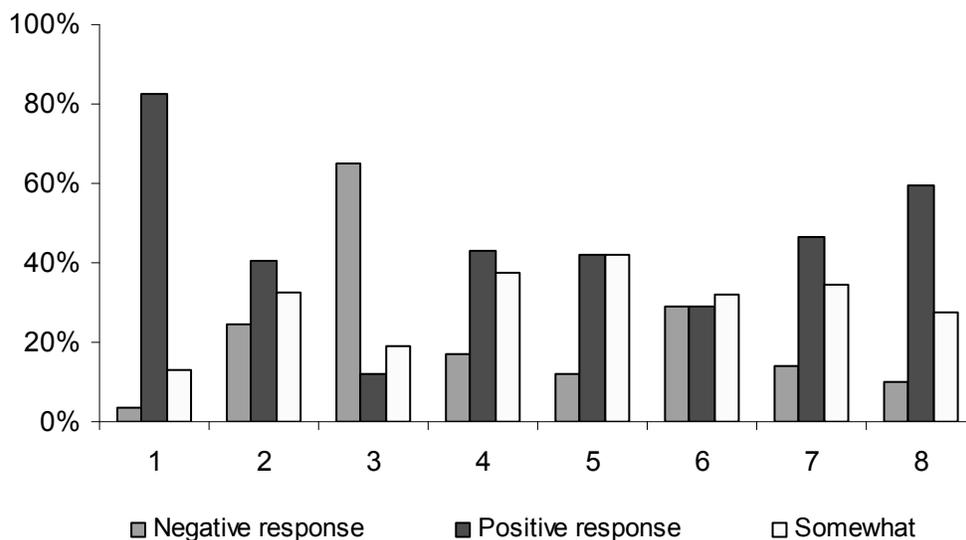
**Q23 Does your organization have any of the following formal agreements with UNICEF**



**Q24 What have been the main activities in your partnership with UNICEF?**

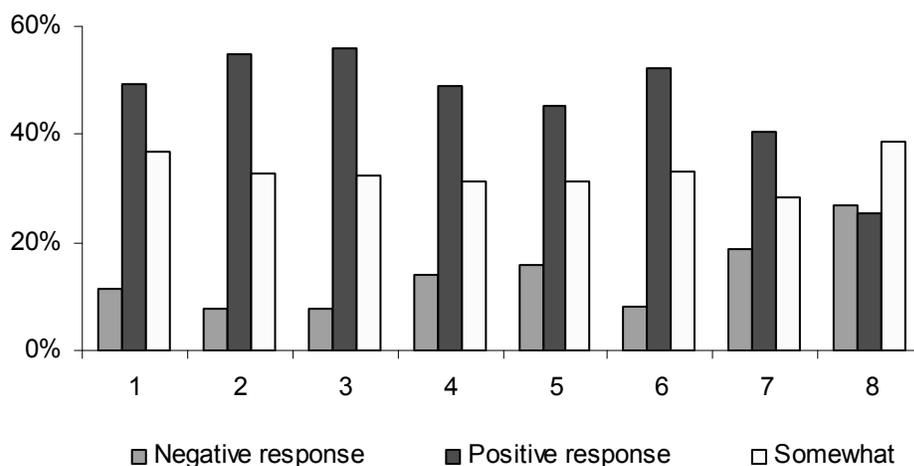


**Q25 How strongly do you agree or disagree that the following statements describe your overall experience of working with UNICEF?**



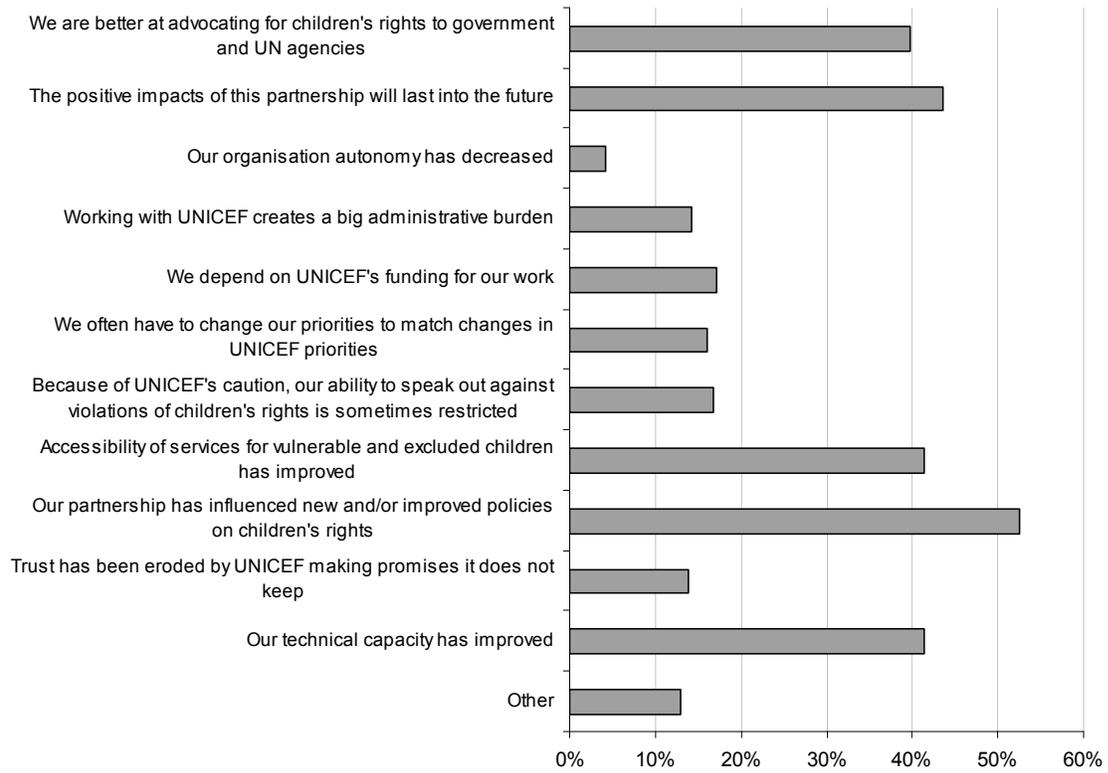
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree	No opinion
1. We share common values	2%	1%	1%	12%	42%	41%	1%
2. UNICEF treats us as equals	8%	17%	14%	19%	28%	12%	3%
3. We compete with UNICEF	32%	32%	10%	9%	7%	5%	4%
4. UNICEF provides us with the information we need in good time	4%	13%	16%	22%	30%	13%	2%
5. UNICEF gives us sufficient time to provide information	4%	8%	19%	23%	32%	10%	4%
6. UNICEF often changes its priorities and/or strategies	8%	21%	14%	18%	20%	9%	10%
7. UNICEF works in an open and transparent manner	6%	8%	13%	21%	30%	17%	5%
8. We trust each other	4%	6%	10%	18%	39%	21%	3%

**Q26. How strongly do you agree or disagree that the following statements describe your overall experience of working with UNICEF**



	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree	No opinion
1. We make the best of each other's strengths	4%	8%	10%	26%	36%	13%	2%
2. There is a clear definition of expected results	2%	5%	11%	21%	42%	13%	4%
3. Our respective responsibilities are clearly defined	3%	5%	14%	18%	42%	13%	4%
4. UNICEF takes the lead on bringing together partners and other key stakeholders	5%	9%	11%	20%	34%	15%	5%
5. UNICEF gives us fair credit for results achieved	5%	11%	13%	18%	35%	11%	8%
6. We are able to successfully negotiate differences between us	2%	6%	10%	23%	41%	12%	7%
7. UNICEF deals with us in a consistent way (even when staff change)	7%	12%	16%	18%	33%	7%	7%
8. UNICEF is more concerned with project administration than with achieving outcomes	4%	23%	16%	21%	16%	9%	11%

**Q27 What have been the impact/results of your partnership with UNICEF?**



## ANNEX 3.1 Survey analysis of ‘factors that matter’ in UNICEF-CSO Partnerships

In the CSP review survey, CSOs rated UNICEF’s performance as a partner and provided feedback on what they thought UNICEF should be doing or could be doing better. Respondents also provided information about their organizations and the type of work they do. The descriptive statistics and graphs section of this survey analysis highlight this data.

Survey respondents also indicated how strongly they agreed or disagreed with 27 rating statements on their partnerships with UNICEF (qs. 25, 26, and 27 in the CSP survey). Two main questions subsequently guided analysis of these rating statements:

- Which factors (partnership and organizational characteristics) seem to influence how CSOs rate their partnerships with UNICEF.
- How these factors matter in UNICEF-CSO partnerships.

A regression analysis was used to answer these questions by focusing on specific factors. For instance, one analytical question asked: “Is scope/ level of the CSO systematically related to rating of UNICEF’s as a partner?” while controlling for factors other than scope e.g. type of contract, length of collaboration.

### Which factors matter in UNICEF-CSO partnerships

Some factors influenced several rating areas; and some types of partners showed stronger patterns of response than others. The factors and interrelationships that appeared most significant in influencing CSO ratings of UNICEF partnerships are discussed below.

The factors that most significantly influenced CSO ratings of UNICEF as a partner were ranked based on the number of partnership rating items that each influenced at the 5 per cent level of significance, determined using F-tests in a regression analysis (See Table 1). In descending order of influence these factors are:

1. Length of collaboration.
2. Geopolitical context/ region.
3. Type of contract.
4. Number of volunteers.
5. Number of employees.
6. CSO scope/ level, category/ type of CSO, and position/ role of the respondent.

**Table. 1 Summary of F-tests to identify ‘factors that matter’**

<b>Predictor factor</b>	<b>Matters (at the 5% level) for Qs. no.</b>
Scope/ level of CSO	25g
Region	25a 25b 25d 26i 26k 26l 26m 26p
Category/ type of CSO	26m
Employees	25b 25h 26m 27g
Volunteers	25b 25d 25h 26i 27a 27g
Respondent position	27b
Length of collaboration	25e 27a 27c 27d 27e 27g 27h 27j 27k
Contract type	27c 27d 27f 27g 27h 27i 27j

## How these factors matter in UNICEF-CSO partnerships

Having identified which factors seem to matter in UNICEF-CSO partnerships, the next step in the analysis was to identify how they influenced CSO ratings of UNICEF.

To achieve this, for factors with fixed sub-categories (e.g. Scope of CSOs specifically referred to Global, Regional, National and Sub-National CSOs), one reference category was selected. For example, as related to scope, the most number of respondents were from National CSOs, so this was considered as the reference category and provided the baseline for analysis of the Scope factor. For factors with more open sub-categories, e.g. those with an "Other, please specify" option, the reference category was left open to reflect an organization that had not selected any of the pre-defined sub-categories. Within each factor significant differences in how the different sub-categories rated the statements on partnership with UNICEF were assessed.

To follow through on this example, Scope was found to matter (in terms of being significant at the 5 per cent level in F-tests) for only one rating statement, namely on whether UNICEF worked in an open and transparent manner. In other words, CSOs of different scope differ on how open and transparent they find UNICEF. To identify **how** scope of CSOs mattered in rating UNICEF partnerships, correlation coefficients and t-tests data was used. Here it was found that regional and global CSOs rate UNICEF significantly lower on the 'Open and transparent' criterion than did the reference category (National CSOs). However, the response of sub-national CSOs to this statement was not significantly different from that of National CSOs.

Similar analysis was carried out for the different organizational and partnership characteristics that could influence CSO ratings of UNICEF. Table 2 shows all the significant factors (at the 5 per cent level of significance) and whether they affected positive or negative ratings for each of the 27 rating statements (compiled from the CSP Survey Qs 25, 26, and 27).

**Table 2. CSOs rate their partnerships with UNICEF: Significant factors at the 5 per cent level of significance**

### 1. "We share common values"

*More likely to agree:*

Category: Professional association

*Less likely to agree:*

Region: ROSA

Region: CEE/CIS

Region: Europe

### 2. "UNICEF treats us as equals"

*More likely to agree:*

Category: Social welfare

Volunteers: More than 500

Respondent: Management

*Less likely to agree:*

Region: WCARO

Region: CEE/CIS

Region: Europe

Employees: More than 500

Contract: MOU

### 3. "We compete with UNICEF"

*More likely to agree:*

Category: Other

Employees: More than 500

Contract: MOU

*Less likely to agree:*

### 4. "UNICEF provides us with the information we need in good time"

*More likely to agree:*

Category: Social welfare

Volunteers: More than 500

*Less likely to agree:*

Scope: Regional CSO

Region: ESARO

Region: WCARO  
Region: CEE/CIS  
Region: Europe

**5. "UNICEF gives us sufficient time to provide information"**

*More likely to agree:*

Volunteers: More than 500

Length of collaboration: 6 - 10 years

Length of collaboration: 21 or more years

*Less likely to agree:*

Scope: Regional CSO

Region: CEE/CIS

**6. "UNICEF often changes its priorities and/or strategies"**

*More likely to agree:*

*Less likely to agree:*

Category: Social welfare

**7. "UNICEF works in an open and transparent manner"**

*More likely to agree:*

Category: Professional association

Category: Social welfare

*Less likely to agree:*

Scope: Global CSO

Scope: Regional CSO

Region: CEE/CIS

**8. "We trust each other"**

*More likely to agree:*

Category: Professional association

Category: Social welfare

Volunteers: More than 500

*Less likely to agree:*

Scope: Regional CSO

Region: WCARO

Region: CEE/CIS

Category: Other

**9. "We make the best of each other's strengths "**

*More likely to agree:*

Respondent: Management

*Less likely to agree:*

Region: CEE/CIS

Region: Europe

Volunteers: 101-500

**10. "There is a clear definition of expected results"**

*More likely to agree:*

Volunteers: More than 500

Respondent: Management

*Less likely to agree:*

Region: CEE/CIS

Region: Europe

**11. "Our respective responsibilities are clearly defined"**

*More likely to agree:*

Category: Professional association

*Less likely to agree:*

Region: CEE/CIS

Region: Europe

**12. "UNICEF takes the lead on bringing together partners and other key stakeholders"**

*More likely to agree:*

Volunteers: More than 500

*Less likely to agree:*

Region: CEE/CIS

Region: Europe

**13. "UNICEF gives us fair credit for results achieved"**

*More likely to agree:*

Region: North Am.

Employees: 11-25

Volunteers: More than 500

*Less likely to agree:*

Category: Youth organization

**14. "We are able to successfully negotiate differences between us "**

*More likely to agree:*

Category: Social welfare

Volunteers: More than 500

*Less likely to agree:*

Category: Youth organization

**15. "UNICEF deals with us in a consistent way (even when staff change)"**

*More likely to agree:*

Volunteers: More than 500

*Less likely to agree:*

Region: CEE/CIS

**16. "UNICEF is more concerned with project administration than with achieving outcomes"**

*More likely to agree:*

Scope: Global CSO

Region: MENA

Region: ESARO

*Less likely to agree:*

Respondent: Research/evaluation staff

**17. "Our technical capacity has improved"**

*More likely to agree:*

Volunteers: 11-25

Volunteers: 51-100

Length of collaboration: Less than 1 year

Length of collaboration: 1 - 5 years

Length of collaboration: 6 - 10 years

Length of collaboration: 11 - 20 years

Length of collaboration: 21 or more years

*Less likely to agree:*

Region: Europe

Respondent: Other

**18. "Trust has been eroded by UNICEF making promises it does not keep"**

*More likely to agree:*

Category: Child rights

Respondent: Programme/ Service delivery

Contract: MOU

*Less likely to agree:*

Volunteers: 51-100

Respondent: Communication/ PR

**19. "Our partnership has influenced new and/or improved policies on children's rights"**

*More likely to agree:*

Length of collaboration: 1 - 5 years

Length of collaboration: 6 - 10 years

Length of collaboration: 11 - 20 years

Length of collaboration: 21 or more years

Contract: MOU

Contract: PCA

Contract: No formal agreement

Contract: Don't know

*Less likely to agree:*

Respondent: Other

**20. "Accessibility of services for vulnerable and excluded children has improved"**

*More likely to agree:*

Region: EAPRO

Region: North Am.

Category: Academic/ research

Employees: 101-500

Length of collaboration: 1 - 5 years

Length of collaboration: 6 - 10 years

Length of collaboration: 11 - 20 years

Length of collaboration: 21 or more years

Contract: MOU

*Less likely to agree:*

Contract: No formal agreement

**21. "Because of UNICEF's caution our ability to speak out against violations of children's rights is sometimes restricted"**

*More likely to agree:*

Employees: 26-50

Volunteers: 11-25

Length of collaboration: Less than 1 year

Length of collaboration: 1 - 5 years

Length of collaboration: 6 - 10 years

Length of collaboration: 11 - 20 years

Length of collaboration: Do not know

*Less likely to agree:*

Respondent: Administration

**22. "We often have to change our priorities to match changes in UNICEF priorities"**

*More likely to agree:*

Employees: More than 500

Contract: MOU

Contract: PCA

Contract: No formal agreement

*Less likely to agree:*

**23. "We depend on UNICEF's funding for our work"**

*More likely to agree:*

Volunteers: None

Length of collaboration: Less than 1 year

Length of collaboration: 1 - 5 years

Length of collaboration: 6 - 10 years

Length of collaboration: 11 - 20 years

Contract: PCA

*Less likely to agree:*

Employees: 51-100

Employees: 101-500

**24. "Working with UNICEF creates a big administrative burden"**

*More likely to agree:*

Category: Foundation/ donor

Respondent: Other

Length of collaboration: 1 - 5 years

Length of collaboration: 11 - 20 years

Length of collaboration: Do not know

*Less likely to agree:*

**25. "Our organisational autonomy has decreased"**

*More likely to agree:*

*Less likely to agree:*

Region: ROSA

Contract: MOU

Contract: SSA

Contract: PCA

**26. "The positive impacts of this partnership will last into the future"**

*More likely to agree:*

*Less likely to agree:*

Respondent: Management

Length of collaboration: Less than 1 year

Length of collaboration: 1 - 5 years

Length of collaboration: 6 - 10 years

Length of collaboration: 11 - 20 years

Length of collaboration: 21 or more years

Contract: PCA

**27. "We are better at advocating for children's rights to government and UN agencies"**

*More likely to agree:*

*Less likely to agree:*

Category: Professional association

Category: Youth organization

Length of collaboration: 1 - 5 years

Length of collaboration: 6 - 10 years

Length of collaboration: 11 - 20 years

Contract: Small-scale Funding

Contract: No formal agreement

## ANNEX 4 Compendium Of Issues Explored With CSO Partners

(Questions were selected and framed/ tailored to specific interviews)

### General Data

Type of CSO: community-based, NGO, faith-based, media, academic, other.

Main focus of Activity: advocacy, awareness raising, service delivery, emergency, other.

Size of CSO: fewer than 10; 10-50; 51-100; 101-500; larger than 500.

Reach of CSO: local, national regional, international/global.

Range of Partnerships: with UNICEF, other UN agencies, bilaterals, government.

Regularity of Partnerships: once, occasionally, often, regularly.

Years Partnering with UNICEF: less than 1; 1-5; 6-10; 11-20; 21+.

### 1. Norms of partnership – what does ‘partnership’ mean?

How attractive is UNICEF as a partner:

- Given the costs and risks of partnering with it?
- Compared to options of partnering with other UN or bilateral agencies?

UNICEF defines partnerships, following the Secretary-General’s ‘Toward Global Partnership’ as “voluntary and collaborative relationships in which all parties agree to work together to achieve a common purpose or undertake a specific task and to share risks, responsibilities, resources, competencies and benefits.”

- How closely does this description reflect your understanding of what a partnership should be?
- How closely does it reflect your partnership experience with UNICEF, or that of others you know?
- In which aspects is it particularly apt or does it fall short?

UNICEF official policy supports three broad sets of partnership principles:

**Core:** common values, share decision-making, transparency, mutual trust, respect for comparative advantage, shared risk-taking.

**Operational:** mutual accountability, fair attribution of credit for results, mutual understanding of operational procedures, shared investment of resources (money, people) ongoing dialogue, joint monitoring and evaluation

**Management:** consistency of commitment to standards and principles across the organization, constancy of involvement.

- Do these principles reflect your organization’s principles of action? Are some missing?
- Are they more and/or less relevant to different types of partners and partnerships?
- Have these principles generally been applied in your experience with/knowledge of partnership with UNICEF?
- In which aspects are they particularly well reflected and where have they been limited?

According to the UNICEF 2002-2005 MTSP, the importance of partnerships lies in their ability to foster “shared success” and “realize results beyond the ability of either organization alone,” based on common interest and effective use of comparative strengths.

- Based on your own partnership with UNICEF – or what you know of its partnerships with other CSOs -- how effectively is it enabling these expectations?

### 2. Realizing global priorities for children

The expectation is that UNICEF partnerships with CSOs will provide both parties a stronger platform for leveraging resources and realizing the goals of the GMC, Millennium Declaration, CRC, Global Campaign against HIV/AIDS etc.

- In terms of your own focus area and your knowledge/experience of partnerships with UNICEF, is this proving to be the case?
- How effective is UNICEF in serving its CSO partners as an information centre and/or knowledge-broker?
- How effective is UNICEF at helping to generate and consolidate innovative partnering arrangements (advocacy and operational)?

Earlier consultations indicate that CSOs look to UNICEF for intellectual and moral leadership in terms of strategies and systems for ensuring children's rights and development, and for speaking out on their behalf

- In your experience and knowledge, as a partner and in your particular focus area, is UNICEF adequately living up to these expectations in moving the agenda for children forward?
- Has UNICEF been appropriately 'risk aware' in generating and reporting information on the situation of children, or overly 'risk-averse' in letting others do it?

At country, regional and global levels, within the general GMC and WFFC frameworks and more focused instruments of the MDGs, EFA, Children Affected by War and HIV/AIDS, is there evidence that UNICEF-CSO partnerships are having a meaningful (sustainable, systemic) impact on the situation of children through international commitments, policy development, institutional reform, legal protections and application of pro-child regulations, social mobilization etc?

- Is this true of your partnership or of others you know about?

### 3. Engagement of equals – core principles

Is UNICEF sufficiently proactive in its outreach to new or, perhaps, contentious civil society organizations who might bring a different and challenging 'take' on the MDG/CRC agendas?

- At all levels (global alliances, national NGOs, CBOs), and with respect to your own partnership, does UNICEF stay too much with the tried and true organizations that can demonstrate they share the values of UNICEF as 'reflected in its Mission statement', that are 'in line with its own standards', that fit into its Country Programme Action Plan?
- Is it more inclusive of diversity in some themes/sectors than others? And is this to good effect?

Do partnerships with UNICEF reflect equally the priorities of both its own MTSP and of its partners?

- Is UNICEF sufficiently clear and open about its agenda and priorities in framing and managing the partnership with your organization or others?
- To what extent do the UNICEF guidelines for partnership development and management, or the application of the guidelines, enable your organization/other CSO partners to realize its own priorities with respect to children, versus playing a more ancillary or service provider role?
- Are partnership arrangements, including your own, long-term enough to enable building a relationship versus simply executing a task? From your perspective as a CSO, does it matter?
- To what extent would you agree with the criticism that UNICEF treats partnerships too much as business relationships, using criteria of selection and management better suited to contracting than collaborating?
- Although perhaps counterintuitive: do partnerships work better where they are **not** too closely aligned with either of the partners' core priorities, but reflect a 'third' set that complements each, **and** moves both to a different, better level?

UNICEF has a range of legal instruments regulating its partnership arrangements: those involving no fund transfers (MOU confirming a common understanding or declared agreement on intent), those involving payment for goods or services (Special Service, Project Cooperation Agreements), and small-scale funding support to enable outreach to marginalized communities with reduced burden on fragile CSOs).

- Which, if any, of these instruments have been used in the case of your partnership with UNICEF

- How has it worked to facilitate, or impede, the broader substantive objectives of the relationship?
- Where were the problems reflected: in the logic/rationale of the instrument itself, in the paperwork involved, in the way it was managed?
- Were problems serious enough to dissuade a future formal partnership?
- What in your experience or knowledge has been the effect of these instruments on weaker CSOs: good in developing their management capacity; negative in over-burdening their ability to implement the substance of the partnership?

Given the often fairly loose ties that bind a partnership arrangement, especially ones that are not strictly service contracts, the quality and effectiveness of the relationship will be better the more closely shared and explicit the goal, role and responsibility expectations of each side are. This is often especially the case where smaller CSOs might be looking for strengthening themselves as development or child rights organizations.

- Based on your partnership experience with UNICEF, or your knowledge of others', is sufficient explicit attention given to clarifying and negotiating agreement on the respective expectations of the partners?
- Is this equally the case in terms of both financial and product delivery obligations as well as non-material aspects of the relationship – especially those involving capacity development and input to UNICEF policy?
- Have UNICEF and partner expectations for monitoring, reporting and following up with governments on CRC abuses been clearly expressed, agreed and met?

Based on your experience and knowledge, are UNICEF's criteria for CSO partnership selection at varying levels adequate and appropriate (clearly defined, fair, consistently and transparently applied across different circumstances and sectors)?

- Especially for criteria related to capacity, reach and sustainability, is their application sufficiently monitored to verify their relevance and appropriateness to the situation, to UNICEF and partner expectations, to the task as it evolved?
- Is UNICEF able to make adjustments to the partnership arrangement where indicated?

Continuous and collaborative results-oriented monitoring and evaluation (M and E), aimed at enabling learning and adaptation, are considered to be critical to effective partnering – to creating a shared culture of mutually agreed goals and values and building the capacities of each partner.

- Is such M and E characteristic of your partnership experience with UNICEF?
- What were the major enablers and/or impediments to such systems or processes?
- What was the effect of the partnership being strong or weak in this regard in terms of both building the relationship and realizing the expected outcomes?

#### **4. Effective and efficient implementation - management principles**

UNICEF-CSO partnerships take on many forms, functions and contractual obligations. How would you define yours in terms of the following:

- Collaboration.
- Cooperation.
- Working arrangement – non-monetary.
- Working arrangement – fees for service.

UNICEF-CSO partnerships operate in uncertain, dynamic and often high-risk development or emergency environments; they will realize progressive and relevant results the better they are able to recognize and be flexible in accommodating each others' needs, limitations, resource bases and competing demands.

- In the experience of your own partnership with UNICEF, or your knowledge of others', how consistent with the realities and demands of each partner are their designs, decision-making processes, programme delivery procedures, and arrangement methods ?

- How well has the partnership accounted for, removed or managed barriers to your or others' participation from the wider social, political or institutional environment?
- Have you felt part of the governance of the partnership, on your own or through UNICEF's encouragement?
- Have the outcome expectations of the partnership and your respective roles and responsibilities been clear enough to allow you to assume decision-making over the directions taken?

Partnerships, as essentially social arrangements, will realize better results according to the extent to which partners perceive the human resources, time and financial costs of the relationship (direct and opportunity) are reasonable and fair given the outcomes being realized.

- In the experience of your own partnership with UNICEF, or your knowledge of others', how accurately were the respective capacities and resources of the organizations assessed in terms of being able to implement the tasks and realize the objectives of the partnership?
- Where capacities were lacking, especially from your side, did UNICEF provide the right and sufficient resources to create them?
- Was appropriate and full use made of the ideas and experience you brought to the partnership?
- Do you agree that the varying risks of partner participation had been well-calculated and were being mitigated, especially for more vulnerable partners?
- Did all partners consider the relationship to be worth the effort and risks involved, allowing that these costs relative to benefit may be different for each of them?

Transparency and shared accountability are fundamental partnership principles. Here, too, managing for and through results requires policies, procedures and tracking systems that ensure partner accountability and protect them and target communities - and especially children as typically most at risk from ill-considered or ineffective intervention.

- Did the partnership include adequate and culturally sensitive mechanisms to monitor, assess and adapt its activities and interventions towards managing for effective, sustained results?
- Has responsibility for managing, reporting on and taking corrective action been equitably shared and applied?

## **5. Realizing sustainable rights and development of children**

Ultimately, UNICEF-CSO partnerships are successful where they contribute to realizing the rights and development of all children in the long term; in their progressive outcomes with respect both to immediate changes in the conditions and status of children, and to sustainable changes in the new learning of duty bearers, more inclusive and effective policy-making systems and child-friendly policy, and strengthened public and civil society institutions for governance, programme development and service delivery.

- In terms of your organization, have you looked at the partnership with UNICEF as an end in itself (e.g. creating a good, perhaps lasting, relationship was the main expected result) or a means to an end (e.g. the quality of the relationship is important only to the extent that it helps move the CSO/MDG agenda forward, this being the core expected result)? In either case, have your expected results been realized?
- What have been the major results (changes in knowledge, attitudes, behaviour, policy) produced through your organization's partnership with UNICEF, and based on your knowledge of others' partnerships?
- How comprehensive have these changes been – how deep into systems and institutions; how broad has been the reach to the wider policy forums and communities of practice?
- How effective is UNICEF at exercising a convening role in bringing its CSO partners together, within or across sectors/issues, to broaden the base and strengthen the voice of/for children in a more sustainable way (e.g. helping create a new social philosophy like the Child-Friendly Movement in the Philippines)?

## ANNEX 5 Country Contexts

UNICEF-CSO partnerships in the Philippines tended to focus on protection; in Egypt, they were more mixed. CSOs in both countries, however, were active across all CRC-related sectors. Not surprisingly, the stronger CSOs, those with broad national reach, concentrated in the larger urban centres; smaller community-based groups (CBOs) in the more remote and marginalized areas. However, the increasing emphasis on networking among many of them was enhancing the viability of even the more fragile CBOs and, importantly for UNICEF in attempting to link local application to national policy, extending their programme and advocacy impact.

Most UNICEF-CSO partnerships in Egypt and the Philippines had developed organically, built over time through consistent, though not necessarily constant, association. Relatively rarely was there something that could be called a partnership 'project'. In both countries, previous professional connections were important enabling factors; for none was the basis of the relationship considered to be its funding arrangement. Even in relatively straightforward cases, a grantee and a contracted analyst in Cairo, for example, the motivating factors were a sense of shared enterprise; a common commitment to children/youth; and staying 'in touch' professionally.

The challenge for UNICEF in both of these countries continued to be how best to establish new types of alliances that can move some of these initiatives to wider scale, open others to fill particular strategic gaps and continue to mature current linkages.

In Zimbabwe, UNICEF-CSO partnerships faced several challenges. Social and economic development conditions were rapidly deteriorating. There was high unemployment, inflation was at around 600 per cent and during this Review, WHO published the finding that people in Zimbabwe had among the lowest life expectancy in the world – 34 years for women and 37 for men (WHO, 2006). However, on the plus side, education continued to be highly valued; a strong focus of UNICEF-CSO partnerships. School enrolment rates had been maintained at 97 per cent with gender parity. There was also no increase in HIV/AIDS prevalence, though the burden of the disease for children affected by HIV/AIDS remained high (UNICEF 2005/i) – another priority area for UNICEF-CSO partnerships.

In Mindanao, CSOs “played catalytic roles in the ongoing post-conflict transformation”, their “knowledge and experience of the area was critical to peace-building efforts given the complex ethnic, religious and political realities... a rich source of political analysis that sharpened the UN’s understanding of the political context and strengthened its capacity to provide sound advice on strategies for peace and development.”

UNDP. 2003: 60

As a further challenge, the current political climate meant that service and technically oriented CSOs operated relatively freely, but groups involved in rights and governance issues were finding it difficult to do their work. UNICEF often played an intermediary role between the government and CSO partners, including helping to register CSOs. Donors had diverted funds from the government to UN agencies, which had in turn channelled them through intermediary coordinating NGOs and on to smaller community-based organizations. However, it remained unclear whether CSOs had the capacity to meet these growing demands for service delivery and whether the administrative and coordinating processes for UNICEF-CSO partnerships were up to the challenge.<sup>64</sup>

The challenges facing UNICEF-CSO partnerships in Liberia were different, centred on issues of a country moving from war to peace. During the war there had been a sense that UNICEF and local CSOs 'held the fort' for children – with regard, for example, to Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) coverage, response to measles and yellow fever outbreaks, child friendly spaces in IDP camps and child protection. CSOs continued to provide over 90% of basic services at the time of this Review.

<sup>64</sup> The Operation Murambatsvina example noted in Section VII suggests they do and are not.

Liberia continued to struggle with infrastructure and very few material and systems resources; there was no electricity supply or running water in the entire country. Schools and hospitals had to be built or rebuilt; there were only 35 medical doctors for a population of over 3 million. The tensions that led to the war had not completely dissipated. At the time of this Review, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Liberia was still being set up; ex-president and warlord Charles Taylor had just been apprehended in Nigeria to be tried for war crimes; and tensions fomenting in neighbouring countries e.g. Guinea, threatened to spill over into Liberia.

However, there was also considerable optimism, and high expectations of the newly elected government of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf – Africa’s first elected woman president. Although there was a concomitant proliferation of agencies and agendas, donor commitments were increasing. Citizens and CSOs in Liberia continued to hope that the UN system and donor community would ‘get it right’ in taking a comprehensive (cross-border) approach to peace building and a long-term and sustainable approach to aiding the country’s development.

Moving forward, what should be the role of CSOs in Liberia? Driving the change process? Providing basic services while the government regulates? Providing checks and balances to government services? Following UNICEF (and other agency) guidelines for structure as we come out of the war? Advocating and promoting communities’ interests? ... Who will pay for all this? It has to be up to the country to decide, but we all need to discuss and plan...

CSO respondents in Liberia

## ANNEX 6 Partnership Results

One expected product of this Review is “a credible analysis of CSO partner perceptions of the results of their partnering experience with UNICEF.” The table below presents an indicative range of these perceived outcomes, all attributed by respondents to their partnership with UNICEF. The results displayed here apply to several types of changes:

- a) Type of change: In knowledge and capacity (what people know and do), in services and products available to support children, and in UNICEF and CSO capacities to provide these services and support (as a result of the partnership experience).
- b) Levels of change: At the level of national or global policy, of operations and institutions, and of individuals and communities.
- c) Areas of UNICEF priority: e.g., CRC policy/advocacy, child protection, child survival and development, basic education.

Several points are important to note here:

- Results statements generated through country case interviews and survey data could not, for the most part, be corroborated by results of UNICEF-CSO partnerships explicitly assessed or documented by UNICEF itself. As indicated earlier, comprehensive and systematically collected results-based data and the analyses of partnership outcomes were not generally available through Country Offices, or in UNICEF overall. Reports typically focused on inputs and completed activities. Evidenced-based outcome monitoring remains a critical challenge for both UNICEF and its partners.
- While not diminishing their validity, the lack of systematically collected data on results and corroborating evidence makes it difficult to track logic models and results chains. Results chains show the cumulative realization of progressively stronger, more sustainable change over time and as partners become more capable advocates and implementers through experience. The concept of a results chain is important in advocacy and development interventions because changes in these areas are incremental, particularly in the context of the progressive realization of children’s rights. Partners should not be discouraged by gradual or unexpected results, but they should be able to trace, learn from, adapt and build on them.
- At the same time, it is important that, in their partnerships, UNICEF and CSOs have a shared understanding of expected results, especially with regard to tracking CRC- or MDG-related progress. For example, does UNICEF expect a trickle down effect, with changes at international level translating eventually into regional, national and finally community change? Do CSOs, on the other hand, take a more grounded perspective requiring gaps and problems identified through CRC or other monitoring processes to be addressed through a range of changes at local, national and global levels? Analyses of CRC results monitoring and impact assessment are critical to knowing exactly what is expected, on what authority and leading to what definable ends, for example whether changes for children and to their status are actually happening.

Looking at results in terms of levels is useful in trying to determine if they are happening in the expected places, what the gaps are and their likely sustainability. UNICEF needs ultimately to realize results at policy and global levels as an international organization. Partnering with CSOs provides it the opportunity to reach local communities. CSO partners, on the other hand, need to realize changes at community or sub-national level. Their partnership with UNICEF enables them to reach beyond this, to realize broader reach/impact on institutions e.g. Ministries and policy levels. Results should, therefore, be appearing at all three levels.

**UNICEF-CSO partnership results by focus area and impact level**

<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Policy level: international or national policy systems</b>	<b>Operations &amp; institutional level: processes, programs/ projects</b>	<b>Community &amp; individual level: development and Rights outcomes</b>
<b>Child Protection</b>	<p>Regulatory changes in treatment of children in the justice system (Philippines).</p> <p>New or improved polices on children's rights" (50% on survey respondents)</p> <p>Changed laws on the age of marriage to 18 and definition of rape (Liberia)</p> <p>Changed inheritance law so women can inherit (Liberia)</p>	<p>Child-friendly barangay (village) with community management, institutionalized in local government (Philippines)</p> <p>Free legal clinics for birth registration, rape reporting (Liberia, Zimbabwe)</p> <p>Improved accessibility of services for vulnerable/excluded children (40% on survey)</p>	<p>New understanding of 'street children' and increased community responsibility (Egypt)</p> <p>Improved community awareness on FGM/C (Egypt)</p> <p>Safe homes and skills training for children affected by fighting forces in Liberia</p> <p>Through a support centre for at-risk children, rehabilitation and reconciliation of children with their families in Zimbabwe</p>
<b>Child Development and Survival</b>	<p>Egypt being declared 'polio-free'</p>	<p>Accessibility of services for vulnerable and excluded children had improved (40% on survey)</p> <p>Malaria control programmes initiated</p> <p>Training to reduce maternal and infant mortality courses and kits for community midwives and clinic staff (Liberia)</p>	<p>Improvements in children's nutritional status through setting up nutrition rehabilitation centres (Liberia)</p> <p>EPI coverage maintained through war (Liberia)</p> <p>Community-based committees for education, health set up (Zimbabwe)</p>
<b>Policy and advocacy (especially for CRC)</b>	<p>Influenced new/ improved polices on child rights (50% on survey)</p>	<p>Established National Child Rights Observatory Group (Liberia)</p>	<p>Election monitoring successfully conducted (Liberia)</p>
<b>Basic education and gender equity</b>		<p>Schools rebuilt and back to school campaigns conducted (Liberia)</p> <p>Girls and vulnerable children retained in school through sponsorships, accelerated learning and school reintegration programmes (Liberia, Zimbabwe)</p>	<p>85% primary and 60% secondary enrolment of internally displaced children in MOE and NGO-run schools (Caucasus)</p> <p>97% school enrolment maintained with gender parity, despite deteriorating socio-economic conditions (Zimbabwe)</p>

<b>Children affected by HIV/AIDS</b>	National Action Plan and budget set (Zimbabwe)		Youth groups established and ongoing activities for HIV/AIDS prevention, awareness raising (Zimbabwe)  Home-based care programmes and household herb, maize and vegetable gardens for families affected by HIV/AIDS (Zimbabwe)
<b>Emergency/ Conflict Transition</b>		UNICEF increased stability to operate in crisis and a stronger basis for the period of transition (Haiti)  UNICEF Zimbabwe sets up fuel depot to maintain service delivery and support other UN agency work (Zimbabwe)	Communities trained in monitoring programmes to prevent recruitment of children to armed forces, in early warning for conflict prevention and in conflict resolution methods in Liberia
<b>Water, sanitation, environment</b>		Mapping Atlas of all WES activity via Dev Info (Zimbabwe)	Community-based wells constructed, with replicable model (Egypt)  Research-generated low-cost technologies e.g. Eco-san (Zimbabwe)
<b>Strengthening CSOs as a community of CRC practice</b>	Galvanized various CSO efforts around children in the justice system	Improved criteria, standards, manuals for CSO work on the CRC  Stronger collaboration and lobbying: CSO with government, UN agencies, INGOs, bilaterals  Increased success mobilizing international private and public funding  Better advocates for child rights to government and UN agencies (40% on survey)  CSO registration facilitated	Increased 'positive face', recognition of the CBO  Increased CSO awareness of child rights issues  Stronger sense of social responsibility and community development skills of Boy Scout volunteers  Log frame planning, accounting methods of CSOs improved "our discipline as organizations"  Technical capacity of CSOs improved (40% on survey)  Reduced scepticism about CSO-government collaboration among communities



## **ANNEX 7 Best Practices in Making Partnerships Work**

**Balloch, Susan, and Marilyn Taylor, 'Partnership Working: Policy and Practice', Bristol: The Policy Press, 2002.**

Research highlights that partnerships can face problems at political, cultural and technical levels that need to be addressed for partnerships to work effectively.

1. Firstly, partnerships largely leave existing power relationships intact:

- Partnerships are dominated by more powerful partners and may not 'deliver' for others, especially for communities and service users. The rules of the game are determined by the big players, with others legitimizing rather than making decisions.
- Partnerships often remain at the margins of organizational processes and there are uneven resources available to different partners.
- Smaller partners from the voluntary, community and business sectors simply do not have the resources to engage effectively in partnerships, especially if they are there to represent large and diverse communities.
- Smaller partners do not have the back up that other partners take for granted and time spent at the partnership takes them away from their constituencies and frontline work. Their infrastructure is fragile, insecure and stretched to capacity by the demands of partnership. In a sense smaller groups are set up to fail.
- There are also inevitable issues about the funding relationship in partnerships – and smaller groups are usually dependent on funding and may not feel like equals in the partnership.

2. Secondly, public service cultures need to be transformed if agencies are to work effectively with each other and with those they are supposed to benefit. Public bureaucracies have not been designed for this type of working in the past and public sector workers have not been rewarded for this. There are genuine difficulties in breaking down existing cultures and working in new ways and this takes time and investment.

Specific areas of change for partnership working include:

- New incentive structures to work in partnership.
- Involving people who can work with change (rather than against it).
- Spreading rather than protecting knowledge (agencies can be protective of their own data sources, there are confidentiality issues etc.).
- Working creatively with diversity and conflict (recognise the unique nature and role of civil society ...not extensions of larger organizations and bureaucracies).
- Learning to handle risks.

3. Thirdly, partnership presents major structural, technical and managerial challenges, requiring new information and communication systems, new budgeting systems and new approaches to handling multiple accountabilities, for example:

- Not sharing a physical location prevents the face-to-face communication often required to develop a shared culture.

**Blagescu, Monica, and John Young, 'Partnerships and Accountability: Current Thinking and Approaches Among Agencies Supporting Civil Society Organizations', Working Paper 255. ODI/UK, 2005.**

## Key questions for equitable and accountable partnerships

### Access to timely and accurate information:

- How do partners share information?
- What type of information is provided? Where and when is it made available?
- Do all partners and relevant stakeholders have access to it?

### Terms of engagement:

- Are the terms on which the partnership is to be undertaken clearly understood by all parties?
- What are the objectives, strategies and expected outcomes of the partnership?
- Are the parameters of what is subject to negotiation (and what is not) clearly defined and understood?
- Do all partners have a say in decision making, particularly to ensure that needs are met and capacities used in the most fruitful way?
- How will the partnerships be formalized?
- How do partners share responsibility and profits?
- Are partners open to scrutiny and willing to revise the terms of engagement? Is there a mechanism in place for this?
- How can other potential partners initiate engagement?

### Legitimacy of engagement/partnership:

- How are partners selected?
- What process is used to ensure legitimacy and accountability of partners to their own stakeholders? (Is there a process to verify that partners represent the interests of those they claim to speak on behalf of?)
- What review process is in place to ensure the competence of the partners?
- Is there a process in place to ensure the commitment of the various partners?

### Procedural review and evaluation mechanisms:

- What mechanisms exist for partners who have a grievance regarding the engagement process?
- What mechanisms are in place to monitor and evaluate the partnership and its impact?
- What processes are in place to ensure correction/improvement?

**Garza, Hector, 'Evaluating Partnerships: Seven Success Factors', *The Evaluation Exchange*, Volume XI Number 1, Harvard Family Research Project, Cambridge, Mass., Spring 2005.**

### **1. Institutional Partners That Link to the Goal**

The number of partners in a partnership is not a measure of success. Rather, the more important question is who is in the partnership and what role does each partner play in terms of accomplishing the overall goal...who is represented, why they are represented, the role they play, and their level of effectiveness.

### **2. Evolving Structure and Partners**

... how the partnership's structure and membership change over time. We expect the partnership to evolve; if we do not see changes, we suspect something is wrong....(To) create change within a partnership, flexibility must be exercised—effective partnerships require the trust and confidence that will allow partners to come and go as needed.

### **3. Leadership in Key Positions**

....consider its leadership and whether that person or group is in the best position to lead effectively and with adequate authority.... to keep momentum and energy going and provide the glue needed for the partnership to accomplish its work.

#### **4. Inclusive Decision Making**

...see whether the partnership is working as a team to make critical decisions. We find that partners very quickly become disenfranchised, disengaged, and uninterested if they feel the same individuals are always making all of the decisions.... Ensuring that the partnership stresses communication and decision making on equal footing is extremely important.

#### **5. Appropriate Governance Structure**

While it is difficult to point to any single governance structure as the 'right' model—that depends on the partnership's goal—determining whether the governance structure is working is an important factor.... While inclusiveness is important, the governance structure of any partnership must be examined to determine whether it functions effectively for the purpose at hand.

#### **6. Mutually Beneficial Interactions**

Partnerships, especially those with diverse partners, should feature mutually beneficial relationships. Partners should interact in ways that benefit individuals and their organizations, as well as contribute to the partnership's overall goal.... Partnerships should feature this type of strategic intersection.

#### **7. Decision Making Based on Data**

...see that partnerships are using data to make strategic decisions and wise investments. In all partnerships, assessment and evaluation are important—not only to measure impact but also to help ensure that partnerships are both sustainable and strategic in reaching their programme goals.... Data are critically important in all partnership work, and, to the extent possible, should be at the centre of all decision making.

### **IIRR, 'Research Partnerships: Issues and Lessons from Collaborations of NGOs and Agricultural Research Institutions', IIRR, the Philippines, 1999.**

**External environment:** undertake explicit joint effort to influence policies with respect to the focus issues; engage in macro-policy discussions and decision-making.

**Institutional environment:** establish forums for information and resource exchange; provide space for initiation phase.

**Design and planning of project:** focus design around role complementarity; plan for the longer-term, but starting small and building gradually into something more sustainable (avoid being over-ambitious); share decisions, resources; design an organic structure, not with an overlay of hierarchy; implement through an expressly team approach.

**Funding:** joint decisions and transparency in use; share risks; ensure core funding and invest for the longer-term; demand and value in-kind and community contributions.

**Implementation:** focus on building capacities rather than technical or information transfer; ensure room/mechanisms for feedback from/to users; share credit and responsibilities; invest in communication between partners; document outputs/processes of partnership; take a collaborative learning approach.

**Evaluation:** design monitoring and evaluation system together, including indicators for task and partnership; monitor and evaluate together and continually; "embrace error and learn from mistakes."

Lamontagne, G., 'Principles for the Development of an Operational Partnership Model', Evaluation Division, Policy Branch, CIDA/Hull, 1990.

### **Characteristics of Successful/Good Partnership:**

“...based on the mutual trust and respect of the partners. From the outset, partners must define both the strong points and the weak points they bring to the relationship and work together in the establishment of beneficial progress” (4)

“A set of objectives, strategies agreed on in advance by the partners, and values that coincide fairly closely....A feeling of solidarity ...” ( 5)

“A clear and precise definition of the role and responsibilities of each partner at the outset”( 5)

“Provision for adequate management capability and administrative, financial and institutional resources is a precondition...” ( 5)

“...partners equitably and actively involved throughout all aspects of the project ... [making] it possible to develop the necessary skills to continue the activities once the external assistance ends and promotes a partner’s feeling of proprietorship ...” ( 5)

“Participation of southern partners in the work of the boards of directors and the project selection process of the northern partners...especially in places where the partner’s direction and policy are being decided” ( 6) [these last in relation to agencies linked in a donor project, not where the donor purports to be a partner; but the same principle presumably holds.]

“...accountable to each other at all levels .... the boundaries between donors and beneficiaries are blurred and planning and decision-making are shared responsibilities.” ( 6)

“...designed to meet the real needs reflecting the various environments in which the developing country partners are to be found.” ( 6)

“Willingness and capacity to finance and facilitate the institutional strengthening of the partner. Human resource development is of fundamental importance ....the full and comprehensive integration of women...” ( 7)

“Flexibility in performance, particularly in timetables” ( 7)

“Knowledge of the local context and willingness to adapt to local conditions.” (7)

“...mutual transfer of skills in the professional, technical and educational fields. It is a learning process (in which) each partner learns something.” ( 8)

“...enables partners to exchange new ways of doing things, to develop new techniques, to acquire experience, working in a different environment and with different people ... to allow technology transfers adapted to the needs of the partners” ( 8)

“ Partners are increasingly committing themselves for the long term.” ( 8)

“A renewable contract that evolves over time. The situation existing at the outset of the relationship is transformed by the experiences and lessons that are acquired into a more mature relationship....” ( 8)

“...enables information and experience to be shared at a more comprehensive level .... a combination of partners who exchange with other groups at the regional and international level.” ( 8)

### **Swiss Commission for Research Partnership with Developing Countries (KFPE), 'Guidelines for Research in Partnership with Developing Countries: 11 Principles', 1998.**

NB all of these deal specifically with research partnerships. The quotes have been edited slightly to make them more generic to partnerships overall.

### **1. Decide on the objectives together:**

...decided upon and the project developed in discussion between all the partners, including the people who will eventually use the results, who should be actively involved in the work as far as this is possible, and to the extent that is feasible for them.... Since the problems to be tackled are usually so complex, a form of collaboration will be needed that promotes trans-disciplinarity and holistic thinking. Such collaboration is most likely to find appropriate answers to socially significant problems. (page 9)

### **2. Build up mutual trust:**

Without mutual trust, cooperative work can hardly be imagined. The creation of trust between partners who may be very different requires time and patience, and considerable ability to put oneself in another's place. Prejudices must be got rid of, and a framework must be created that will stimulate the desire for an honest and open [programme] collaboration ..... It is a good idea to analyse the earlier collaboration carefully, and characterise all the partners as objectively as possible. It is also important to look at how they are embedded in their social, institutional, political and economic framework. This helps to avoid false assessments and exaggerated expectations, and makes it easier to take action quickly to avoid negative consequences.... It is worth considering short-term exchange visits so that [partners] can get to know each other in a working situation before beginning formal collaboration. (page 10)

### **3. Share information; develop networks:**

A well-functioning communication system is decisive for satisfactory collaboration between partners who are often far apart geographically. It is vital to be able to exchange information regularly and comprehensively – to set up a functioning «network». But in addition, since there is often a considerable «cultural distance» between the partners, it is necessary for them to adjust their ways of thinking and expressing themselves so that they can come closer to each other. Without both of these, effective coordination is impossible. Ideally, all partners should have a comparable level of information and knowledge about the joint (programme or project) activities and the environment in which they are being carried out. This means – especially for the partners in the South – being linked to regional and international information networks. (page 12)

### **4. Share responsibility**

Both the (substantive) and the technical leadership and management responsibility for the project should be carried as far as possible by all the partners, taking into consideration the competence and the resources of each. If all the partners are included at all levels of the project, they will identify more strongly with (its) activities. Experience has shown that a project is very often perceived as belonging exclusively to the Northern partners; in the long run, this makes it difficult for the Southern partners to identify with the activities. If all partners are involved in administration, it also gives those with less experience the opportunity to gain expertise in (programme) management. (page 13)

### **5. Create transparency:**

If all the partners contribute to the resources needed for the planned project their commitment to the common enterprise will be strengthened. The worth of contributions made in forms other than money must be appropriately acknowledged. To satisfy the need for transparency, the source and amount of all resources, especially money, and the way they have been used, must be declared openly to all partners. Financial decisions should as far as possible be taken by all the partners together– and the amount of material support given should not be the basis for allowing some partners a stronger voice in decision-making than others. (page 14)

### **6. Monitor and evaluate the collaboration:**

Both the progress of the [programme] and the development and functioning of the partnership, should be continuously monitored. Furthermore, there should be regular internal or external evaluations, which should assess as accurately as possible how successful (or unsuccessful) the project has been from the point of view of partnership in all its aspects: management, communication, decision-making, implementation, improvement of the capacities of all partners, etc. (page 15)

## **7. Disseminate the results:**

Care must therefore be taken that all partners can take part to the proper extent in the dissemination of the results.... Since [development] projects in partnership between industrialised and developing countries are very often directed towards concrete problems, care should be taken that the results ... are also communicated adequately to the people who will finally use them. This will smooth the way for putting the results into practice with the active participation of the local community. (page 16)

## **8. Apply the results:**

... partnership between developing and industrialised countries often claims that it is related to real life and is concerned, at least to some extent, with the problems of disadvantaged communities. Partnership projects thus raise expectations among the partners from the developing country and in the community. But these hopes are often disappointed – for example, very often the [external actors] fail to come back to the place where they carried out [fieldwork], even to say what they found – let alone to help with putting the results to use. It is not enough to disseminate the results, however good the format is. As far as it can, the [external project] team has an obligation to ensure that the results are really used to benefit the target group. (page 17)

## **9. Share profits equitably**

... results have intellectual worth, and may also have a commercial value. All partners should share equally in the benefits of both. A very frequent complaint of partners from developing countries – and without a doubt one that is often justified – is that partners from industrialised countries have published results under their own names that were the results of collaborative work (and have then held the copyright), or have even benefited financially (taking out patents). This should not be allowed to happen. (page 18)

## **10. Increase (development) capacity:**

.....the chief concern when ... partnerships are formed is to strengthen the total capacity of all those involved ... both on the individual and on the institutional level. In this process, the different personal and institutional backgrounds and possibilities must be taken into account. (page 19)

## **11. Build on the achievements:**

The new knowledge and insights that have been obtained as a result of the joint efforts of all the partners must not be lost when the project comes to an end. If this happens, all the investment of energy, time and money will be wasted. If a project is successful there should be at least three valuable outcomes: new knowledge, a contribution to sustainable development, and new or more highly developed ...capacities. This last is particularly important..... If newly-developed (sector or development) capacity is to be maintained two things are needed. Existing institutions must continue to thrive, or new ones must be founded, and the people who worked in the project must be able to find suitable jobs under acceptable conditions. (page 20)

FindLaw, *Creating a Partnership Agreement* Accessed February 18/06,. <http://smallbusiness.findlaw.com>

The following points are taken from a law website providing advice to private sector/small business on setting up partnership agreements, and this orientation is reflected in the specific issues and language used. In this sense, they are not entirely suited to UNICEF-CSO partnerships, but merit consideration as a checklist of issues that could be considered in drawing up a partnership agreement.

## What to Include in Your Partnership Agreement

**Name of the partnership.** One of the first things you must do is agree on a name for your partnership. If you choose a fictitious name, you must make sure that the name isn't already in use.

**Contributions to the partnership.** It's critical that you and your partners work out and record who's going to contribute cash, property, or services to the business before it opens – and what ownership percentage each partner will have. Disagreements over contributions have doomed many promising businesses.

**Allocation of profits, losses, and draws.** Will profits and losses be allocated in proportion to a partner's percentage interest in the business? And will each partner be entitled to a regular draw (a withdrawal of allocated profits from the business) or will all profits be distributed at the end of each year? You and your partners may have different ideas about how the money should be divided up and distributed, and each of you will have different financial needs, so this is an area to which you should pay particular attention.

**Partners' authority.** Without an agreement to the contrary, any partner can bind the partnership without the consent of the other partners. If you want one or all of the partners to obtain the others' consent before binding the partnership, you must make this clear in your partnership agreement.

**Partnership decision making.** Although there's no magic formula or language for divvying up decisions among partners, you'll head off a lot of trouble if you try to work it out beforehand. You may, for example, want to require a unanimous vote of all the partners for every business decision. Or if that leaves you feeling fettered, you can require a unanimous vote for major decisions and allow individual partners to make minor decisions on their own. In that case, your partnership agreement will have to describe what constitutes a major or minor decision. You should carefully think through issues like these when setting up the decision-making process for your business.

**Management duties.** You might not want to make ironclad rules about every management detail, but you'd be wise to work out some guidelines in advance. For example, who will keep the books? Who will deal with customers? Supervise employees? Negotiate with suppliers? Think through the management needs of your partnership and be sure you've got everything covered.

**Admitting new partners.** Eventually, you may want to expand the business and bring in new partners. Agreeing on a procedure for admitting new partners will make your lives a lot easier when this issue comes up.

**Withdrawal of a partner.** At least as important as the rules for admitting new partners to the business are the rules for handling the departure of an owner. You should set up a reasonable buy out scheme in your partnership agreement.

**Resolving disputes.** If you and your partners become deadlocked on an issue, do you want to go straight to court? It might benefit everyone involved if your partnership agreement provides for alternative dispute resolution, such as mediation or arbitration.



## **ANNEX 8 CSP Review Contributors**

### **A) COUNTRY CASE STUDIES**

#### **Egypt**

Assiut Child and Development Association (ACDA)  
Better Life Association for Comprehensive Development  
Caritas Egypt  
Coca-Cola  
Community and Institutional Development (CID)  
Egypt Boy Scouts and Girl Guides Association  
Egyptian Medical Students Association (EMSA)  
Egyptian NGO Network Against AIDS (ENNAA)  
Egyptian Red Crescent  
El-Zanaty and Associates  
FEDA  
Hope Village Society  
Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA)  
Maritime Boy Scouts Association  
NGO Coalition on Child Rights  
Sohag Businessmen's Association  
Terre Des Hommes  
Third Eye 'Youth Participation' Team  
Youth Association for Population and Development (YAPD)

#### **Liberia**

Aid for the Needy Development Programme (ANDP)  
Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia (AFELL)  
Children Assistance Programme (CAP)  
Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE)  
Foundation for International Dignity (FIND)  
Liberia Prevention of Maternal Mortality (LPMM)  
National Child Rights Observatory Group (NACROG)  
New Era  
Pentecostal Mission Unlimited (PMU)  
Touching Humanity Need of Kindness (THINK)  
West African Network for Peace Building (WANEP)

#### **The Philippines**

Asia Against Child Trafficking (Asia ACT)  
Child Hope  
Children for Breastfeeding  
Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers  
Community Organizers Multiversity  
Community Rehabilitation Centre/Davao Branch  
Davao Local Government Unit Technical Working Group (CSO members)  
ECPAT  
In Peace Interfaith Coalition  
Interfaith Network  
Juvenile Justice Network  
Mindanao Peoples Caucus  
National Council for Social Development  
Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement  
Plan International

PROBE  
Save the Children  
Visayan Forum  
Women of Manila

**Zimbabwe**

Batsirai Group  
CAMFED  
Catholic Relief Services  
DFID  
HOSPAZ  
Mavambo Trust  
National NGO Alliance (NANGO)  
Mvuramanzi Trust  
Plan International  
SNV Netherlands  
Streets Ahead  
Zimbabwe Red Cross

**B) INTERNATIONAL CSO PARTNERS AND BEST PRACTICE ORGANIZATIONS**

CAMFED  
CARE/USA  
CIDA  
Coalition against the Use of Child Soldiers/International  
Ford Foundation  
Human Rights Watch  
Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies  
International Development Research Centre  
International Federation Terre des Hommes  
International Save the Children Alliance  
NGO Group for the CRC  
Overseas Development Institute (ODI)  
One World Trust  
Save the Children, UK  
UNESCO/Bangkok (UNGEI)  
Watchlist  
World Vision

**C) INDIVIDUAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Respondents to the CSP survey, both CSOs and UNICEF staff, are not thanked individually because of conditions of anonymity, but are acknowledged through the organizations listed here. There are, however, some individual experts who we would like to thank for their advice and help on the CSP Review. In alphabetical order:

Greg Armstrong, governance consultant  
Erlend Berg, Department of Economics, London School of Economics  
Bill Bell, Save the Children UK  
Monica Blagescu, Accountability Programme Manager, One World Trust  
Fred Carden, Director, Evaluation Unit, IDRC  
Julius Court, Research Fellow, Research and Policy in Development, ODI  
Claire Feinstein, children's participation consultant  
Dean Hirsch, President/CEO, World Vision International

Sam Landon, Programme Officer, CIDA  
Charles MacCormack, President, Save the Children/USA  
Nicholas Mays, Professor of Health Policy, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine  
Enrique Mendizabal, Research Officer, Civil Society Partnership Programme, ODI  
Andrew Pleasant, Assistant Professor, Department of Human Ecology, Rutgers University  
Amarjit Singh, Department of Law, London School of Economics and Head of Asia Division, Exclusive  
Analysis Ltd.

#### **D) UNICEF STAFF (facilitating Review coordination)**

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Afshan Khan, Deputy Director, EMOPS  
Erma Manoncourt, Country Representative, Egypt CO  
Rosemary McCreery, Chief of Staff, OED  
Jean Quesnel, Director, Evaluation Office  
Rima Salah, Deputy Executive Director, OED

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Monrovia: Angela Kearney, Representative; Keith Wright, Senior Programme Officer; Rosa Mota,  
Operations Officer; Emmet Watson, Evaluation Office



## ANNEX 9 Case Country Selection Process

Based on available time and resources, the terms of reference for the Review stipulated that the consultants visit at least two, but not more than three, case countries each. In order to ensure acceptable representation of UNICEF's substantive areas of concentration, types of activities and CSO partnership arrangements and characteristics, the following grid was applied to each of the five MTSP focus themes, with partnership suggestions requested from MTSP task force leaders in as many of the cells as appropriate.

	Advocacy & Policy	Monitoring Reporting inc. CAAC, CRC	Intellectual Leadership and Innovation	Programme Delivery	
				Country Programme Delivery	Humanitarian & Emergency Intervention
International CSOs: Global and Regional NGO; multi-partner alliances, networks					
Special focus CSOs: voluntary, religious, youth, labour, professional, development organizations					
National NGOs, operating in individual countries					
Community-based organizations serving or representing narrow or localised populations					

In addition, senior UNICEF/HQ officers in each MTSP area, as well as a number of Country Representatives and Senior Programme Officers, were consulted through interviews and emails for their guidance on (i) partnerships considered 'significant' in some way e.g. importance of objectives, scope of activity, quality of results, challenges of implementation; and (ii) for their recommendations as to case country options. Extensive reviews of country annual reports, evaluations and thematic analyses were also undertaken to identify partnership cases and broaden analytical categories.

Working through these several actions, the OPP, EO, SG members and Review consultants assessed and gradually winnowed down the selection to four countries (Egypt, Liberia, the Philippines and Zimbabwe) on the basis that:

- a) they are implementing a reasonable number of partnerships in the MTSP grid categories and/or they are considered particularly significant.
- b) they are reflecting a cross-regional perspective.
- c) they are allowing consultants to work reasonably independently in English or French (neither spoke Spanish).
- d) they were available for a mission during the relatively narrow time window of the Review period (mid-February through mid-March).



## ANNEX 10 Review Methods

### Review design

An Inception Report elaborating the initial Terms of Reference was developed and approved for this review following analyses of related studies and consultations with OPP and EO, the Review Steering Group, and senior HQ and Country Office staff. This provided a conceptual and analytical framework, an agreed strategy for selecting partnership cases and an established timeline. It also set out the five elements of Review methods:

#### a) Literature review

Studies of UNICEF-CSO partnerships and experiences of like-minded agencies were analyzed for guidance on the roles and types of CSOs involved in the context of human rights and development; the nature and modalities of effective partnerships, partnership principles and best partnership practice of CSO and development agencies; and operationalization of partnerships within a child rights and rights-based development framework.

#### b) Country case studies

A small sample of partners, grounded within the context of partner and UNICEF mandates, goals and activities provided a realistic reflection of UNICEF as a partner and guidance on strengthening this role. Case study countries were selected using the five focus areas of the 2006-2009 MTSP—a reflection of UNICEF's programming priorities under the CRC and MDGs, and its commitment to realizing these priorities through effective civil society partnerships—as a framework. They also allowed analyzing partnerships in terms of their increasingly integrated role in all aspects of UNICEF's decision-making, advocacy and programme interventions around child rights and development issues, as well as the links between partnerships at local, regional and global levels. Each MTSP area was further focused in terms of partner selection and analysis through reference to a specific sub-theme.

Egypt, Liberia, the Philippines and Zimbabwe illustrated partnerships within MTSP areas and a range of geopolitical contexts, and were selected following extensive consultation with and by OPP and EO, the Review Steering Group and senior HQ staff in each of the five MTSP areas; and confirmed through discussions with CO Representatives and Senior Programme Officers. Literature and documentary review, as well as both group and individual interviews, were used for data collection in each of these country cases.

#### c) Global survey

An online survey of UNICEF-CSO partnerships was developed with questions in three broad categories:

- Descriptive – to understand the types of CSOs answering the survey,
- Evaluative – asking CSOs to rate UNICEF against partnership principles
- Normative – eliciting CSOs preferences and recommendations on partnering with UNICEF.

Survey questions were pre-tested (Annex 3) with 45 CSOs from the Child Rights Information Network (CRIN). Experts on CSOs, partnership, children's rights and research methods also provided guidance and questions were re-drafted for clarity, internal consistency and alignment with the Review analytical framework overall.

The survey questionnaire was disseminated targeting both CSOs who had worked with UNICEF and those who had not, and was available in English, French, Spanish and Arabic. The survey was administered by the Evaluation Office and made available online through the survey tool Zoomerang, and emailed as a Word attachment.

The survey was distributed through various CSO email lists from CRIN, End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes (ECPAT), the NGO Group for the

Convention on the Rights of the Child, the NGO Committee on UNICEF, NGO Coalitions, e-Civics and UNICEF. This ensured that a range of CSO respondents were contacted, enabling reach to CSOs active in priority UNICEF areas, while avoiding pre-selection or targeting by UNICEF offices. Some individual emails were also sent out to CSOs to supplement these mailing lists.

#### **d) Thematic interviews**

Approximately 15 key informant interviews of 1-2 hours were conducted in person and by phone with people within and outside UNICEF partnership arrangements. Interviews were informed by both data from the other methods of the Review and its main analytical themes (i.e. UNICEF partnership policy and practice within the context of its global mandate, and principles of partnership best practice as related to CSOs).

#### **e) Illustrative 'stories' and quotations**

Emblematic stories and quotations were noted for use in illustrating key UNICEF-CSO partnership issues and recommendations. These are highlighted throughout this document and given particular emphasis in Section III "UNICEF's Strengths and Challenges as a partner."

### **Analytical approach**

Data from the different methods were organized and integrated through iterative analysis. Key analytical themes based on initial literature review were drafted in a 'deductive' process, and an 'inductive' process generated analytical themes using data emerging from the case studies, survey results and review consultations. The final analysis synthesised both approaches, allowing for two levels of analysis or inference: direct analysis of data and a determination of whether data coincided with current theory and previous empirical analyses.

Quantitative analysis of the survey data generated descriptive statistics of CSO perceptions of UNICEF as a partner; regression analysis identified key factors influencing these perceptions (see Annexes 3.1 and 3.2 for details on the CSP survey analysis and statistics).

### **Limitations and adaptations**

1. Potential for identifying national or regional variations in partnership practice was limited by the number of case study countries and the relatively short time spent in each (7 to 9 days). Opportunities to learn from 'non-partners' about challenges in establishing partnerships with UNICEF were also limited. The strong support of CO staff and cooperation of CSO partners mitigated these limitations, allowing for relatively good coverage and in-depth data. Also, analysis of survey data identified indicative patterns of potential regional variation and reasons for CSO non-partnership.
2. The online survey may have disadvantaged CSOs lacking access to the Internet, sufficient bandwidth or familiarity with online work. While the survey was available in English, French, Spanish<sup>65</sup> and Arabic, language may have been a constraint. Despite wide dissemination, response rate was relatively poor (over 660 respondents) considering that potential respondents ran into the thousands. The survey language was designed to be user-friendly, parallel use of Word format was intended to increase accessibility, and some follow-up by phone/email was done. However, increasing accessibility through additional languages and with interviews and mail-in forms should be considered for further surveys. On the positive side, CSOs ranging from international NGOs to community-based organizations responded to the survey (national NGOs were the largest group) and there was good representation across geographical regions, allowing for analysis of differences between groups.
3. Some CSO partnership groups may have been under-represented in the country case studies because only current partners were interviewed. The perspectives of specific CSOs (e.g., youth or faith-based

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<sup>65</sup> The CRIN mailing list only goes out in these three languages.

organizations) were not sought out. Still, the range of partnerships was fairly broad. Also, a wide range of CSO types, including youth, volunteer, professional and faith-based groups, responded to the survey.

4. The MTSP focus areas were a less powerful organizing reference for CSO partners than the broader and more readily recognized language of the CRC, and child protection, survival and development programming. The child survival, protection and development concerns underlying the CRC still define the nature and challenges of most CSOs' work, especially those partnered with UNICEF. While the five MTSP areas were addressed to a reasonable degree through the combined data sources and in the range of country partnerships met (on average 15 CSO partners/country), the data and analysis cut across them to a large degree.

### **Quality considerations**

**Quality control.** External experts, OPP, EO and the Steering Group were consulted regularly to ensure the quality of the review process. The Steering Group broadened UNICEF input to, and ownership of, the process by including as members both director- and technical-level officers from different HQ units and limited consultation with COs. Quality control and feedback mechanisms also included broadcasting the Review to all UNICEF staff and inviting comments on the intranet 'Have Your Say' site.

**Triangulation.** The use of multiple data collection and analysis methods served to address gaps and limitations associated with any single method.

**Confidentiality and anonymity.** Interviewees were informed of the Review purpose, asked for their consent to interviews and assured confidentiality. Anonymity safeguards were also included in the protocol and process of the survey.

**Feasibility.** The Review built on previous analyses of UNICEF-CSO partnerships and other agency experience; both consultants had worked previously on these issues. The limited number of country case studies was counterbalanced by broad survey data.

**Acceptability.** Survey questions were pre-tested for clarity and general usability; response times were assessed to avoid respondent burden; time limits for the survey and the interviews were confirmed with respondents.

**Reliability.** Pre-testing helped ensure consistent interpretation of questions; a common analytical framework, questions and vocabulary ensured consistency across all methods.

**Validity.** Periodic feedback on the Review process from UNICEF, CSOs and experts helped ensure validity, as did framing questions and analysis within established principles of partnership, current theories of partnership and civil society, and past empirical analyses of UNICEF and CSO interactions.

**Relevance.** Regular communication with Review clients aimed to ensure their questions were being addressed. Unstructured interviews built around open-ended questions to UNICEF and CSO partners, enabling inclusion of their respective priorities and concerns in both the analysis and recommendations.

**Generalizability.** Triangulation and the range of methods used, references to previous empirical and theoretical analyses, and the quality assurance steps taken broadened the context of the analysis beyond the four country cases and somewhat limited responses.



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