



An Independent Evaluation of UNHCR's Decentralization and Regionalization Reform

Inception Report

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Prepared by: Deloitte Consulting AG

Commissioned by:

UNHCR Evaluation Office

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Acknowledgements

The evaluation team would like to thank all the stakeholders who have contributed to the development of the inception report, in particular the Evaluation Office (EvO) for their expertise, collaboration, and guidance throughout this phase. The timely provision of key documents and data has been crucial to enhancing the depth and quality of the deliverables. The evaluation team would also like to thank the UNHCR stakeholders who have been interviewed for their time and for having shared crucial insights for this evaluation. Lastly, the evaluation team wish to express our gratitude to the Core Group, the Evaluation Reference Group and the Field Reference Group for their contribution and their valuable input throughout the inception phase.

Executive Summary

Introduction and Context

In 2016, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) embarked upon a significant shift in terms of ways of working which has far-reaching implications on the agility and timeliness of support to forcibly displaced and stateless persons. The Decentralization and Regionalization (D&R) reform put in place a new organizational design — with new Regional RBs (RBs) moved to strategic locations in the field, new devolved authorities to senior managers in regions, Country Offices, and Sub-Offices supported by a range of decentralized, simplified systems and processes. This transformation aimed to empower colleagues at every level to deliver on the High Commissioner's Strategic Directions (2017-2021) and engage more effectively with a range of traditional and new partners.

In the context of UN reform, many UN agencies are on a journey to decentralize and regionalize and are at different horizons and stages. It is not surprising that within the UN system, the challenges with roles, responsibilities, accountability, governance, coordination, communication, structures, people, and culture are common across agencies experiencing D&R. The reality is that the world is fast evolving, and the UN system as a whole is adapting to new challenges and possibilities and moving in the direction of devolution of authority to the regions. More than ever, decisions are made, relationships built, partnerships and alliances sustained, and impact assessed at regional or country level. To remain essential, UNHCR must evolve in this new policy area including to advance the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR).

About five years after the launch of the reform, an independent evaluation is initiated to assess the progress and identify gaps in the decentralization and regionalization process so far. The evaluation's purpose is to assess the reform's design, implementation, outcomes, and influencing factors, with key stakeholders including UNHCR leadership.

The inception phase, including this inception report, lays down the foundation for the next phases of the evaluation. The inception phase was conducted between the 8th of January 2023 and the 29th of February 2024. During this phase, the evaluation team undertook several activities, with the key objective of understanding the D&R reform in its integrity, including its intent, the initiatives undertaken throughout the years, and the different outcomes that D&R brought across the different functions, levels, and stakeholders.

Whilst UNHCR will be the primary user of the evaluation, the findings and recommendations will be of value to many stakeholders including member states and key partners.

Evaluation Scope

The evaluation will concentrate on the D&R reform of UNHCR from 2017 to 2023, focusing more deeply on the period from 2019 to 2023 when the reform was initiated. It will assess changes in strategy, processes, people, organization and governance, and technology for the reform. The evaluation aims to determine the appropriateness, coherence, efficiency, and effectiveness of the D&R reform in empowering operations to provide better protection to forcibly displaced and stateless persons in line with the goals of One UN and the GCR. The assessment will cover macro-level design, implementation factors, and the reform's impact on operational effectiveness, agility, and support for broader UN goals. The geographical scope includes Headquarters (HQ) and all regions, with a focus on changes at regional, national, and sub-national levels.

This independent Evaluation of the D&R reform will ultimately achieve the following key objectives:

- Ascertain the appropriateness of the design of the reform.
- Assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the reform implementation process.
- Determine which outcomes, have and have not been achieved that are attributable to the reform, and the extent to which the intended results- working more effectively at the point of delivery, agility, and better supporting the goals of One UN and the CGR have or have not been achieved.
- Outline the factors that have influenced the reform design, process and outcomes, unintended consequences and highlight the specific issues to be addressed moving forward.
- Determine how best the organization uses the positive experiences to maximize the benefits of the change process moving forward.

The evaluation team also recognizes that while there are multiple ongoing parallel reforms in UNHCR, the focus of this evaluation will be on D&R. An in-depth study of other parallel reforms is not considered part of the scope of the current evaluation.

Evaluation Approach and Methodology

During the inception phase, the evaluation team has conducted numerous activities including:

- Extensive review of UNHCR documents (incl. prior evaluations) and other documents from other organizations, including a clustering of the key findings across an Excel workbook and Miro board.
- Meetings and workshops with the Evaluation Office.
- Meetings with the Core Group, the Field Reference Group, and the Evaluation Reference Group
- Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with twelve stakeholders.
- Shortlisting of Country Case Studies.
- Shortlisting of Vertical Case Studies.
- The development of an analytical framework and Evaluation Matrix.

All of these activities have allowed the evaluation team to deduce several key preliminary findings that have been crucial to developing the evaluation approach and methodology and set the groundwork for the following phases – particularly data collection.

The framework being leveraged is anchored on 4 key pillars of a holistic operating and organizational model evaluation – i) Strategy; ii) Processes; iii) People, Organization and Governance; and iv) Technology.

Figure 1: Framework, anchoring the four pillars and the twelve D&R facets

Strategy	Processes	People, Organization and Governance	Technology
Goals, Vision, Mission	Partnership Management	Organizational Architecture	Technology Enablers
Strategic Planning Process	Operational Delivery	Roles, Accountabilities and Authorities (RAAs)	
Monitoring and Evaluation		Functions and Staffing	
Resource Management		Change Management/Ways of Working	
		Oversight and Risk Management	

The Evaluation Matrix itself is designed to offer evidence across five evaluation questions (EQs) to assess UNHCR's performance across different facets outlined in the framework. The 5 EQs include:

- EQ1: Design principles and approach: how relevant, appropriate, and feasible was the design and planning approach taken in the D&R reform and what can be learnt to inform the future?
- EQ2: Reform outcomes: have the intended results of the reform been realized?
- EQ3: Organizational outcomes: to what extent has UNHCR delivered on the key intended strategic vision and outcomes of the reform?
- EQ4: Implementation processes and inter-dependencies: how effectively and efficiently has UNHCR managed the reform process?
- EQ5: Lessons and recommendations: where are the good practices that can be built upon; the effective aspects of the reform and the possibilities not considered?

The proposed framework for this evaluation will leverage the evaluation criteria defined by the OECD DAC Network on Development Evaluation (EvalNet). The five key tenets of the evaluation will be: Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability. The evaluation will span HQ, RBs, Multi-Country Offices (MCOs) and Country Operations (COs), including sub national entities (Sub-Offices, Field Offices/Units). For this study to be inclusive and adequately representative of perspectives from different parts of the organization, the Evaluation Office and the Evaluation team have worked closely with the Core Group and other stakeholders (identified in the appendices) to identify the right sample of MCOs and Countries that should be included in the evaluation. Additionally, the team shall critically evaluate four Vertical Case Studies to assess the D&R intent, initiatives, outcomes, efficacy, and interlinkages of key functional areas that cut across the organization.

The team will use a mix of data collection tools, including document review, focus group discussions, an e-survey, and semi-structured interviews, to ensure both quantitative and qualitative evidence can be collected and assessed. as part of the evaluation.

Through the inception phase, the evaluation team have worked with a wide range of stakeholders within the UNHCR ecosystem to outline a fit-for-purpose approach to conduct this evaluation. That said, the evaluation might be subject to some limitations and risks that have been outlined in Chapter 3. However, the evaluation team has identified mitigating steps and actions that have been incorporated into the evaluation framework to ensure recommendations are unbiased and actionable.

Schedule and Workplan

The evaluation was initiated on the 19th of December 2023 and will conclude by the 30th of August 2024 with the final evaluation report. Dissemination of findings will take place until mid-September 2024. The evaluation is divided into four distinct phases: inception, data collection, data analysis and reporting and finalization. The evaluation is managed by Deloitte, in collaboration with UNHCR's Evaluation Office. In addition, a Core Group, an Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) and a Field Reference Group (FRG) made up of colleagues involved in the change process, internal and external interlocutors, and colleagues representing the different regions within the organization, respectively, have helped guide the evaluation design and contributed their insights.

Key evaluation information at a glance

Title of the evaluation	An Indonandant Evaluation of LINIUCD's
Title of the evaluation	An Independent Evaluation of UNHCR's
	Decentralization and Regionalization Reform
Time frame covered	2017-2023
Duration	19 December 2023 – 30 August 2024
Type of evaluation	Global, thematic
Locations/focus countries to be included	Seven Regional RBs, country visits to Indonesia,
	Pakistan, Uganda, Spain, Belgium, Jordan, Saudi
	Arabia, Angola, Dem Rep of the Congo, Ecuador,
	Guatemala, Central African Republic, and Nigeria
	(exact locations to be defined in the data collection
	phase)
UNHCR Evaluation Manager	David Rider Smith

List of acronyms

AHC Assistant High Commissioner

AHC-O Assistant High Commissioner Operations
AHC-P Assistant High Commissioner Protection

ARA Accountabilities, Responsibilities and Authorities

BTP Business Transformation Programme

CAT Change Advisory Team
CO Country Operations

D&R Decentralization and Regionalization

DER Division of External Relations

DESS Division of Emergency Security and Supply

DFAM Division of Financial and Administrative Management

DHC Deputy High Commissioner

DHR Division of Human Resources

DHRM Division of Human Resource Management

DIP Division of International Protection

DIST Division of Information Systems and Telecommunications

DSPR Division of Strategic Planning and Results

DSR Division of Resilience & Solutions

EVO Evaluation Office
EQ Evaluation Question

EQA Evaluation Quality Assurance
ERG Evaluation Reference Group
FGD Focus Group Discussion
FRG Field Reference Group

GCR Global Compact on Refugees

HC High Commissioner
HQ Headquarters

IFAD International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

IDPs Internally Displaced Persons

IFIs International Financial Institutions

JIU Joint Inspection Unit

KI Key Informant

KPI Key Informant Interviews
KPI Key Performance Indicators

MCO Multi-Country Office

OIOS Office of Internal Oversight Services

PBS Programme Budget Service

QA Quality Assurance

RAA Roles, Accountabilities and Authorities

RAF Resource Allocation Framework

RB Regional RBs

RCC Regional Contracts Committee

RC Resident Coordinator
RG Reference Group

ROA Rapid Organizational Assessment SMC Senior Management Committee

TOM Target Operating Model
ToR Terms of Reference
UN United Nations

UNFPA United Nations Population Fund

UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

WFP World Food Program

WHO World Health Organization

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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction and outline

UNHCR's mandate is to ensure international protection, deliver humanitarian assistance to refugees and stateless persons and cooperate with governments to find lasting solutions to address their plight¹. To effectively serve and deliver its mandate, the UNHCR High Commissioner in 2016 launched an ambitious organizational reform process towards a new organizational design and ways of working for the organization against the backdrop of the humanitarian and political reality marked by staggering increases of displacement and protracted situations. The objective of the reform was to empower UNHCR staff to deliver on UNHCR's Strategic Directions (2017-2021) and engage more effectively with a range of traditional and new partners along the humanitarian-development nexus as enshrined in the New York Declaration (2016) and the subsequent Global Compact on Refugees (GCR).

The organizational reform was guided by recommendations put forward in an external Rapid Organizational Assessment (ROA) 2017 which inter alia recommended that UNHCR should be more agile, adaptable and empower strong and integrated responses at the country level to remain a relevant humanitarian organization fit for the future. Following this recommendation, various changes at the Headquarters (HQ) level were implemented with the objectives of a more integrated and cohesive operations management. The second phase of UNHCR's transformation was planned to focus on the changes that more directly affect the field, structures, staffing and processes to further improve UNHCR's operational impact. Four out of thirty recommendations of the ROA addressed the regional structures of the organization ². Amongst the recommendations outlined, decentralizing and regionalizing UNHCR's operations was deemed crucial to enable faster decision-making, agility, and greater responsiveness at the point of delivery through strengthened collaboration with partners to better serve forcibly displaced and stateless persons³.

This evaluation seeks to evaluate the design, implementation, and outcomes of this organizational reform. The outcomes and recommendations of this evaluation will be provided to strengthen D&R through understanding its current state, focusing on the lessons learned and the way forward.

This inception report provides the foundation for the evaluation. It outlines key details including the evaluation scope, approach and methodology, and work plan. The report is divided into four main sections:

- Section 1 outlines the evaluation's purpose and objectives, and a summary of key activities within the inception phase.
- **Section 2** details the context and history of the D&R reform, the initial observations, implications for revised methodology, and conclusions on the scope of the evaluation.
- **Section 3** focuses on the evaluation approach and methodology which includes the overarching approach, conceptual basis for evaluation, the Evaluation Matrix, data collection, analysis and synthesis, ethical considerations, limitations and risks to the evaluation, and quality assurance.
- **Section 4** summarizes the key milestones and associated deliverables of the evaluation, the evaluation team including their roles and responsibilities, and the Evaluation Office team.

¹ UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency | UNHCR.

² The recommendations on decentralization included a reconsideration of the number of RBs and their country coverage, a new core design, structure and staffing plan of the Bureaux, and a clarification of the existing regionalization policy.

³ 2019-08-30 Update on UNHCR reform to SCM 76th meeting.pdf - All Documents (sharepoint.com)

1.2 Evaluation purpose, objectives, and audience

The purpose of the independent evaluation of UNHCR's D&R reform is to study the appropriateness, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, and outcomes of UNHCR's D&R reform aimed at establishing a more agile, devolved organization which empowers operations to ensure more effective protection to forcibly displaced and stateless persons. The evaluation will provide **evidence and lessons learnt in a retrospective analysis** of the reform journey thus far, illustrating what has worked well, lessons learnt of challenges encountered, and develop recommendations for corrective measures including adjustments to structures, staffing, systems, and processes to realize the reform objectives. The evaluation intends to apply the target operating model framework to assess Strategy; People, Organization and Governance; Processes and Technology to achieve the proposed reform.

The objectives of the D&R evaluation as set out in the terms of reference will guide the evaluation's objective. These include:

- To ascertain the appropriateness of the design of the reform.
- To assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the reform implementation process.
- To determine which outcomes have and have not been achieved that are attributable to the reform, and the extent to which the intended results of working more effectively at the point of delivery, agility, and better supporting the goals of One UN and the GCR have or have not been achieved.
- To outline the factors that have influenced the reform design, process and outcomes, unintended consequences and to highlight the specific issues and lessons to be addressed moving forward.
- To determine how best the organization can use the positive experiences to maximize the benefits of the change process moving forward.

The evaluation covers the period **2017 to 2023**, with a particular focus on the launching and implementation of the reform from 2019 to 2023. Documents prior to these dates have not been reviewed systematically but only as deemed relevant. The evaluation will be global, with country case studies selected carefully against criteria from each of the UNHCR's regions (refer to annex 5.4 for further details on our sampling and selection).

The primary audiences for this evaluation are the High Commissioner and the Senior Executive Team (SET), with the aim being to provide evidence for organizational learning and accountability, and to inform any course correction that may be required to deliver the reform outcomes. The Transformation and Change Service (TCS), Division for Human Resources (DHR), the Regional RBs and Divisional Directors and Country Representatives are also primary audiences, as critical actors in this reform process. Secondary audiences include the broader UNHCR staff, member states of UNHCR and other stakeholders who provide financing and planning/budgetary oversight of the organization.

1.3 Summary of key activities in the inception phase

This inception phase was conducted between the 8th of January 2023 and the 29th of February 2024, sets the foundation for a successful evaluation. Throughout this phase, the evaluation team deepened their understanding of the UNHCR decentralization and reform intent, strategy, and underlying rationale.

The main activities within the inception phase are described below:

- 1. **Desk review:** Review of all documents provided by the Evaluation Office for the evaluation team to inform understanding, theoretical underpinnings, and literature, define the key areas and questions relevant to the reform facets, and objectives of the evaluation.
- 2. **Evaluation Approach and Methodology:** A review of the Theory of Change, applicable conceptual framework, and exploratory model.

- 3. **Evaluation Framework:** Developed the Evaluation Matrix, including developing the areas of inquiry to guide the evaluation, developed key hypotheses to be tested against key dimensions and identified data sources (both qualitative and quantitative) for data collection and analysis (refer to further details in section 3).
- 4. **Key Informant Interviews (KIIs):** Conducted interviews with diverse UNHCR stakeholders from HQ, RBs, members of the Core Group and member states.
- 5. **Meetings and stakeholder workshops:** A wide range of different meetings with key stakeholders, including with the EvO, ERG and FRG. A brainstorming workshop for the inception phase was also held between the EvO and the evaluation team.
- 6. **Evaluation plan:** Identification of country case studies and vertical case studies as part of the evaluation plan.

All these activities have been crucial in defining the central inquiries guiding the evaluation and ensuring a well-informed design of the evaluation to guide the subsequent phases.

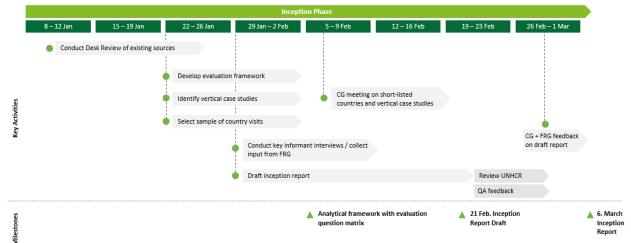


Figure 2: Timeline of the inception phase, outlining the key activities and key deliverables

2. Background, existing evidence, and scoping

2.1 Context and history of the D&R reform

2.1.1 Timeline of D&R reform

Before 2019, UNHCR struggled with challenges stemming from a notably centralized structure and a heavily bureaucratic system, impeding the effective execution of UNHCR's mandate. The imperative for internal change was further underscored by developments in a rapidly evolving international landscape, necessitating an equitable response to the growing numbers of forcibly displaced and stateless persons.

Commencing with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for SDGs in 2015, aligning with the Universal Value to "Leave no one behind" and the "Grand Bargain" commitment endorsed at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, which compelled donors and organizations to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action and fortify decision-making processes, the UNHCR's commitment to a sustainable and equitable future became increasingly intertwined with broader global initiatives. Simultaneously, in 2015, the

⁴ https://unsdg.un.org/2030-agenda/universal-values/leave-no-one-behind.

^{5 2016-08-23} Report on the Outcome of the World Humanitarian Summit 2016.

revision of the guidance on "ToR for regional offices" set the stage for a more coherent and field-centric approach, emphasizing decentralized decision-making. The subsequent years witnessed pivotal events such as the UN Summit for Refugees and Migrants in 2016, where 193 Member States adopted the "The New York Declaration". The declaration outlined a comprehensive plan for addressing large movements of refugees and migrants and marked a commitment to international solidarity, responsibility sharing, and practical and sustainable solutions to address for refugees. The subsequent Global Representatives Meeting in Geneva⁸ in July 2016 raised concerns about bureaucratic complexity hindering engagement towards the new paradigm shift thereby laying the groundwork for the need for organizational adaptability.

In 2017, UNHCR adopted the UNHCR Strategic Directions (2017-2022), the call for a review of HQ functions⁹ and the internal Rapid Organizational Assessment all indicated a proactive stance towards organizational agility and effectiveness. As reforms continued in 2018, with the announcement of structural changes and the adoption of the Global Compact on Refugees¹⁰, UNHCR solidified its commitment to finding pragmatic solutions amid complex global challenges. Simultaneously, UNHCR's conceptual framework for defining Accountabilities, Responsibilities and Authorities (ARA) underwent revision due to its unclear nature, leading to independent audits highlighting risks at the regional level 11. Against this backdrop and recognizing the imperative for transformative measures highlighted in the internal Rapid Organizational Assessment, UNHCR released the Change Strategy¹² in January 2018, with five overarching goals aligning with the Strategic Directions (2017-2021)¹³. A shared element of this transformative effort is the "enhanced delegation/empowerment of the country level" which serves as the foundation for the D&R reform¹⁴. The Senior Executive Team endorsed key considerations from the internal Rapid Organizational Assessment to guide D&R in June 2018¹⁵.

The introduction of D&R in 2019 was carried forward with the announcement of a new Resource Allocation Framework (RAF)¹⁶ and the creation of new vacant positions in regions as a result of an intensive and collaborate design process for the new RBs¹⁷. The organization witnessed a restructuring of functions related to strategic planning, resource allocation, and results management into one consolidated Division of Strategic Planning and Results (DSPR), reinforcing the emphasis on evidence-based planning and efficient decisionmaking. The creation of the Division of Resilience & Solutions absorbed the remaining elements of the Division of Programme Support & Management and the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) Team. The Senior Management Committee (SMC) meetings in 2019¹⁸ finalized RBs structures, and the core RBs positions were approved by the Budget Committee in March 2019¹⁹. Furthermore, the introduction of the revised "Three Lines of Defense" model now called "the 3Lines Model", and 'Roles, Accountabilities and Authorities' framework for country offices²⁰, RBs²¹ and Divisions²² in 2019 aimed to enhance clarity in decisionmaking and accountability. The creation of draft KPIs²³ aimed to track progress in shifting resources to the field, improving decision-making, confirming D&R completion in design, and strengthening risk management.

2015-12-18 Policy on Regionalization in UNHCR (SUPERSEDED as of 01 09 2022).

 $^{^7 \}text{ https://www.unhcr.org/what-we-do/protect-human-rights/asylum-and-migration/new-york-declaration-refugees-and-migrants.} \\$

^{8 2016-08-17} HC launches change process.

²⁰¹⁶⁻⁰⁸⁻¹⁷ HC launches change process ¹⁰ 2018 Global Compact on Refugees Booklet.pdf.

¹¹ 2018-07-19 First draft revised ARAs .docx.

^{12 2018-01-09} The Case for Change - UNHCR Change Strategy.pdf.

¹³ HCR Strategic Direction 2017-21.

¹⁴ Evaluation office - 2019-08-30 Update on UNHCR reform to SCM 76th meeting.pdf - All Documents (sharepoint.com).

 $^{^{\}rm 15}$ 2017 -03-30 HQs endorsement of ROA - message to all staff -moving to Phase 2.

¹⁶ UNHCR_AI_2019_7_RAF_01_New_RAF_Part_1_Delegation_Authority_Implementation.

^{17 2019-04-08} Addendum 1 to the March 2019 Compendium - Special Vacancy Announcement – Decentralization and Regionalization positions .msg.

¹⁸ 2019-01-17-18 SMC Retreat Key Decisions Summary .docx.

¹⁹ 2019-02-01 Draft Parameters Bureau Construction.

²⁰ 2019-10-22 Country offices Roles, Accountabilities and Authorities.

^{21 2019-10-22} RBs Roles, Accountabilities and Authorities.

²² 2019-10-22 HQ Roles, Accountabilities and Authorities.

²³ 2019-03-12 UNHCR DR strategic map for KPIs.

The subsequent implementation of detailed organization structures in January 2020 marked a significant milestone in the D&R initiative. This was followed by the restructuring and deployment of seven RBs in strategically important locations in the regions and 15 Multi-Country Offices (MCOs). The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 necessitated adaptations and adjustments, underlining the need for flexibility and resilience. In early 2020, UNHCR established a Field Reference Group²⁴ with broad representation from all seven RBs with the goal of providing a feedback channel based on its D&R experience and serving as a sounding board for prioritization of proposals for major transformative initiatives/projects, policies and guidance directly impacting field operations prior to their consideration by the Transformation Governance Board. In May 2020, UNHCR conceptualized a new multi-year planning system²⁵ designed to better align with the GCR and broader development collaboration.

The shift in focus was from planning and reporting on inputs and outputs to analyzing outcomes and impacts, enhancing accountability for results. Over the next 24 months, the key changes that were to be introduced throughout the organization through the rehaul of the results-based management system were:

- 1) A multi-year and multi-partner planning approach at the country level, with a streamlined and logical results chain that can align with national plans and UN country frameworks
- 2) A new corporate results and indicators framework to link flexible country level results with organizational strategic directions.

Survey results²⁶ in July 2020 gauged the impact of UNHCR's response to the COVID-19 pandemic on D&R, highlighting the need for course corrections and simplifications.

In 2021, the new multi-year planning approach²⁷ was introduced, focusing on planning and budgeting for results, delivering against annual implementation work plans, and showing results through enhanced global coherence, analysis, and reporting. One of the objectives was also to align the multi-year planning approach with three to five-year strategies, encompassing humanitarian response, advocacy, and capacity development. UNHCR released an updated "Handbook for Designing Field Presences²⁸ - a Guidance for Structuring and Staffing UNHCR Country Operations and Field Presence". Based on the recommendations and oversight on the implementation of D&R reform, and further refinement based on the operational realities, several new policies such as the revised policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response²⁹; and the Policy on Planning, Getting and Showing Results³⁰ were issued. Updated RAAs³¹, RAFs³² and a revamped 3LoD³³ model were introduced which aimed to enhance risk management and oversight responsibilities across different functions within the organization. In 2023, the FRG focus expanded³⁴ to include UNHCR's broader efforts to make the organization more agile, more efficient, more inclusive, and more collaborative, as set out in UNHCR's "Our Transformation".

In the recent timeline, UNHCR adopted new Strategic Directions (2022-2026)³⁵. The Business Transformation Programme (BTP), a reform of UNHCR systems and processes, was launched in 2020 to support UNHCR's change agenda through modernized cloud-based systems. In early 2021, the new multi-year planning and results-based management system COMPASS was rolled out. In 2022, the new cloud-based HR software

²⁴ 2020-9 Draft ToR Field-based reference group on DR.

²⁵ 2020-05-00 Paper on UNHCR's new planning monitoring and reporting system.

²⁶ 2020-07-20 Survey findings- COVID-19 and D&R.

²⁷ 2021-02-00 HQ Realignment Bureau Consultation - Evaluation office Input.

²⁸ 2021-05-01 UNHCR Updated Handbook for Designing Field Presences.

²⁹ 2023-01-31 UNHCR-HCP-2023-01 Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response

³⁰ 2023-09-26 Policy_on_Planning_for,_Getting_and_Showing_Results_UNHCR-HCP-2023-05-.

³¹ 2021-10-01 Overview of new 3L model.

^{32 2023-09-26} Resource_Allocation_Framework Revision 3 (UNHCR-AI-2019-07-Rev.3).

³³ UNHCR (2021). The Three Lines Model in UNHCR.

³⁴ 2023-01-01 Field Reference Group TOR – 2023.

^{35 2022-03-01} UNHCR Strategic Directions 2022-2026.

Workday was launched, and in 2023 PROMS, Cloud ERP, Synergy and Link, for project reporting, resource planning, external engagement, and information management respectively, went live.

2016-2018 2019-2024 D&R Planning & Development Post-D&R · Revised guidance "TOR for regional offices" • SMC meeting to finalize the regional bureaux A new multi-year planning system introduced * Revision of ARA framework New RAF, organization structures, RAA issued structures 👈 Adoption of Strategic Directions (2017-22) · Budget committee meetings and feasibility study of · 3L of Defense (3LoD) model introduced as part of HQ review announced by High Commissioner D&R RAAs Revision of ARAs to address clarity issues, Risk Management 2.0 initiative launched by High Official roll out of decentralized regional bureau and Commissioner subjectivity, complexity, and difficulties in application multi-country offices · Draft KPIs developed to track D&R progress Global Representatives Meeting (GRM) Geneva where Country Reps expressed concerns about bureaucratic complexity hindering engagement with displaced communities Adoption of Global Compact for Refugees (GCR) · One consolidated division called the Division of Revised RAF and RAAs * · Grand Bargain Commitment at the World Humanitarian Summit * Strategic Planning and Results (DSPR) * Revised policy on Emergency Preparedness and . The New York Declaration- 193 member states · Interviews with Representatives to gauge the need Response; and Planning, Getting and Showing Results signed up one plan for addressing large movements and changes required under D&R 3LoD model undated to 3L Model to enhance risk and changes required under D&R

HC decision on detailed organization structures

Transformation of HR function into field driven of refugees and migrants management and control responsibilities across Adoption of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) different functions within the organization · Transformation of HR function into field driven model Launch of UN Development System Reform Released an updated UNHCR Handbook for Designing Field Presences ROA report issued, endorsed and accepted which Restructuring and deployment of seven Bureaux to • Adoption of Strategic Directions (2022-26) identified challenges and changes needed for UNHCR regions and more than fifteen multi-country offices 2024 Culture Assessment announced ** to be more agile and fit for the future 🖈
• UNHCR Case for Change issued which included four · BTP, PROMS, workday go-live announced Establishment of Field Reference Group (ERG) with a Launch of COMPASS to improve multi-year strategic change workstreams and D&R retorms A
Principles for culture change were endorsed to serve
as living guidance for best practices representation of all seven regions to address and planning provide solutions for issues related to D&R HQ Regional Bureaux staff realignment in lines of D&R ★ Milestones

Figure 3: D&R timeline view through the years and key events

2.1.2 Objectives of D&R

The principle of the D&R reform is rooted in certain underlying assumptions about its outcomes. One assumption is that those closest to the point of operational delivery are inherently better positioned to understand the needs of people with and for whom UNHCR works and to make decisions that facilitate the effective delivery of services. UNHCR's primary objective of implementing D&R is to enhance the responsiveness and agility of operational delivery by shifting personnel and decision-making authorities closer to the field, along with strengthening the overall protection framework³⁶.

Based on the existing evidence, the D&R reform endeavors to strike the right balance between HQ and field operations. The expected outcomes of this process include:

- Fully empowered, efficient and effective COs so decision-making is as close as possible to the point of delivery.
- Empowered, accountable regional platforms for engagement oversight and support to CO.
- Clear authorities and corresponding accountabilities at country, RBs and HQ level; and
- A lean, dynamic, and forward-looking HQ

The overarching goals encompass effective field response; alignment with broader UN reforms and implementation of GCR through improved partnerships, enhanced global positioning and advocating for UNHCR's mission; increased responsiveness and flexibility.

2.1.3 Implementation and Actions of D&R

 $^{^{\}rm 36}$ Quick Guide to UNHCR's Regionalization & Decentralization Process.

Throughout the conceptualization and implementation phases, several pivotal decisions ³⁷ were made to reshape UNHCR's operational framework:

- Developing a new organizational strategy and planning approach.
- Repositioning seven new RBs in the field to enhance operational efficiency.
- Restructuring the organization's staffing model, emphasizing reinforced Country offices, and decentralizing certain functions from HQ to RBs.
- Transferring resource mobilization and allocation authority to the regional and country levels; and
- Modifying UNHCR's accountability framework, resulting in a reallocation of authority to align with the organizational changes.

2.2 Existing evidence

From a review of existing evaluations and audits it is evident that significant progress towards D&R has been made despite the need for further improvement and corrective action. Regarding the restructuring and repositioning of RBs, delegation of authority, transition from review of ARAs to RAAs, and creation of a new RAF. The evaluations provide demonstrable evidence of decentralized decision making, resources and people to the regions, including enabling governance, systems, and processes. However, it is important to note that in certain circumstances, such as in emergency situations, most effective responses have not always been aligned to the agreed ways of working, roles and responsibilities outlined in the RAA framework, which has resulted in duplications and inefficiencies. In addition, leadership alignment, clarifying roles and responsibilities, communication and coordination are areas that have been identified as requiring further improvement.

From an audit point of view, the RAA framework needs to be better understood, and there is a need to further empower RBs given changes in the RAF. From the review of existing evaluations, country contextual factors such as geography, partnerships, and stakeholders need to be taken into consideration to effectively implement D&R. In addition, cultural ethos continues to emerge in the ways of working between HQ, RBs and COs, affecting efficiency and effectiveness. The need for a strategic coordination responsibility is important to drive accountability and results of D&R efforts, a finding which has come across consistently throughout previous evaluations of D&R exercises across UN agencies, the lack of which has resulted in duplicative structures and rising staff costs (Refer to annex 5.1 for details).

2.3 Scope of the evaluation

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The evaluation team has delaminated the scope of the evaluation taken into consideration 1) the requirements of the ToR 2) the findings from the initial scoping (including desk review and KIIs, 3) the feasibility and practicality in the framework of assigned resources to the evaluation.

The evaluation of the D&R reform will be limited to the changes to strategy and planning, organizational architecture, functions and people, financial architecture (resource mobilization and allocation), roles, accountabilities and authorities, and ways of working. The evaluation will focus primarily on the launch and implementation of the D&R reform process from 2019 to 2023.

The evaluation shall further be limited to five areas of inquiry:1) appropriateness of the design of the reform; 2) assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation process; 3) to what extent intended results of the reform have been realized; 4) to which extent UNHCR has achieved its overarching objectives of working more effectively at the point of delivery, contribution to the goals of One UN and GCR, and organizational agility, 5) highlighting lessons learnt and recommendations for the effective implementation of D&R ahead.

The evaluation will focus on twelve D&R facets summarized under four dimensions; Strategy, Processes, People, Organization, Governance, and Technology (details outlined in Chapter 3).

Past and ongoing parallel reforms including the HQ realignment reform and HR systems and business process reforms under the Business Transformation Programme (BTP) are out of scope of this evaluation. While there will inevitably be interlinkages among some of these reforms with D&R as they relate to changes in processes and ways of working (see Chapter 3.8 for discussion of risks and limitations with regard to causality), the evaluation will limit its review of them to an inquiry into the extent to which they enable of impede the successful implementation of D&R.

The geographical scope will include HQ and the seven regions in which UNHCR operates. The evaluation will focus on a global sample of sub-national (Sub-Offices/ Field Offices/Field Units), national (Country Offices/National Offices), sub-regional (MCOs) and RBs. The country case study shortlist analysis performed during the inception phase (refer to annex 5.4) provides an overview of regions and countries in scope for country visits.

3. Evaluation approach and methodology

3.1 Overarching approach

The evaluation approach is founded on a four-stage approach as outlined below. Each of the steps of the evaluation is explained in further detail in the subsequent sections:

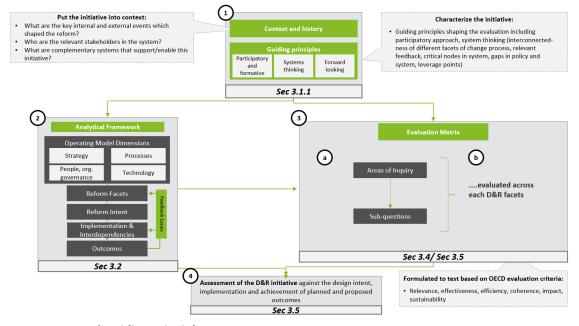


Figure 4: Evaluation approach (refer to annex 5.9 for an enlarged view)

3.1.1 Context and Guiding Principles

The overall approach for evaluation is grounded in a detailed review of the context and history of the reform which is based on the following two data sources:

1. Existing documentation related to the reform, prior audits, and evaluations (see annex 5.1), organizational data, academic literature.

2. KIIs conducted in the inception phase with selected stakeholders to provide contours for the detailed data collection phase (refer to annex 5.6)

The review of the reform has been designed to identify the situation prior to D&R, the reform intent and the initiatives taken as a part of D&R reform to achieve the intended objectives. It has also been designed to put relevant system boundaries, identify the right stakeholders for data collection in the next phase and identify complementary systems. The evaluation approach has been outlined using three key principles:

- 1. **Participatory and formative:** The evaluation endeavors to identify areas where UNHCR can enhance the effectiveness of the reform, with a particular emphasis on stakeholder involvement to derive practical recommendations.
- 2. **Systems approach**: Analyze interconnected components of a system to understand their interactions, dependencies, and outcomes, providing holistic insights for informed decision-making and sustainable interventions.
- 3. **Forward looking:** The evaluation is forward looking in its orientation, providing key stakeholders with an independent and objective evaluation of the current progress, and pinpointing any required adjustments to facilitate the D&R reform ahead.

3.2 Conceptual basis for Evaluation

The proposed analytical framework for the evaluation (Figure 4) is structured to look at the various facets of the reform from the lens of the four dimensions of the operating model.

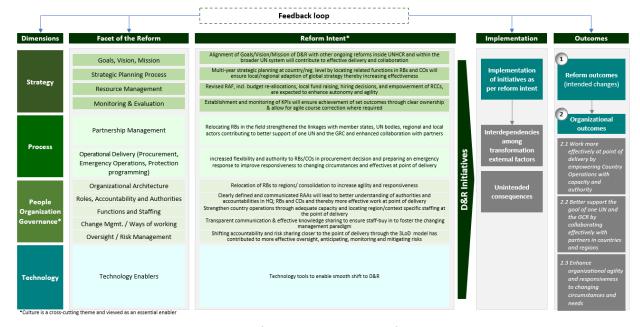


Figure 5: Proposed analytical framework (refer to annex 5.10 for an enlarged view)

The evaluation team will analyze the D&R reform through the lens of building a robust Target Operating Model (TOM), which has been tested in other similar contexts. While a Theory of Change framework is generally used to assess system-wide changes and articulate the underlying assumptions behind a program or a targeted intervention such as country strategies, a TOM framework is used to analyze internal reform programs within organizations which have a transformational impact such as D&R.

A TOM can be used to define and describe the current and future state of how an organization operates to achieve its strategic goals and hence serves as a framework to drive organizational change. In this regard, this

framework offers the unique advantage of not only drawing conclusions based on retrospective analysis but also a forward-looking lens with recommendations for course correction where required.

The TOM model examines interactions and interdependencies of reform outcomes, considering the pre-D&R organizational elements that did exist and will continue to exist after the D&R reform. It therefore allows drawing holistic conclusions, drawing on systems approach principles to understand the interdependencies among the D&R facets and their impact on different outcomes. It is important to underscore that for this evaluation, the framework will be used to pinpoint specific reform areas, the so-called 'D&R facets', where the evaluation team found an intent for change and will assess how D&R as a reform process has influenced the broader TOM of UNHCR in order to develop comprehensive recommendations on the way forward.

The present analytical framework (figure 5) has been developed using two main sources of documentation:

- 1) UNHCR key documents related to background material which outlined the key issues at onset and initiatives undertaken as part of D&R (sec 2.2 and 3.3)
- 2) Most relevant evaluation and audits conducted for/related to D&R reform (annex 5.1.1).

As a part of the evaluation, each D&R facet of the reform will be evaluated against relevant areas of inquiry and sub-questions (As outlined in the Evaluation Matrix in Sec 3.4). The evaluation team has also developed a set of probing questions relevant to each facet of the reform and area of inquiry. Existing evidence, lessons learnt and recommendations from the evaluations and audits have provided an input for formulating probing questions across each facet of the reform (annex 5.3). In the data collection phase, data collection tools such as interview guide, survey, focus group discussion guide will be developed on the basis of the Evaluation Matrix and the probing questions (annex 5.3) to ensure comprehensive coverage and the required level of depth and specificity of evidence to address the five areas of inquiry.

3.2.1 Operating Model Dimensions and D&R facets

The dimensions of analysis are identified as an interlinked configuration of internal-external capabilities which together form an optimal design for UNHCR to meet the needs of people with and for whom UNHCR works. For this purpose, a review of design UNHCR D&R design documents from 2016-2019³⁸ were reviewed to identify key D&R facets across the four dimensions of analysis.

- **Strategy:** Collectively bring together the entire organization to maintain internal coherence and ensure the overall effectiveness of the D&R reform.
- **Processes:** Serve to operationalize the strategy and prioritize transformation needs.
- **People, Organization and Governance:** Decode the underlying execution requirement activities inherent to (or supporting) the core functioning of the organization post the reform across different processes and functions.
- **Technology:** Serve as tools to seamlessly enable cross-functional/level execution of the reform.

3.2.2 Reform Intent

The evaluation team found no single repository of the D&R reform intent across different facets of the reform. Through the extensive desk review and discussions with stakeholders, the evaluation team found the intent to have evolved and been refined over the years to meet the demands placed on UNHCR for an agile, effective, and relevant humanitarian organization in the years to come. Rather than originating from one single place,

^{382016,} UNHCR Broadcast, "HQs Review / Revue du Siège du HCR". Email from High Commissioner to All Staff at HQs and in the Field on 17 August 2016.

^{2017,} Mannet, UNHCR HQs Review: Rapid organizational Assessment. Final report 2018. UNHCR. The Case for Change UNHCR's Change Strategy.

^{2018,} UNHCR, Repositioning UNHCR in the field: Key considerations to guide Decentralization and Regionalization. Part I and II.

^{2018,} UNHCR Broadcast, "Change management update - regionalisation". Email from High Commissioner to All Staff at HQs and in the Field on 27 Sepember 2018.

^{2019,} UNHCR. SMC Principals Meeting (17-18 January 2019). Summary of Key Decisions.

^{2019,} UNHCR. Parameters and Design Considerations for the Creation of New RBs in the Field.

the D&R reform intent is captured across various documents which speaks to its cross-cutting and intersecting nature with other ongoing reforms at UNHCR. The limitations of the absence of a clear definition of intent and an evolving design of the reform are further discussed in Chapter 3.8.

The evaluation team formulated the reform intent across each of the D&R facets by identifying the issues at the onset which the reform intended to address, and the initiatives undertaken as a part of D&R to address the issues of onset. These reform intents (figure 3) are also anchored in certain inherent assumptions and risks that are articulated as follows:

The assumptions are:

- Those closest to the point of delivery are best placed to understand the needs of people with and for whom UNHCR works, and therefore to plan, decide and prioritize.
- Adequate resources for decentralization are available.
- Official shifting of decision making, and resource allocation power is vital for reaching true decentralization.
- Staff buy-in, continuous communication and cultural change is crucial for effective change to ensure cultural alignment and adaptability across RBs and COs.
- Repositioning of the RBs in the field is overall cost neutral.
- Seamless integration of technology to support communication and collaboration across RBs, COs and HQ.

The risks are:

1. Operational

- Risk of fragmentation of UNHCR as an organization.
- Simplification/review of systems and processes not synchronised/aligned with the implementation of D&R.
- Lack of sufficient admin and HR resources to manage implementation of D&R.

2. Performance

- Lack of effective KPIs hindering informed decision-making and adjustments.

3. Cultural

- Psycho-social risks for UNHCR colleagues affected by multiple change processes taking place simultaneously.
- Lack of communication across the organization with respect to D&R change initiatives.
- Insufficient ownership across the organisation to drive D&R reform.
- Misalignment between the various parallel reforms.

4. Reputational

- Lack of effective oversight by HQ, leading to misalignment between the activities of Field Offices and the global vision of UNHCR.

The reform intent along with the assumptions and risks will be further tested throughout the data collection phase through the area of inquiries to ensure its accuracy and comprehensiveness.

3.2.3 Implementation and Interdependencies

To achieve the reform intent, various initiatives were launched as part of the D&R reform. These initiatives were launched post the conceptualization phase (post-2018) with regular evaluations and subsequent refinements launched post-review. The present evaluation aims to identify the effectiveness and challenges faced in the implementation of revised policies, procedures, frameworks, and tools to enable the achievement

of the set objectives. The team will also evaluate interdependencies between different focus areas of transformation and external factors to identify any unintended consequences of the reform as well.

3.2.4 Outcomes

The effectiveness of the implementation of reforms determines the extent to which the outcomes of the reform have been achieved. Across each facet of the reform, it is important to determine the extent to which the right authorities (with accountabilities), oversight, capacity, functions, and resources are placed at the right organizational level. These reform outcomes are meant to lead to impact at an organizational level. The multiple objectives of the D&R reform can be summarized as the following three overhead goals³⁹:

- Work more effectively at the point of delivery by empowering COs with capacity, authority, support, and oversight.
- Better support the goal of One UN and the GRC by collaborating effectively with host governments and partners in countries and regions.
- Enhance organizational agility and responsiveness to changing circumstances and needs, enabling UNHCR to respond faster and in a more flexible way to protection needs.

3.3 Initial observations along D&R facets

The proposed framework above integrates the original six reform facets as outlined in the original TORs and provides an opportunity to evaluate the D&R reform through key organizational dimensions required to bring about effective change. As part of the initial desk review and stakeholder engagement, twelve D&R facets linked to the four overarching dimensions; Strategy, Processes, People, Organization and Governance, and Technology were identified.

The twelve facets are explained and initial observations from the desk review summarized below:

1. Strategy

1.1 Goals, Vision, Mission – Prior to D&R, UNHCR was largely operating according to a centralized system. TAs a response to this shift in the broader UN system, a new organizational design with strategic locations in the field to empower UNHCR to deliver on UNHCR Strategic Directions (2017-2021)⁴⁰ was developed. It was planned to enhance the capacities and skills of UNHCR's Country offices for the organization to remain relevant in the GCR era and the UN Reform⁴¹. Country Offices were to be strengthened and Regional RBs positioned in their to better align UNHCR's presence and authority at the regional level with UN sister agencies and enhance UNHCR's role in finding solutions for people with and for whom UNHCR works within an increasingly decentralized and integrated UN development system⁴².

1.2 Strategic Planning Process – Before D&R, results-based management and strategic planning were predominantly centered at the HQ level, although COs were granted some flexibility in formulating contextually relevant strategic plans. However, the annual planning cycle tended to sometimes discourage longer-term strategic considerations and limited the assessment of outcomes. There was also an opportunity to better prioritize impact, outcomes, and feedback mechanisms rather than planning and reporting activities.⁴³. A new division, the Division of Strategic Planning and Results (DSPR) at HQ was established to revamp a set of functions encompassing planning, resource allocation, monitoring and results management, ensuring

 $^{^{39}}$ 2017, Mannet, UNHCR HQs Review: Rapid organizational Assessment. Final report

^{2018,} UNHCR, The Case for Change UNHCR's Change Strategy

^{2019,} UNHCR, UNHCR's Transformation (2017-2019): Initial stock taking of what happened, when, how and why

^{2019,} UNHCR, Quick Guide to UNHCR's Regionalization & Decentralization Process

⁴⁰ HCR Strategic Direction 2017-21.

⁴¹ 2018-05-15 GRM_session on country-level identity and catalytic role.

^{42 2018-09-17} Repositioning UNHCR in the field- Key considerations to guide Decentralization and Regionalization_Part 1.

consistency, coherence, and efficiency across COs. In doing so, COs were given flexibility in planning, for example, a multi-year and multi-partner planning approach has been implemented with a streamlined results chain in place. This has been supported by a new results framework and simplified processes for planning, monitoring, and reporting, aided by modern tools⁴⁴.

- **1.3 Monitoring and Evaluation** The Change Team, in consultation with various divisions, developed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of the D&R reform. A dedicated task team consisting of representatives from RBs, DHRM, and Programme Budget Service (PBS) was established to ensure smooth transition of RBs into the field and ensure all issues related to it are shared and referred to relevant persons. These KPIs consisted of quantitative and qualitative data collected through surveys, regular consultations, and other methods, to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the reform⁴⁵.
- **1.4 Resource Management** Resource management is an important aspect of the D&R reform, enabling better operational autonomy and agility and ultimately leading to more effective delivery to forcibly displaced and stateless persons. During the inception phase, insights from KIIs shed light on opportunities for enhancing resource mobilization. There was also a need for better empowerment of Sub-Offices which lacked delegated authorities, limiting autonomy. Country offices were not actively encouraged to engage in local fundraising. The resource allocation process from HQ to country offices had elements of rigidity, which posed some challenges. Further, there was an opportunity to promote more representative budget allocation through involvement of other key stakeholders, for example, the AHC for Operations and Protection to discuss Protection related resource allocation. Additionally, Country offices faced constraints on recruitment authority, impacting effective workforce management.

Therefore, several strategic and structural updates were made to the RAF. Comprehensive revisions to the RAF delinked in-kind contributions from the budget allocations, allowing Representatives to increase their budgets as a result of locally raised funds, and empowered Heads of Sub-Offices with formal delegated authorities. Country Representatives were given the authority to make structural changes, such as opening or closing Field Offices. The adaptation of fundraising and allocation criteria spanned across HQ, RBs and COs accompanied by an assessment of delegations and potential responsibilities transfer from the center to COs. The RAF delegated authority to heads of Sub-Offices, granting formal delegated powers for position and budget management, including the acceptance of in-kind contributions within pre-set limits. The Budget Committee underwent expansion, incorporating a broader representation to rebalance power dynamics and allow for more direct input in decision-making processes. Additionally, the implementation of quarterly reporting by the Secretariat on decisions made by delegated authorities and COs raised transparency throughout the reform process. These initiatives aimed to promote operational autonomy and agility, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness of operational delivery.

2. Processes

2.1 Partnership Management – Before the implementation of the D&R initiative, partnership Management encountered challenges, including a lack of role clarity within the Partnerships division. The centralized structure faced challenges in effectively addressing regional nuances in partnership management, leading to limited interaction and exchange of experiences among field-based staff. Moreover, there was an opportunity to improve the centralized resource framework and provide better incentives for local fundraising for new initiatives which would also avoid delays, bureaucratic challenges and donor misunderstandings while increasing colleagues' agility and capacity for engaging in new multi-stakeholder initiatives⁴⁶. One of the intents

^{44 2020-05-00} Paper on UNHCR's new planning monitoring and reporting system.

⁴⁵ 2019-03-12 UNHCR DR strategic map for KPIs

 $^{^{46}}$ 2018-09-17 Repositioning UNHCR in the field- Key considerations to guide Decentralization and Regionalization_Part 1.

behind relocating RBs to the field was to fortify linkages with member states, UN bodies, regional and local actors. This strategic move aimed to better support the One UN and the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), fostering enhanced collaboration with partners in countries and regions. Under the D&R initiatives, substantial measures were introduced, empowering RBs with more accountability and authority to adapt to regional contexts, explore fundraising prospects, and allocate resources within predefined boundaries⁴⁷. The initiatives also encouraged greater engagement of Country Representatives and RBs Directors with donors at regional and country levels. RBs were enabled to play a more consistent and political role in rapidly evolving regional humanitarian and development contexts⁴⁸. Additionally, new roles were established in Sub-Offices to provide greater autonomy and decision-making authority, particularly in managing partnerships with local actors, including local government and private partnerships 49. To ensure ongoing improvement, a feedback mechanism was implemented to assess support needs, evaluate performance and partnerships, and identify areas for further enhancement.

2.2 Operational Delivery – Before D&R, the absence of RBs or HQ support and oversight sometimes led to financial losses and delayed delivery of goods and services. Weak control mechanisms by Representatives indicated an opportunity for improvement in monitoring procurement by partners⁵⁰. The overarching intent of the D&R initiative was to enhance responsiveness to changing circumstances and effectiveness at the point of delivery by increasing flexibility and authority for RBs and COs in procurement decisions and preparing for emergency responses.

The D&R Initiatives for operational delivery involved comprehensive measures. Overall, flexibility was granted to RBs for efficient decision-making with fewer layers between the field and senior management. Greater accountability was assigned to RBs for all activities, policy decisions, implementation, and risk management within their geographical areas⁵¹. In Procurement and Supply, the rules and procedures were clarified and simplified, outlining the roles and responsibilities of different actors at all levels. New thresholds governing procurement and asset management were established. A "single review principal" and simplified templates for Asset Management Boards were introduced, along with the creation of seven Regional Asset Management Boards and Contracts Committees for new thresholds. Amendments in rules and procedures increased the upper thresholds for RCCs and the Head of the Supply Management Service, enhancing efficiency in procurement processes⁵². For emergencies, an Emergency Preparedness Framework was implemented with Responsible Area Advisors assigned. The UNHCR policy for enhanced emergency planning and response was revised, empowering COs for proactive emergency preparedness based on risk analysis, and RBs were tasked with overseeing emergency preparedness and risk analysis for complex situations impacting multiple countries. With regard to strengthening UNHCR's work on protection, dedicated protection pillar integrated in RBs aim at ensuring stronger integrated and comprehensive planning, including towards long-term durable solutions, with the overarching goal of strengthening protection outcomes at the point of delivery. These initiatives collectively aimed to strengthen operational delivery and improve outcomes in the areas of procurement, emergency operations, and protection programming⁵³.

3. People, Organization and Governance

^{47 2022-10-20} RAF Revised.

 $^{^{\}rm 48}$ 2018-01-09 The Case for Change - UNHCR Change Strategy.

⁴⁹ 2018-09-17 Repositioning UNHCR in the field- Key considerations to guide Decentralization and Regionalization_Part 1.

 $^{^{50}}$ 2016-04-25 OIOS Audit of the arrangements for procurement undertaken by partners using UNHCR funds

⁵¹ 2018-01-09 The Case for Change - UNHCR Change Strategy.

^{52 2021-05-21} UNHCR-AI-AI on Procurement.pdf, Emergency Preparedness from a Procurement Perspective (1).

UNHCR_AI_2018_5_Rev.1 Rules and Procedures of UNHCR Committees on Contracts.pdf, 2019-08-26 RAF part 1 files from intranet.

53 UNHCR-OG-2023-02-Guidance on Emergency Preparedness.pdf, 2023-01-31 UNHCR-HCP-2023-01 Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response.pdf, Emergency Preparedness from a Procurement Perspective (1).

Prior to D&R, decision-making and processes at UNHCR were characterized with a lack of clarity in defining roles⁵⁴. The internal Rapid Organizational Assessment report noted systemic issues embedded in the systems and culture of the organization, emphasizing the pivotal role of culture in the success of D&R reform. The report also underscored the importance of cultural shifts, particularly in the delegation of responsibilities, accountabilities, and authorities; clarification of the respective roles; cultivating a collaborative work environment; and rebuilding of trust among HQ, RBs and COs with the revised RAAs. The overall reform intent of this dimension of analysis aims for a cohesive and interlinked approach to culture recognizing that each facet under People, Organization and Governance contributes synergistically to the overall intended culture shift towards a culture of accountability and trust. The evaluation will limit its scope on culture to assessing whether cultural shifts have been supporting and enabling D&R success going forward.

- **3.1 Organizational Architecture** Before the D&R reform, decision-making predominantly resided within HQ, creating a need for enhanced alignment and collaboration with other UN agencies and partners locally and regionally⁵⁵. To address this, a new regional structure was designed to include seven RBs in strategic locations in the field and to establish fifteen MCOs. The design of RBs was a key part of the D&R reform, with the flexibility to adjust each one of them according to regional context (operational and political considerations)⁵⁶. These initiatives are intended to strengthen COs, enhance organizational agility and speed of decision-making to respond to changing circumstances and needs, collaborate better with partners, and work more effectively at the point of delivery⁵⁷.
- **3.2 Roles, Accountabilities and Authorities** Preceding the D&R reform, an ARA framework (Accountabilities, Responsibilities, Authorities) existed at an organizational, regional, and country level in order to designate the correct accountabilities, roles, and authorities to their respective levels of organization⁵⁸. Several independent audits identified areas for improvement in these ARAs, including reducing ambiguity, minimizing open interpretation, simplifying complexity, and making it easier to grasp and implement them. To address these areas, the ARA framework was first revised in 2018 during the planning and design stages of D&R, and later in October 2019⁵⁹. The ARAs became the RAAs (Roles, Accountabilities and Authorities), where accountabilities and authorities were delegated to directors instead of the collective, and roles to teams/staff, aiming to enhance clarity in decision-making across HQ, RBs and COs and establish clear delineation between HQ and RBs⁶⁰.
- **3.3 Functions and Staffing** Prior to the D&R reform, the centralized organizational structure led to limited complementarity of roles between HQ divisions and RBs, decreasing accountability and hindering effective regional and country engagement. Ensuring strong COs was seen as key for UNHCR to contribute more effectively at the point of delivery and strengthen capacity to respond to changing circumstances and needs. Thus, a Change Advisory Team (CAT) was introduced in 2019 to make recommendations on how to best (re)position context-specific and technical staff in the field as part of the 2020 Annual Programme Review (APR) COs were to be strengthened while robust RBs providing technical and localized strength in a wide range of functions, including human resources, supply chain and financial controls, were set up.
- **3.4 Change Management/Ways of Working** Prior to the D&R reform, engagement efforts, including staff surveys and readiness assessment, were undertaken to ascertain the necessity for change and pinpoint areas requiring attention, including psychological safety, leadership, internal communications, and career

⁵⁴ 2018-09-17 Repositioning UNHCR in the field- Key considerations to guide Decentralization and Regionalization_Part 1.

^{55 2019-10-25} Change legacy piece_without links.

⁵⁶ 2019-01-17-18 SMC Retreat Key Decisions Summary .docx (sharepoint.com).

⁵⁷ 2019-01-13 Documents for Jan 2019 SMC Principals Meeting_Managerial and technical interfaces.pdf (sharepoint.com)

^{58 2019-10-25} Change legacy piece_without links.pdf - All Documents (sharepoint.com)

^{99 2018-09-17} Repositioning UNHCR in the field- Key considerations to guide Decentralization and Regionalization_Annex 3 - Revised ARAs - Draft Proposals.

⁶⁰ 2019-10-14 Update email from HC on final phase of change process.msg.

developments⁶¹. In addition, with the introduction of the 2017-2021 Strategic Directions, a fundamental shift in ways of working was needed to effectively navigate the organizational transformation, notably D&R. Thus, specific initiatives were implemented during the D&R reform to best support UNHCR's staff. In 2019, UNHCR's Talent Development and Performance Section (TDPS) and Global Learning and Development Center (GLDC) supported staff in their transition, through both training opportunities and management assistance. Notably, collaborative decision-making processes were prioritized to foster staff buy-in and ensure their active involvement. Furthermore, the introduction of new tools and communities of practice demonstrates a proactive approach to managing information flow between HQ, RBs and COs⁶². A large majority of KII in the inception phase mentioned that transparent communication, effective knowledge sharing, and appropriate support measures are essential elements for a successful D&R reform.

3.5 Oversight and Risk Management - UNHCR formally adopted the three Lines of Defense (3LoD) model in 2017⁶³ aligned to its specific needs and structure. The model was first introduced by the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) in 2011, as a reference model for oversight, accountability, and risk management. The model provided a simple and effective way to enhance communications on risk management and control by clarifying essential roles and duties. In 2018, the Independent Audit and Oversight Committee voiced strong support to strengthen the model and improve accountability by establishing an effective integrated internal control framework to identify more effective risks posed to the achievement of its objectives and the requisite mitigation measures. Certain key findings from internal audit in 2018 highlighted that UNHCR's conceptual framework for defining ARAs leaves considerable room for individual interpretation and implementation regarding the roles and responsibilities of second line of defense entities, making each RBs responsible for developing an annual, risk-based performance and compliance monitoring plan in consultation with other entities in the second line of defense. The model was also not widely communicated within the organization to inform staff and managers of its purpose, and management and oversight risk for various functions.

This was followed by the revision of the 3LoD model, from the "3-Lines of Defense" to the "3-Lines Model" in 2021, which more correctly recognized that first and second line roles are present at all levels of the organization and, at times, within individual functions. It is worth noting that UNHCR was simply adopting and adapting the IIA model according to the organizational and operational realities, and not innovating it. In the current model:

- First line roles are aligned with the delivery of products and/or services (including support functions), but also establishment of internal controls and management of risks. In UNHCR, these roles correspond to those typically assumed by COs, but some are also fulfilled by RBs and HQ Divisions/Entities (e.g., management of resources within the delegation frameworks, and management of their own risks.)
- Second line roles provide complementary expertise, support, monitoring, and challenge related to the management of risks by first line roles. In UNHCR, RBs, HQ Division & Entities typically assume the second line roles, but some are also fulfilled by Country offices (e.g., Project Control, oversight, and support roles with respect to Sub-Offices, Field-Offices and Field-Units)
- Third line roles provide independent assurance and advice to Management on the adequacy and effectiveness of governance and risk management. The internal, independent oversight entities (e.g., Inspector General's Office, Office of Internal Oversight Services, Evaluation Services) assume the third line roles, further complemented by external assurance providers (e.g., United Nations Board of Auditors and Joint Inspection Unit, UNHCR's Independent Audit and Oversight Committee).

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⁶¹ 2012-01-10 Recommendations of the 2011 Staff Management Consultative Council (SMCC) meeting.txt.

⁶² Evaluation office - 2019-02-01 Quick Guide on Decentralisation Change Process.

^{63 2021- 10-01} Overview of new 3L model.

The model serves as a lens through which the organization looks at how risks are managed at different levels. It also provides high level guidance on how to identify and structure the interactions and responsibilities of the key players in an organization, to improve alignment, collaboration and accountability while maintaining adequate controls and oversight. Overall, the revised RAAs⁶⁴, which reflect the principles of the 3 Lines Model and ensure the provision of technical support to the field were seen as trust building measure between divisions, RBs and the SET.

4. Technology

4.1 Technology Enablers – D&R's overall objective was to improve UNHCR's support to forcibly displaced and stateless persons. In doing so, UNHCR has taken numerous steps as part of an overarching transformation agenda, the case for change ⁶⁵, to enable the organization to operate in a more agile way, enhancing collaboration and operational efficiency, and ultimately ensuring better adaptability to changing circumstances and needs. With regard to technology, UNHCR has taken multiple transformation programs to address its legacy platform by introducing new technology. While an evaluation of the past and ongoing initiatives, including the Business Transformation Programme (BTP) is out of scope of this evaluation, there will inevitably be interlinkages among some of these with D&R as they relate to changes in processes and ways of working (see Chapter 3.8 for discussion of risks and limitations). The relevance of tools and technology to enable successful implementation of D&R has come up as a consistent and prominent theme in the inception phase and is a key enabling factor for UNHCR's further journey on D&R. The evaluation will limit its scope on technology to assessing whether changes in technology have been supporting and enabling D&R success going forward. In addition, findings from our evaluation will be used to recommend technology interventions to improve D&R.

3.4 Evaluation Matrix

The analytical framework serves as a foundation for investigating the effectiveness of the reform across various facets of the operating model, as well as assessing the role of UNHCR in bringing about observed transformations. The five evaluation questions (EQ) offer avenues for assessing UNHCR's performance across different facets outlined in the framework, corresponding to five areas of inquiry (design intent, reform outcome, organizational outcome, implementation and interdependencies and next steps/recommendations):

- EQ1: Design principles and approach: how relevant, appropriate, and feasible was the design and planning approach taken in the regionalization and decentralization reform and what can be learnt to inform the future? The intent of this evaluation question is to understand the conceptual design of the various facets of the reform along with clarity of the rationale and appropriateness as per the reform intent. This will address the left-hand side of the analytical framework. (Sec 3.2.1, 3.2.2)
- **EQ2: Reform Outcomes: have the intended results of the reform been realized?** This evaluation question aims to understand the extent to which the reform has achieved the reform intent in the context of each facet of the reform as outlined in the analytical framework. (Sec 3.2.4)
- EQ3: Organizational Outcomes: to what extent has UNHCR delivered on the key intended strategic
 vision and outcomes of the reform? This question tests the extent to which the reform outcomes have
 translated into the achievement of overall D&R goals for the organization, as outlined in the analytical
 framework. (Sec. 3.2.4)

⁶⁴ UNHCR (2018). Repositioning UNHCR in the field: Key considerations to guide Decentralization and Regionalization. Part I.

^{65 2018-09-17} Repositioning UNHCR in the field. Key considerations to guide Decentralization and Regionalization_Part 1

- EQ4: Implementation processes and inter-dependencies: has UNHCR effectively and efficiently managed the reform process? The implementation process and interdependencies for the reform are articulated here to evaluate whether the reform was implemented as per the intended design and identify any challenges faced in the implementation process. The focus will also be on evaluating any interdependencies between different systems and identifying any unintended consequences of the reform in alignment with the systems approach. (Sec 3.2.3)
- EQ5: Lessons and recommendations: where are the good practices that can be built upon; the effective aspects of the reform and the possibilities not considered? The focus of this evaluation is not just identifying the issues faced but also providing forward-looking guidance on the next steps and recommendations to improve the outcomes of the reform.

The Evaluation Matrix presents the five EQs, with sub-questions and relevant evaluation criteria (OECD DAC criteria for evaluation), indicators/judgement criteria proposed to measure each sub-question, and proposed data collection and analysis methods and tools. The matrix has been revised, considering the findings from the inception phase, to make it more comprehensive and to provide robust data-backed findings in the evaluation report. (Full matrix can be found in annex 5.2)

3.5 Evaluation methodology

The evaluation will follow a mixed-methods methodology for data collection involving document reviews, KIIs, focus group discussions (FGDs), a global online survey, country case studies and vertical case studies. Anchored in an inclusive approach, the overarching aim of data collection is not only to identify existing gaps, and challenges but also to discern emerging dynamics across various D&R facets across countries, regions and key functions.

Through the analysis and synthesis of quantitative and qualitative data, the methodology seeks to generate empirical evidence for assessing the design and planning approach, intended strategic vision and reform outcomes, implementation processes and inter-dependencies, agility of operational delivery and responsiveness, and good practices that can be built upon- the effective aspects of the reform and the possibilities not considered during of UNHCR in relation to D&R. The following data collection methods illustrate an indicative approach that will be deployed throughout the data collection phase:

3.5.1. Document review

Building on the initial document and literature reviews carried out in the inception phase, our next step involves a thorough examination of documents to furnish concrete and documented evidence in response to the evaluation questions. On a global scale, the team will scrutinize a range of documents, primarily focusing on relevance to D&R. This includes:

- Internal background material including policy documents, D&R strategy, and implementation guidance, organigrammes, documentation of background research, and other key documents mentioned in the bibliography.
- Existing quantitative data related e.g., to tracked KPIs, headcount, budgets, procurement, resource allocation, emergency responsiveness.
- UNHCR and UN corporate documents.
- UNHCR evaluations and audits. Related academic papers, research reports and audits of other organizations.

This broader scope aims to ensure a comprehensive understanding and evaluation of existing evidence related to each facet of the reform including conceptual design, strategic plans, region-wise assessment of reforms, alignment with other programs, protocols(e.g., emergency policies and handbook), FTE data and overall budget documents, results previously conducted surveys (e.g., culture assessment), issues identified in D&R (e.g., issues with effectiveness of RAAs, oversight mechanisms and functions, adequacy of resources and capacities placed at regional/country level).

3.5.2. KIIs

The evaluation team will conduct KIIs with a mix of UNHCR and external stakeholders relevant to the evaluation. The primary objective is to uncover the qualitative insights focusing on a comprehensive understanding and perceptions on D&R appropriateness, level of standardization or flexibility provided, alignment with other reforms and programs, extent of achievement of reform outcomes, leadership perspective on improvement in delivery outcomes, improved agility, implementation effectiveness, adaptability, inter-dependencies and oversight, behavioural changes, lessons learnt, future outlook and other key areas of enquiry. The key stakeholders for these interviews include:

- UNHCR staff at HQ, in particular the division of Strategic Planning and Results (DSPR) the division International Protection (DIP), the division of Emergency, Security & Supply (DESS) and the division of External Relations (DER).
- UNHCR RB Directors and staff, in particular the functions of Strategic Planning and Partnerships, External Engagement, Protection Coordination and Operations Support.
- Representatives and/or staff at different offices at national and sub-national levels including MCOs, Country Offices, and Field Offices.
- Strategic and implementing partners (Incl. Refugee Led Organizations) (refer to annex 5.6).

This will include an indicative mix of stakeholders across functions critical to D&R, such as strategic planning, external relations and partnerships, protection, emergency response and operations. The list of KIIs to be conducted will be further refined in the data collection phase. It will be imperative that the selected interviewees across critical functions possess significant pre- and post-D&R experience or substantial amount (>4 years) of service within UNHCR. This requirement will ensure a depth of knowledge and insights crucial for the evaluation. For case studies, interviewees will include leadership, division heads, directors and multicountry office/ country office representatives directly associated with the shortlisted functions and/ or countries. The KIIs will be conducted using a combination of virtual and in-person discussions.

3.5.3 FGDs

The principal aim of the FGDs is to gather perspectives on the perceived outcomes of the reforms (e.g., clarity of roles and responsibilities, alignment with partners and HQ, adequate staffing and presence of context-specific functions, improvement in effectiveness of delivery, responsiveness and agility in response etc.), implementation progress and challenges faced especially during external events such as Covid-19, inter-dependencies identified between different reform strands and perceptions of changes in the organizational culture as an enabler/obstacle to reform success. The target audience for FGDs will include a mix of staff within P1-P5 designations in HQ, RBs, MCOs/COs, other relevant staff, and a mix of strategic and implementing partners. The selection of participants will be particularly based on their experiences with the identified facet under evaluation and whether their specific function has been impacted due to the D&R initiative.

The operationalization of FGDs will follow a well-sequenced plan, commencing with planning virtual/physical visits to short-listed countries (during country case studies) and subsequently hosting separate focus group discussions at each organizational level. The FGDs will also provide further depth to the vertical case studies through participatory sense-making.

To steer these discussions, a facilitation guide, informed by insights from surveys, KIIs and document reviews, will be created. This guide, with predefined topics and prompts, will ensure that discussions remain focused and relevant.

3.5.4 Global Online Survey

The global survey will target a diverse mix of participants, including leadership (D1/D2 and P4-P5), and staff (P1-P3), This inclusive approach ensures representation from individuals across various organizational levels, spanning RBs, MCO/CO, and field staff. The survey will be designed to elicit perceptions from UNHCR staff, specifically addressing key evaluation questions across facets. To ensure precision and manageability, the survey will be designed to cover essential aspects of D&R, such as perceived effectiveness, field staff perspectives at field and regional level, perceived improvement in operational delivery, agility and responsiveness and perceived culture change. The survey aims to gather both quantitative and qualitative insights, with a focus on identifying priority D&R impact areas, assessing improvement, scope, and understanding staff perspectives in comparison with leadership's viewpoints.

Recognizing the potential challenge of low response rates due to workload and survey fatigue, the survey will be thoughtfully planned and communicated. This survey will be a valuable source of information collection, playing a crucial role in constructing a comprehensive dataset. This approach emphasizes the importance of collecting data comprehensively from diverse sources and locations, contributing to the evidence required for evaluation.

The survey will be created using a secure online survey tool, and an initial pilot survey will be carried out among a small group to assess its effectiveness. Feedback from the pilot survey will be carefully reviewed for further refinements. Following successful pilot testing, the survey will be deployed globally. Several important considerations will be addressed to maximize survey response rates, including:

- The survey is anonymous, with an option to add contact details for later follow-up.
- Clear, unambiguous, and precise questions.
- Universally intuitive design for diverse backgrounds and technological competencies.
- The survey is open for a sufficient period, and a reminder message is sent.
- Emphasize data privacy and security measures.
- Diverse distribution channels for comprehensive outreach.

3.5.5 Country Case Studies

The sampling process for country case studies involved a collaborative approach among the evaluation team, the Evaluation Office, the Core Group, and the Field Reference Group. An initial classification of 144 countries based on four key criteria: size (staff and budget size), emergency status, number people with and for whom UNHCR works and number of sub-national offices within the country (Sub-Offices, Field Offices, Field Units, and "other" offices⁶⁶) was performed. Next, a rigorous screening exercise was conducted using three key criteria: operational representativeness, geographical coverage, and other considerations, such as prior evaluation/audit load, narrowing down the list to 33 countries. Parallelly, a survey was rolled out to the FRG (refer to annex 5.7) to gain an understanding of the countries that would pose as interesting case studies in regional and field contexts. The screened countries along with prioritized and de-prioritized countries were further presented to the Core Group for a collaborative discussion and qualitative inputs. The final selection of 14 countries included two MCOs, with backup options contingent upon situational analysis (Refer to annex 5.4). These case studies aim to evaluate various facets of the reforms across the various areas of inquiry and ideally represent the global scenario of the D&R reform. The evaluation methodology involves extensive document

⁶⁶ Including for instance Chiefs of Mission.

reviews, including analysis of regional contexts, functional backgrounds (e.g., advocacy-focused) and relevant D&R focused impacts. In-depth KIIs, FGDs, observations and surveys will be conducted with diverse stakeholders. After each mission, a de-briefing with head of RBs will be conducted.

3.5.6 Vertical Case Studies

The vertical case studies will adopt a standardized structure, subject to refinement in subsequent phases, assessing an exploration of the intent of D&R for the specific case study, D&R initiatives undertaken, outcomes achieved with qualitative and quantitative feedback, comparative analysis against initial intent to gauge effectiveness, an examination of the impact D&R had on the case study, broader conclusions on interlinkages with the organization's ways of working, and finally, a set of recommendations derived from insights gained to guide future actions and inform the way forward. The evaluation methodology involves extensive document reviews, KIIs, FGDs and a survey.

The vertical case study sampling process involved a strategic process, beginning with the initial classification of four potential vertical case studies mapped against a selection criterion: strategic priority, vertical coverage, criticality for D&R and measurability. In addition, a survey was designed for the Core Group and the FRG to gather inputs and views regarding the selection of vertical case studies. (Refer to annex 5.5)

3.6 Data analysis and synthesis

3.6.1 Data Coding and Evidence Collation

The collected data will be further categorized, coded, and organized using an Evidence Assessment Framework (EAF) which will be carried out on an MS Excel document, imaging the structure of the Evaluation Matrix. The goal of this exercise is to amass evidence derived from primary data collection, establishing a firm foundation for subsequent triangulation and in-depth analysis across the areas of enquiry.

3.6.2 Data Analysis

The third phase will involve data analysis and reporting, commencing with a thorough document review and the gathering of data through KIIs, FGDs, and surveys which will focus on:

- 1. Qualitative analysis of evidence from document reviews, KIIs and FGDs: The evaluation team will analyze the qualitative evidence gathered from documents, stakeholder interviews and FGDs at global, regional, and country levels. The team will validate the findings using triangulation, a methodological approach involving cross-verification of information from more than one source or method, in conjunction with the evaluation questions and sub-questions, to guide and support the relevant findings and lessons learnt. This will include collation and comparison of evidence at all levels (global, regional, country) supported by techniques such as participatory sense-making analysis⁶⁷, maturity analysis⁶⁸ and strategy analysis⁶⁹.
- 2. Quantitative analysis of evidence from data, reports and surveys: During the exercise, the team will collate quantitative data from existing documents related to KPIs, headcount, budgets, fundraising etc. to perform trend analysis⁷⁰ (e.g., staff headcounts, financial considerations) to ultimately answer the key sub-questions across the areas of inquiry. This will also include survey analysis which will quantify the staff/leadership perceptions on topics such as organizational hierarchy, culture, RAA, process standardization, and reporting lines while undertaking comparative analysis at the level of different

⁶⁷ Participatory sense-making analysis: To assess the collaborative and shared understanding among stakeholders

⁶⁸ Maturity analysis: To assess the level of development or maturity of a process, system, or organization.

⁶⁹ Strategy analysis: To identify if a reform has been undertaken with clear definition of the end state aligned with the overall goals, vision, and mission of the organization.

⁷⁰ Trend analysis: To assess, identify and analyze patterns or trends in data over time and generate insights

entities (HQ, regions, countries), regions (e.g., Asia Pacific, Americas etc.) and hierarchy level (e.g., leadership vs staff perception) (Further information in annex 5.2).

3.6.3 Synthesis

Findings will be synthesized using triangulated data, across different stakeholders and different locations. Synthesizing the findings will allow the evaluation team to 1) identify potential patterns, relationships, and trends and 2) inform new insights decisions to derive meaningful conclusions and recommendations for way forward. The evaluation team views the data synthesis stage as a dynamic and iterative process that involves several working sessions. During these working sessions, the evaluation team will draft findings and map them against the Evaluation Matrix while considering input from the reference groups and the Evaluation Office. The goal is to identify direct and traceable evidence to derive meaningful findings and recommendations. The evaluation synthesis will be used to generate a **summative performance analysis and formative learning experiences** of the success of D&R reform against the OCED DAC evaluation criteria cited in the Evaluation Matrix.

3.7 Ethical considerations and data management

The evaluation shall be aligned with the UNEG Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct, as well as the UN Supplier Code of Conduct, and will ensure compliance with these principles and guidelines throughout all phases of the evaluation. In addition, the evaluation will comply with international ethical guidelines and best practices in quality assurance, evaluation processes and research. In addition, the evaluation shall take into consideration transparency; confidentiality and informed consent; independence; diversity and inclusion.

If participation of forcibly displaced and stateless persons in the evaluation will be sought, the evaluation will support and respect the ethical and meaningful participation of forcibly displaced and stateless persons and meet the standards and ethics of UNHCR and the UN Evaluation Group. As the scope of the evaluation may include the participation of forcibly displaced and stateless persons, who are considered a vulnerable population, the evaluation protocol and tools pertaining to the collection and management of data pertaining to forcibly displaced and stateless persons may need to be reviewed by an institutional ethics review board (IRB) and receive clearance prior to commencing. The evaluation team will align with RBs and COs to receive any necessary country-specific ethical review requirements in the case study countries.

The key principles that shall guide the evaluation include independence, impartiality, credibility, and utility, which in practice, call for protecting sources and data; systematically seeking informed consent; respecting dignity and diversity; minimizing risk, harm, and burden upon those who are the subject of, or participating in the evaluation, while at the same time not compromising the integrity of the exercise.

The evaluation team shall sign the UNHCR Code of Conduct, complete UNHCR's introductory protection training module, and respect UNHCR's confidentiality, UNHCR Data Protection Policy, and UNHCR Age, Gender, and Diversity policy requirements.

3.8 Limitations and risk to the evaluation

A total of nine limitations and risks to the evaluation have been identified below. None of the risks identified is expected tom have a high impact on the results of the evaluation due to mitigation measures taken:

Table 1: Table outlining limitations and risks to the evaluation

Risk	Description	Mitigation	Likelihood	Impact
		External factors		
Impact of COVID-19 on the efficacy of the D&R reform	The pandemic has affected COs throughout UNHCR to various degrees. Hence, the effects of D&R need to be considered against this external factor which made it unable to travel physically to many locations for up to 2 years and made it impossible to coherently roll out planned interventions/activities as part of D&R including data collection, feedback loops and KPI tracking.	The evaluation will control for the external effects of COVID by a) contextualizing the impact of the pandemic on D&R and distinguishing related and unrelated causes and effects, and by b) creating a baseline comparison pre-pandemic to help isolate pandemic-related effects from other factors to arrive at an accurate assessment.	High	Medium
Ability to de- link D&R from other reforms and transformatio ns within UNHCR	UNHCR has undertaken multiple transformation programs over the past few years including modernizing its legacy and introducing new technology platforms. Each transformation brings with it an associated set of changes to processes and ways of working which will have intersecting impacts on the D&R reform. In addition, there are growing needs and decreasing budgets which may impact D&R results. Consequently, it will be a challenge in ascertaining the degree of causality between D&R and evaluation findings.	The evaluation framework and data collection tools will be designed to enable greater specificity on the impact and efficacy of D&R (to the extent possible). The evaluation team will also outline this risk in conversations with interviewees and stakeholders to ensure the inputs shared are restricted to D&R and its efficacy/impact. Hypothesis formulation, data collection and recommendation formulation process will be cognizant of the need to find evidence to establish causality. The updated theory of change will also adopt a systems-based approach, ensuring to minimize the focus on individual contribution/causality.	High	Medium
	Dan and evaluation infames.	Methodological risks		
Absence of central strategy documentation on the intent of D&R	Risk of lack of conceptual clarity on the intent of the reform in view of the absence of one central document of truth. Given the evolving nature of D&R with various interlinked and parallel reform processes and key decision-making points through the period of 2017-2020, gaps in mapping arguments, decision-making and outcomes must be expected. A limited sample of key informants who were involved in the design of the reform may offer a biased view.	The evaluation team will undertake a systematic desk review analysis to reconstruct the initial design plan/intent of the evaluation. It will draw on an extensive literature review of 700+ documents to establish the baseline for the evaluation and methodologically gather scattered information from a variety of sources, filling in data gaps while validating and fact-checking information provided by key informants.	High	Medium
Inability to get consistent data/data gaps across different	There is variance in data availability across the different areas of inquiry and the relevant dimension of analysis for the evaluation.	The UNHCR Evaluation Office has been supporting the evaluators to close as many data gaps as possible by obtaining all available information from different data custodians. Applying a variety of mitigation	Medium	High

offices and	While KPIs of overall success	magaziras such as avalaring the availability	Ī	
functions of	indicators exist, there is the	measures such as exploring the availability of alternative data sources when required,		
the UNHCR.	absence of one central	applying statistical methods of triangulation,		
the divitor.	repository or authority within	and using a mix between qualitative and		
	UNHCR to ensure the collected	quantitative data, will ensure that data gaps		
	data is complete, up-to-date,	will have as little impact as possible on the		
	and accurate.	robustness of the overall findings of the		
	and accurate.	evaluation. Significant data gaps which may		
	Limited good quality data is	impact findings will be made transparent.		
	available for a selection of	impact initings will be made transparent.		
	country case studies due to the			
	lack of a single repository of			
	data across all regions.			
Sampling Bias	The evaluation will be	The country samples and vertical case study	High	Medium
Sampling bias	conducted based on a sample of	selection are decided in conjunction with the	Tilgii	ivieululli
	-	Evaluation Office with input from the Core		
	countries jointly decided between the Evaluation Office	Group and the FRG. The country sample		
	and the evaluation team. The	includes a diverse mix of countries based on		
	sample might not be a	geographical balance and coverage of		
	completely accurate global	diverse entity operational		
	1	representativeness. To enlarge data		
	picture.			
		collection beyond the country visits, a global		
		survey will be conducted to capture the		
		collective input of a broader global perspective of UNHCR staff. Similarly, the		
		vertical case studies have been chosen		
A : _ _	There will be contain nectainties.	applying a critical selection.	NA - di	Laur
Availability of	There will be certain restrictions	The evaluation team will gather a variety of	Medium	Low
key	regarding the availability of key	perspectives from different stakeholders		
stakeholders	stakeholders, in particular, key	including UNHCR staff throughout all		
	informants who have changed	organizational levels (RBs, MCOs, Country		
	roles and status (e.g.,	Offices etc.), civil society networks,		
	retirement) since the initial D&R	implementing partners to UNHCR, Member		
	rollout. In addition, there may	States, other UN agencies, IFIs, regional		
	be a risk that some stakeholders	organizations and other strategic partners		
	will not feel comfortable sharing	including private sector partners to ensure a		
	their frank views despite the	robust sample of evidence. While high staff		
	independence of this	rotation will limit our ability to capture a		
	evaluation.	before and after D&R perspective from		
		some stakeholders, UNHCR staff who have		
		held various roles in the organization at HQ		
		and country are an additional asset as they		
		will be able to bring both perspectives to the		
C. 14	Cultural bios an language	evaluation.	High	Love
Cultural/lang	Cultural bias or language	The evaluation team composition has been	High	Low
uage barriers	barriers can lead to	carefully selected to ensure geographical		
leading to	misunderstandings,	and cultural balance including robust		
misinterpreta	misinterpretation of information	experience in understanding the context of		
tion of	presented during interviews	UNHCR's work. Regional senior evaluators		
perspectives	ultimately leading to inaccurate	have been selected to ensure regional specificities including cultural and linguistic		
		i specificities incliming chithral and linguistic	1	
shared by	or incomplete information.	I -		
respondents	or incomplete information.	aspects are being taken into consideration		
respondents	·	aspects are being taken into consideration Operational risks	Lucat	NA - P
respondents Security risks	Certain locations where an in-	operational risks If in-person visits are not possible from a	High	Medium
respondents Security risks impede in-	Certain locations where an in- person visit would be desirable	Operational risks If in-person visits are not possible from a security point of view, remote consultations	High	Medium
Security risks impede in- person visits	Certain locations where an in- person visit would be desirable from a data sampling	aspects are being taken into consideration Operational risks If in-person visits are not possible from a security point of view, remote consultations will be conducted which will ensure a	High	Medium
respondents Security risks impede in-	Certain locations where an in- person visit would be desirable	Operational risks If in-person visits are not possible from a security point of view, remote consultations	High	Medium

Limited	Risk of low response rate to	The Evaluation Office is aware of the risk of	High	Medium
Survey	surveys floated due to a large	survey fatigue in the organization and will		
Response	number of ongoing surveys	apply a host of best practice measures to		
Rate		maximize engagement and response rates.		

Identification of potential risks in the inception phase itself has allowed the evaluation team to identify potential mitigating steps and actions. These actions have already been contemplated into the evaluation framework and approach to be followed, to ensure recommendations are unbiased and actionable.

3.9 Quality assurance

The evaluation team will follow a comprehensive approach to quality assurance from the project start to the delivery of the final evaluation report:

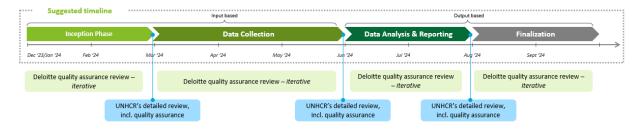
Step 1: Identification and assessment of the exact requirements for each organization, its context and needs from the evaluation, which informs the team composition with the required skillsets and diversity to conduct a robust evaluation.

Step 2: Implementation of **standard quality review process** through **multiple review levels** from survey interviewers/coders, senior evaluators, team lead to a review from two partners from Deloitte leadership. In addition, the project team has access to Deloitte's global network of subject matter experts whose knowledge can be drawn on throughout the project.

Step 3: Iterative review cycles among the evaluation team and the Evaluation Office will ensure continuous quality control. Key deliverables themselves will additionally be reviewed by the established Core Group and reference groups which will enable the evaluation team to proactively identify and mitigate challenges and obstacles that could affect the quality of the evaluation. Main quality assurance activities and review cycles by phase are illustrated below (Figure 4). If required, corrective measures will be defined among the Evaluation Office and evaluation team.

Step 4: As a final layer, an **internal global sounding board composed of two Deloitte partners** will be established and provide quality assurance on the final deliverable before it is handed to UNHCR.

Data management and confidentiality are key considerations in conducting independent evaluations ensuring integrity and privacy of sensitive information. In this regard, Deloitte complies with its obligations under Data Protection Legislations ("DPL") in respect of personal data processed by it in connection with the Contract and the Services. The evaluation team will only process personal data to the extent necessary to provide the services and in accordance with the specific instructions given by the Evaluation Office and as required by any competent authority or applicable law (if appropriate). Adhering to UNHCR's evaluation quality assurance (EQA) guidance, all evaluation products will be shared with an external quality assurance provider for their comment, in addition to being reviewed by the Evaluation Manager and relevant reference groups. Evaluation deliverables will not be considered final until they have received a satisfactory review rating and have been cleared by the Head of the Evaluation Office. The Evaluation Manager will share and provide an orientation to the EQA at the start of the evaluation. Adherence to the EQA will be overseen by the Evaluation Manager.



4. Schedule and workplan

4.1 Key milestones, associated deliverables and stakeholder engagement

The evaluation was initiated on the 19th of December 2023 and will conclude by the 30th of August 2024 with the final evaluation report. The evaluation is divided into four distinct phases: inception, data collection, data analysis and reporting and finalization.

In the inception phase, the evaluation team will conduct a comprehensive review of all relevant documents, desk research, and KIIs to inform the analytical framework. The Evaluation Matrix and data collection strategy are finalized, and the team will deliver the Inception Report.

In the data collection phase, KIIs, FGDs, and surveys with UNHCR staff and relevant stakeholders will be conducted. This phase will also entail validation workshops with key stakeholders interviewed throughout the data collection phase on the findings and post-field mission debriefs.

In phase three, data analysis will be performed to inform key insights, themes and findings which shall be validated with relevant stakeholders ahead of any recommendations and the draft report. In phase four, the evaluation team shall finalize the report and engage in internal dissemination activities to present final recommendations. Key deliverables and corresponding project phases are highlighted in Figure 7.

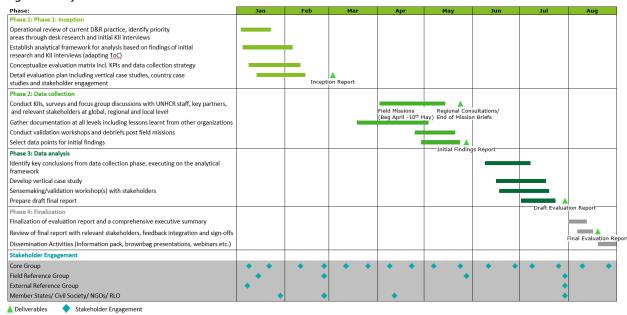


Figure 7: Key milestones and deliverables timeline

4.2 Evaluation team and management

On behalf of the UNHCR Evaluation Office, David Rider Smith is the Evaluation Manager responsible for this evaluation under the leadership of Lori Bell, the Head of the Evaluation Office. The Deloitte evaluation team is led by Nina Haelg, an expert in multilateral affairs and international migration, and overseen by Julius N. Hill, a senior partner for the international affairs and development sector based in Geneva, Switzerland.

The evaluation team is composed of seven core members and a pool of subject matter specialists at the global, regional, and local levels available upon which the core team can draw for additional subject matter expertise

(refer annex 5.8 for team composition organigram). The team comprises individuals from diverse nationalities across four continents, ensuring cultural diversity and enabling multilingualism in English, French and Spanish.

In addition, a Core Group, an Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) and Field Reference Group (FRG) have been established to guide the evaluation design and to contribute with their insights and expertise throughout the evaluation.

5. Annexes

5.1 Evidence base for synthesis of scoping and initial observations

The desk review comprised many documents (+700 documents) provided by the Evaluation Office, key informants and other UNHCR stakeholders in different functions.

The documentation was structured along the seven archetypes:

- 1. UNHCR background materials
- 2. External reading materials
- 3. Audits, Evaluations, Reviews
- 4. Organigrammes
- 5. Data
- 6. UNHCR corporate & other guidance documents
- 7. Documents received from Divisions and RBs

These documents were utilized for several purposes, including:

- 1) Understanding the context of the D&R reform: The evaluation team conducted a critical review of the literature including previous evaluations, audits, and other documents related to D&R to gain an understanding of the nature, scope, objectives, and purpose of the reform, the ongoing implementation status, challenges, and opportunities. Additionally, these documents served as the foundation for conducting the KIIs, ensuring the right questions were asked to gather as many useful insights as possible. Given the large number of documents, the evaluation team has concentrated on the most critical and high-priority documents and will continue to review other documents.
- 2) Informing the Evaluation Matrix: The documentation enabled the evaluation team to develop the analytical framework and the Evaluation Matrix, outlining the areas of inquiry, the relevant sub-questions, the indicators and different data collection and analysis methods for assessing the D&R reform performance. This is crucial in ensuring that the Evaluation Matrix is comprehensive and aligned with the objectives of this evaluation.
- 3) **Providing valuable feedback, best practices and lessons learned** from similar reforms undertaken at UNHCR as well as key outcomes related to D&R, helping the evaluation team form the development of relevant approaches for this evaluation.

5.1.1 Evidence from evaluations and existing audits

The evaluation team conducted a thorough review of previous evaluations and audits in UNHCR and in other organizations which highlight various aspects related to D&R within UNHCR and in other organizations.

The previous evaluations and audits were structured as follows:

- 1. Prior UNHCR evaluations, which describe experiences with D&R to date.
- 2. Prior UNHCR audits and reviews, which describe experiences with D&R to date.
- 3. Audits and evaluations related to D&R from other organizations.

1. Prior UNHCR evaluations, which describe experiences with D&R to date

In the review of prior evaluations of UNHCR's, including Country Strategy Evaluations and L3 Emergency Response Evaluations, the evaluation team identified notable insights and critical findings.

On the one hand, a few L3 emergency evaluations for example Ukraine⁷¹ and Afghanistan demonstrate an overall improvement in operational efficiency and responsiveness resulting from D&R initiatives, specifically regarding preparedness for emergencies⁷². However, it is important to note that when there is an emergency, the ways of working and operating are subject to change to achieve efficiency and effectiveness. While D&R is meant to strengthen UNHCR at the point of execution, there is a clear need to further assess D&R in the context of emergency situations, to fully realize its benefits. ⁷³ Furthermore, it was highlighted that bringing operations and decision-making closer to the field enables better real-time gathering of information on the ground, due to better collaboration with locally based stakeholders, including governments, UN agencies, international agencies, and donors⁷⁴. Several areas of improvement are pointed out in the Country Strategy Evaluations with respect to D&R. In addition, other L3 emergency evaluations also noted that roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined and well understood, leading to ambiguity and inefficiency⁷⁵. Interestingly, it was also noted that the introduction of D&R added a layer of bureaucracy for RBs, impeding organizational agility instead of improving it⁷⁶. Coupled with the layer of bureaucracy, there seem to be notable bottlenecks in systems and processes, which need to be addressed in the D&R evaluation⁷⁷.

From the Country Strategy Evaluation of Mauritania, among others, it is observed that communication strategies between different levels of the organization do not seem to always be adequate, resulting in incomplete dissemination of information to staff members between HQ, RBs and COs⁷⁸. This suggests that clear change management strategies and a focus on ways of working remain critical in the success of D&R given the complexities across levels, functions, and geographies. This lack of awareness affects staff members' understanding of their authority post-D&R implementation, often hindering decision-making processes. While some evaluations highlight that RAAs are well documented, they are not applied when RBs and COs are faced with emergencies⁷⁹.

Based on our reviews, it is evident that UNHCR's strategy to support government efforts to promote the exercise of rights and the inclusion of refugees, while effective, has not always succeeded due to contextual factors. This reality is not far removed from the D&R reform. Whereas the intention of D&R is to strengthen regions and COs, the success of the reform is dependent on country contextual factors, some beyond UNHCR's control. This finding strengthens the need to carefully examine contextual specific needs of each country during the D&R process. With respect to coordination and leadership, the Country Strategy Evaluations of Mauritania, and L3 emergency response evaluation of Afghanistan and Ukraine provide evidence that multi-level leadership coordination is important for the successful delivery of D&R. This is rightly so during emergencies where several leadership layers are involved from HQ, RBs and countries, and so leadership alignment and ways of working remain critical in the success of D&R given the complexities across different geographies.

From an evaluation approach and methodology point of view, most if not all previous evaluations follow a consistent methodology using a theory-based approach, evaluation framework, principles of participation, and a combination of data collection methods for primary and secondary data which include document review, semi-structured interviews, FGDs, observations, and reflection workshops. In the current evaluation, the methodology is consistent with previous evaluations which have produced consistent and valid evidence. There

⁷¹ 2023-12-00 Evaluation of UNHCR's Level 3 Regional Refugee Emergency Response to the crisis in Ukraine.pdf

⁷² Evaluation of UNHCR's L3 Emergency Response to Cyclone Idai | UNHCR France.

⁷³ EvO/2023/02 Evaluation of UNHCR's Response to the L3 Emergency in Afghanistan 2021–2022.

⁷⁴ Evaluation of UNHCR's L3 Emergency Response to Cyclone Idai | UNHCR France.

⁷⁵ EvO/2023/01 Evaluation of UNHCR's Response to the L3 Emergency in Ethiopia 2021–2022.

⁷⁶ EvO/2023/01 Evaluation of UNHCR's Response to the L3 Emergency in Ethiopia 2021–2022.

Fivo/2023/02 Evaluation of UNHCR's Response to the L3 Emergency in Afghanistan 2021–2022.

⁷⁸ mauritania-cse-2020-2022-report-en.pdf (unhcr.org).

⁷⁹ mauritania-cse-2020-2022-report-en.pdf (unhcr.org).

is an opportunity to explore other methods to assess whether the results or evidence will be strengthened. The target operating model framework could be a catalyst in this process.

2. Prior UNHCR audits and reviews, which touch upon/describe experiences with D&R to date

In parallel to evaluations, UNHCR has conducted various audits, both internally and in collaboration with external entities throughout the preceding years, to assess the implementation, progress, and recommendations related to D&R. A comprehensive review of these audits indicates that while D&R has been effectively implemented, there are several areas, including clarity of roles, oversight, and staffing, that could benefit from further refinement and improvement. For instance, the audit of the Regional Bureau for Africa conducted in 2023 highlighted the necessity to adapt the RAAs framework based on specific contexts and support it with specific tools to help with the implementation of roles, accountabilities, and authorities⁸⁰.

Another internal audit conducted in 2018 observed the need for effective controls over strategic planning and performance monitoring, emphasizing the need to strengthen emergency preparedness and its management support, monitoring and oversight across the region. This finding feeds into the design of the D&R reform. A subsequent audit on UNHCR Implementation of D&R published in 2021 acknowledged that the new RAF was a positive start towards decentralizing decision-making closer to the field, but it did not adequately empower the RBs and COs, something synonymous with almost all audits. The audit noted that the RBs staff did not participate in the allocation of resources, even though they were held accountable for the same. It is important to note that some functions, such as resource mobilization were only clarified in the RAAs in 2022, even though it became a regional bureau function in 2020. Thus, this may have increased confusion regarding specific responsibilities at the regional level. Emergency procedures vary across different contexts, underscoring the potential necessity of HQ's involvement to ensure effective coordination and response as needed. Indeed, it was noted that some delegations had not been operationalized due to a "lack of trust" in Sub-Offices. This demonstrates the evolutionary nature of D&R, and that corrective action has been gradual.

The audit of the Regional Bureau of East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes further found that the staff in RBs and COs were not always guided well in making risk-based decisions, bringing back decision-making to HQ⁸¹. This is an interesting finding as it may raise the possibility of staff not being adequately trained to take on new responsibilities because of the D&R reform, or a general fear for accountability. Whereas some documents highlighted good D&R practices such as the use of shared transactional services within COs and the RBs⁸² and that delegation of authority as defined by the RAF and the Policy on Recruitment and Assignments are generally followed ⁸³, other documents highlighted that staffing remains misaligned with identified priorities or risks in the region⁸⁴ and a lack of compliance with UNHCR rules and regulations due to lack of guidance from HQ⁸⁵.

Interestingly, other internal audits also mention that the staffing across the different levels of the organization was not well thought through, as there have been duplications of roles across HQ, RBs and COs (e.g., technical experts in all levels), even though COs had priority over technical roles, which may bring in a risk of inefficiency across UNHCR. There is a need to review the distribution of human resources within the operation and strengthen the necessary expertise in response to growing needs in terms of protection, inclusion, and the dynamics of the location of people with and for whom UNHCR works in various locations. This suggests that from skills transfer perspective, D&R should focus on strengthening technical skills closer to the countries,

⁸⁰ Audit of UNHCR Regional Bureau for Southern Africa.

⁸¹ Audit of the UNHCR Regional Bureau for East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes.

⁸² MCO Saudi Arabia review mission 11-04-2022.

⁸³ MCO Argentina review mission report 02-10-2023.

^{84 2022-06-08} SA Review Mission Report.

^{85 2023-07-06} OIOS Audit Regional Bureau EHAGL.

while considering country contextual needs. This appears to be a consistent finding across several audits and evaluations. As the UNHCR reviews staffing, it is important to assess the actual utilization and relevance of specific skill sets in the RBs on a case-by-case basis. Thus, it is crucial to conduct a staffing analysis to accurately assess RBs and COs adequately, considering the availability of resources and specific regional and local context. This finding was also shared among multiple interviewees during the inception phase, who emphasized the importance of not assessing RBs and COs as homogenous entities.

It is important to note that the evaluations and audits that were reviewed during the inception phase were conducted at various points in time, including periods prior to the implementation of D&R. Therefore, these findings are not a summative reflection of D&R reform, but accounts of this reform over time and within different country contexts.

3. Audits and evaluations related to D&R from other organizations

By reviewing evaluations and audits of decentralization and/or regionalization experiences in other organisations, the evaluation team has been able to extract valuable lessons and best practices from the experiences of organizations such as United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), World Food Programme (WFP), World Health Organization (WHO), UN System Reforms, UN Women, and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). Additional selected D&R experiences of other international organisations will be analysed in the data collection phase where relevant.

In an evaluation of its decentralization experience, IFAD acknowledges the significant role of country presence in partnership-building, yet identifies limitations in knowledge management and policy dialogue, suggesting these areas for enhancement⁸⁶. An evaluation at FAO's highlighted the importance of streamlining lines of command during complex emergencies, emphasizing the need for dedicated senior emergency coordinators.⁸⁷ In terms of ways of working and culture, challenges were evident in FAO due to corporate decisions not aligning with regional patterns, while WFP faced hurdles in fostering a shared commitment to decentralization goals, emphasizing the necessity of transformative change management⁸⁸. During the UN System Reforms, the emergence of cultural ethos affecting reporting expectations between HQ and Field Offices was noted⁸⁹. These cultural considerations underscore the need for organizations to align corporate decisions with regional nuances and address emerging cultural dynamics to ensure successful decentralization. For tracking progress, WHO was advised to establish clear outcome-level milestones for internal management and communication purposes⁹⁰. WHO recommended the establishment of clear outcome-level milestones for Monitoring and Evaluation, whereas WFP encountered challenges in system upgrades.⁹¹ IFAD implemented the development of a comprehensive budget and accounting system for decentralized costs.⁹²

The review of the UN System Reforms also highlighted challenges in coordination and the absence of a system-wide coordinated strategy, alongside the imperative of exploring project versus program-based approaches and modernizing communication systems. The review stressed the importance of addressing specific challenges during emergencies, improving organizational communication, and fostering a collaborative culture between HQ and regional offices, underscoring their pivotal role in successful decentralization efforts. In line with this finding, the independent evaluation of FAO's decentralization highlighted the need to unify the lines

 $^{^{86}}$ 2016-12-01 Corporate-Level Evaluation of IFAD's Decentralization Experience.

⁸⁷ Independent Evaluation of FAO's Decentralization.pdf (2004-09-27).

⁸⁸ WFP - Rapid Organizational Assessment (April 2012).

⁸⁹ UN System Reforms: UNDP and WHO 1992 and 1993.

⁹⁰ 2021-05-01 Evaluation of WHO Transformation.

^{91 2021-05-01} Evaluation of WHO Transformation

⁹² 2023-05-10 Corporate-level evaluation on IFAD's decentralization experience 2022.

of command and responsibility when faced with a complex emergency. One specific recommendation in this regard was the establishment of a "senior emergency coordinator" role.

The lack of clarity with regards to roles, responsibilities, authorities, and delegation was prominent across evaluations analysed. Most UN organisations that underwent a D&R process faced challenges in defining roles, streamlining structures, and maintaining consistent guidance. Newly introduced regional roles were often unclear to country offices, similarly the role of HQ was unclear to country offices in the context of regional implementation responsibilities that seemed to overlap with HQ⁹⁴. Often staff was not empowered with the necessary awareness, skills, and knowledge to execute on their newly assigned roles and responsibilities.

Overlapping authorities between country offices and RBs, and between RBs and HQ divisions as a significant source of corporate risk and non-compliance were highlighted as an overarching theme. Furthermore, IFAD's decentralization progress was hindered by slow delegation of authority: IFAD's top-down approach remained prominent and resulted in staff concerns not being addressed⁹⁵.

Building a fit for purpose workforce was key for many organizations undergoing a decentralization reform. This includes promoting staff mobility and rotation programs ⁹⁶, introducing career development programs, including trainings, for smooth role transitions ⁹⁷, and developing a staff performance appraisal system ⁹⁸. These initiatives were seen as crucial to ensure proper staffing across the different levels (HQ, RBs and COs). Indeed, WFP highlighted the necessity to ensure that the RBs are properly staffed to carry out the roles, and FAO recommended to adjust technical support in line with specific staff needs⁹⁹.

Overall, there were no coordination and strategic approach of the reforms across the UN System, and as a result there have been duplicative structures and staff costs across different agencies.

All documents obtained have and will continue to serve as essential support for formulating evaluation questions and gathering evidence during the data collection phase.

5.1.2 KII

The evaluation team conducted interviews with stakeholders from HQ, RBs, and members of the Core Group (refer to annex 5.6 for a full list of stakeholders interviewed). The purpose of the interviews was to gather initial perspectives on the D&R reform, clarify the evaluation objectives and scope, and identify key themes that have been revealed to be important for this evaluation regarding the D&R reform. Additionally, interview transcripts conducted pre-ToR by EvO were also summarized and analyzed to 1) avoid redundancy 2) allow for follow-up on previous discussions and crucial areas regarding D&R.

The interview guide for KII in the inception phase was developed with tailored questions for each interviewee thereby ensuring relevance and depth while addressing interlocutor's specific experiences, insights, and roles held during the D&R reform. Questions were inspired by information gathered during the desk review, including internal and external documents. The interview comprehensively addressed all questions pertaining to the specific D&R facets areas of this evaluation and enabled to reveal several common themes, that are crucial for the evaluation and have helped shape and inform the analytical framework and the Evaluation

^{93 2004-09-27} Independent Evaluation of FAO's Decentralization.

^{94 2013-02-08} UNFPA GRP audit report – FINAL.

^{95 2016-12-01} Corporate-Level Evaluation of IFAD's Decentralization Experience.pdf.

⁹⁶ 2004-09-27 Independent Evaluation of FAO's Decentralization.

⁹⁷ 2003-06-00 Evaluation Office Review of WFP's Decentralization Initiative

^{98 2004-09-27} Independent Evaluation of FAO's Decentralization.

^{99 2004-09-27} Independent Evaluation of FAO's Decentralization.pdf.

Matrix. Many findings established in the desk review documentation, including external audits and evaluations, have been confirmed and further outlined by KIIs.

5.2 Evaluation Matrix

Sub questions	Eval criteria	Potential Indicators	Proposed data collection method	Data Analysis
EQ 1: How relevant, appropriate and feasifuture?	sible was the de	esign and planning approach taken in of the regionalization and dec	centralization reform and what can be lear	nt to inform the
What was the conceptual design for the reform , its rationale, how well aligned to the organization's strategy, how clear and compelling?	Relevance	Articulation of clear and compelling rationale through presence of official documents, reports, and communications related to the D&R initiative, such as strategic plans, change management documents, organizational assessments, progress reports, and official communications from organizational leadership Evidence of initially conceptualized design of key polices and processes that are part of the reform aligned to UNHCR strategic direction 2022-2026 Implementation of measures to secure staff buy-in, including pre-engagement activities with staff, utilization of staff survey data, and readiness assessments to identify change needs and areas requiring attention Presence of change initiative aligned with organization's strategic directions and priorities	Document review: Evidence of the rationale in existing documents Semi-structured interviews: Qualitative insights and understanding	Document Analysis Strategy analysis
To what extent was the approach taken demonstrably the most appropriate: Was relevant background research, including needs or capacity assessments made and taken into account? Were alternative options modelled? Were lessons from past reforms in UNHCR and from other agencies evidentially taken into account and learnt from in the design of this reform?	Coherence, Relevance	Evidence of background research documents including option assessment of reasonable alternatives inspired by previous UNHCR reforms and reforms undertaken by other UN agencies Evidence that KPIs selected for tracking the reform progress are relevant, reliable, and aligned with organizational objectives Evidence of pre-engagement with staff, use of staff survey data and/or readiness and skills/capacity assessment illustrating regional/local capacity gaps Evidence of organizational assessment indicating sufficient capacity and readiness for change Evidence of assessment of the risks, considerations and likelihood of success to identify mitigation strategies	Document review: Analyze background research, existing benchmarks and engagement evidence Semi-structured Interviews: Assess stakeholders' perceptions on appropriateness	Document Analysis Strategy analysis Policy or risk analysis
Through which means did the design principles consider overall organization coherence while allowing for local flexibility & decision-making?	Coherence, Efficiency	Evidence of standardized org. structures, processes or templates for requisitions Evidence of clear and coherent organizational structures, roles and accountability frameworks (E.g., RAA, RAF, emergency preparedness) following coherent design principle across the functional areas	Document review: Background material and region wise assessment of reforms Semi-structured interview: Stakeholders' perspective on level of standardization or flexibility provided	Document analysis Comparative analysis b/w different regions
How clearly and coherently has this reform fit and been sequenced with the wider set of corporate reforms and systems changes in working towards the organization's overall transformation? To which extent have UNHCR's systems enabled or impeded the exercise of the new processes and authorities put in place by D&R	Coherence	Alignment and coherence of D&R reform objectives with other internal and external transformations, demonstrating interconnectedness and mutual reinforcement. Evidence of institutional feedback mechanisms facilitating engagement and collaboration among diverse policy and operational units, including discussions on the interplay of ongoing corporate reforms. Incorporation of decentralization goals and principles into the structure and framework of subsequent systems, ensuring consistency with the reform's objectives. Inclusion of decentralized resource planning components within the enterprise resource planning system, enhancing the effective distribution and utilization of resources across multiple levels.	Document review: Examine documents outlining alignment with other actions Semi-structured interviews: stakeholders' perspectives on alignment Walkthrough/observation of existing systems	Document Analysis Strategy analysis Context analysis

Sub questions	Eval criteria	Potential Indicators	Proposed data collection method	Data Analysis
EQ 2: Reform Outcomes: have the intend	ed results of the	reform been realized?		
To which extent and where has the reform delivered on establishing the right authorities (with accountabilities), oversight and functions placed at the right organizational level? Where are the good examples of this? What factors have influenced this?	Effectiveness	Increased involvement of RBs, COs in the planning process Indications of quicker signing of partnership agreements due to greater authority to RBs/Cos Evidence of increased local fund raising due to greater authority Increase in number and value of procurement related decisions taken at regional level Clearly defined policies and procedures demonstrating alignment with Localization, Legitimization, and Legalization principles of the 31 model. Clear relationship between bureau and country office size and function in each region in relation to need Evidence of clear understanding of the revised RAAs, functional and managerial lines (covering flow of decision making from senior and middle management) and escalation procedures at all levels of the organization and clear delineation of authorities, responsibilities and accountabilities.	Document review: Existing data regarding effectiveness of RAAs, oversight mechanisms and functions E-survey: Quantitative and qualitative data on perceived effectiveness Semi-structured interviews: qualitative insights on extent of achievement of reform outcomes FGD: Qualitative data on perceived effectiveness	Document Analysis Review of available data against baseline Survey analysis Cross-country case study analysis Participatory sense-making analysis
To which extent and where has the reform delivered on providing adequate resources and capacities at the right organizational level? Where are the good examples of this? What factors have influenced this?	Effectiveness	Increased resource availability at country/local level due to local fundraising Evidence that staffing positions are adequately staffed as per the revised roles and functions (e.g., Strategic planning, external relations and partnerships) Evidence of localized hiring processes and financial authorities to enhance operational autonomy.	Document review: Existing data regarding adequate resources and capacities placed at regional/ country level E-survey: Quantitative and qualitative data on perceived effectiveness Semi-structured interviews: qualitative insights on extent of achievement of reform outcomes FGD: Qualitative data on perceived effectiveness	Document Analysis Review of available data against baseline Survey analysis Cross-country case study analysis Participatory sense-making analysis
EQ 3: Organizational Outcomes: to which	extent has UNH	CR delivered on the key intended strategic vision and outcomes o	f the reform?	
To which extent has the reform better enabled UNHCR to support the goals of one UN, and the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees? How is this evident particularly at regional (intergovernmental, UN system engagement) national and sub-national (government, UN system engagement) levels? What factors have contributed to this?	Coherence, Effectiveness	 Better engagement with various stakeholders, including member states, governmental organizations agencies, NGOs, RLOs, whole of the UN system and private sector Evidence that D&R has facilitated a shift in how and with whom UNHCR works (at regional and country level) Evidence that more and/or new - traditional and non-traditional partners have been onboarded due to greater authority to RB/COs Indications that post D&R, RBs and COs were provided with right capacity and skillsets to effectively engage with partners and maximize the impact of partnerships to achieve commitments of broader UN goals (GCR/SDGS/one UN) Evidence of stronger engagement of UNHCR in the humanitarian/dev. nexus through stronger engagement and alignment with country strategies, UNCT and alignment of activities with UNSDF (e.g., joint fundraising efforts) post D&R 	Document review: Evidence of alignment with global goals E-survey: Ground staff perspectives at regional level Semi-structured interview: Interview with partners Focus group discussions: Group perspectives on alignment with partners/HQ Document review: Evidence of the partners of the	Document analysis Context analysis Participatory sense-making analysis Survey analysis
Is there any evidence of increased effectiveness of UNHCR's work at the point of delivery, or of it being on the path to achieve this?	Effectiveness	Improved protection outcomes for People with and for whom UNHCR works, with specific metrics reflecting enhanced effectiveness at the point of delivery Demonstrated adaptability in operational protocols, showcasing the flexibility to respond to diverse needs at the point of service as a result of the D&R reform Efficiency gains in operational processes, reflecting improved effectiveness at the point of service due to the D&R reform. Evidence that communication tools ease communication flow between bureaux and divisions Evidence that staff feels more empowered to make decisions and contributing to a more effective response at point of delivery (i.e. staff survey) Evidence that RBs and CO's response are better aligned with the specific needs of forcibly displaced and stateless persons (continuous and meaningful engagement)	Document review: Evidence of increased effectiveness (through existing evaluations) E-survey: Perceived improvement in service delivery Focus group discussions: Group perspectives on effectiveness Semi-structured interview: Leadership perspective on improvement in delivery outcomes	Context analysis Participatory sense-making analysis Survey analysis Trend analysis Cross-country case study analysis
To what extent has UNHCR has been more agile and better able to respond to changing regional/local contexts? Are there examples of faster, more flexible responses to large scale emergencies/ unexpected needs at country level? If so, why? Which other factors have facilitated or inhibited this?	Effectiveness	Indications of faster mobilization and response action to emergencies Evidence of prompt decisions in response to emergencies by local offices/RBs , showcasing the effectiveness of decentralized decision-making Successful examples of rapid needs assessments and subsequent adaptation of strategies to address unforeseen challenges, indicating agility at the country level. Evidence that RBs and Cos are better able to mobilize and allocate resources to address immediate needs Evidence that COs staff are perceived as having the right skills and capacity to handle emergencies	Document review: Quantitative data on agility of operations/speed of response to emergencies, if available; documentation on emergency policies and handbook to understand protocols Semi-structured interviews: Insights on improved agility Focus group discussions: Evidence of streamlined functions (HQ,RB, MCO) E-survey: Perceived improvement in agility of response	Document analysis Participatory sense-making analysis Trend analysis Survey analysis

Sub questions		ta collection method Data Analysis
EQ 4: Implementation processes and inte	r-dependencies: how UNHCR effectively and efficiently managed the reform process?	
How effectively was the reform implemented according to its intended design? What were the challenges faced during the implementation process? How have they been addressed?	Relevance, Efficiency agreements with sister UN agencies or GCR stakeholders. Increased involvement of country offices in planning process and challenges faced (e.g., potential delay) Sustained monitoring effort through regular risk manage measurement/reporting of KPIs related to the reform Funding support to operations without local fundraising options and any challenges faced in adopting the new Resource Allocation Framework (RAF) (Audits, ev faced in in examination of risk manage measurement/reporting of KPIs related to the reform on implement of the processing options and any challenges faced in adopting the new Resource Allocation Framework (RAF)	ctured interviews: Insights enentation effectiveness up discussions: Discussion BJ/CO staff to understand tation progress and different regio e Participatory sense-making analysis Maturity analy
How effectively has UNHCR adapted throughout the reform process in response to internal and external changes? What are the best examples of this? In what ways did external events, such as COVID-19, influence the reform and what implications has this had in terms of its effectiveness?	Relevance, Sustainability Suidence of Inkages between new UNHCR initiatives (e.g., lnnovation, Digital etc.) and changes to D&R related Sustainability Sustainability Suidence of D&R process benefiting delivery based on existing au Susmit	t review: Evidence through udits and evaluations ctured interviews: e insights on adaptability up discussions: Group res on agility and adaptation MCO) during external events ovid-19
How efficiently did UNHCR manage the reform with the aim of being cost neutral in the medium-to-long term? Have economies of scale been realized?		t review: Examination of FTE • Financial analys overall budget documents • Staffing analys
How clearly were the inter-dependencies between the elements of this reform, other change processes and the wider context and running of the organization mapped and managed throughout the implementation process? To what extent were unintended effects identified and addressed?	Coherence of the reforms oversight a feedback reinterdependencies interdependencies on oninteraction of different reforms, ensuring cohesive approach Evidence of feedback mechanism to report and address issues or served.	t review: Examination of and control models, mechanisms ctured interviews: Insights ependencies and oversight up discussions: Group was on inter-dependencies ight effectiveness (HQ, RB)
How has the organization addressed the intended changes in organizational culture and individual behavior as requisites in achieving the reform outcomes? What have been the good examples of where this has taken place?	Positive examples of leadership actively modeling the desired cultural and behavioral changes, reinforcing the principles of decentralization Existence of systems recognizing and rewarding individuals and teams that exemplify the desired cultural and behavioral changes associated with the reform Positive examples of leadership actively modeling the desired cultural and behavioral changes associated with the reform Positive examples of leadership actively modeling the desired cultural and behavioral changes associated with the reform Positive examples of leadership actively modeling the desired cultural and behavioral changes, reinforcing the principles of descent actively modeling the desired cultural and behavioral changes, reinforcing the principles of decentralization Existence of systems recognizing and rewarding individuals and teams that exemplify the desired cultural and behavioral changes associated with the reform Positive examples of leadership actively modeling the desired cultural and behavioral changes associated with the reform Positive examples of leadership actively modeling the desired cultural and behavioral changes associated with the reform Positive examples of leadership actively modeling the desired cultural and behavioral changes associated with the reform Positive examples of leadership active examples of leadershi	ts: Results from culture hts, previously conducted ctured interviews: e insights on behavioral up discussions: Group yes on cultural shifts (HQ, RB,

Sub questions	Eval criteria	Potential Indicators	Proposed data collection method	Data Analysis
EQ 5: Lessons and recommendations: w	here are the goo	d practices that can built upon; the effective aspects of the reform	and the possibilities not considered?	
Which lessons can we draw to inform UNHCR's policies and processes in the future? Where are the good practices, and what are the success factors in these cases?	Sustainability, Relevance	Evidence of learnings from evaluations of implemented policies and processes by UNHCR Evidence of successful policies and processes used by other UN organizations (As part of a successful D&R) Capture different lessons learnt & good practices to strategically inform future support Examples of lessons learned from implementation of prior reforms relating to D&R outcomes	Document review: Existing audits and evaluations and UNHCR response to them Semi-structured interviews: Insights on	Lessons learnt from other UN agencies in past evaluations Participatory sense making analysis Validation/sense- making workshops
What steps are undertaken to ensure (to the extent possible) that outcomes are sustainable moving forwards?		Evidence of reforms being institutionalized through the incorporation of changes into official organizational policies, ensuring sustainability Continuous communication and change management initiatives to emphasize D&R understanding to sustain momentum Implementation of effective monitoring mechanisms to regularly assess the performance and impact of decentralization, ensuring adjustments are made as needed. Regular solicitation of feedback from staff, local partners, and communities, with documented evidence of adaptations and improvements based on the received feedback. Evidence that UNHCR is continuously implementing improvement initiatives to refine the D&R reform Evidence of an ongoing alignment between the D&R reform and UNHCR's mandate, strategic goals and wider UN priorities Evidence of action on feedback and recommendations from evaluations to effect necessary changes for continuous improvement	Semi-structured interviews: Insights on lessons learnt and future outlook Focus group discussions: Group perspectives on future improvements	 Participatory sense making analysis Validation/sense- making workshops

5.3 Key probing questions across different facets of the D&R reform

The following is an indicative set of questions which will be utilized during the data collection phase across the different facets of the reform. The objective of these probing questions is to drive discussion and get meaningful evidence through various data collection methods. The intent is not to answer each question in isolation but to answer the key areas of inquiry.

1. Strategy

1.1 Alignment of Goals Vision and Mission

- What elements of the D&R initiative were expected to bring better alignment with other UN reforms?
 Why?
- Was there a clear rationale behind choosing D&R as the best option to better align with GCR and other sister UN agencies?
- To what extent did relevant background research and assessment inform the appropriateness of the design?
- To what extent have lessons learnt from past UN reforms been taken into account?
- How clearly and coherently has this reform fit and been sequenced with the wider set of corporate reforms and systems changes in working towards the organization's overall transformation?

1.2 Strategic Planning Process

- How was the strategic planning process rethought to better guide prioritization and delivery?
- What was the rationale behind a multi-year and multi-planning approach?
- Was there any staff engagement/capacity assessment undertaken to define the best way forward?
- To what extent has the involvement of RBs and COs increased in the planning process?
- Has the authority devolved from the HQ?
- Are lessons learnt from the previous years incorporated in current year plans (feedback loops?)
- To what extent has the new strategy and planning processes improved the agility of the organization and its cooperation locally and regionally, while still retaining organizational cohesiveness
- What are the challenges faced in multi-year planning? (E.g., potential delays, involvement of country offices etc.)
- Are there adequate technology tools to enable collaboration and joint planning?
- Is there regular monitoring of KPIs and data-driven decision-making to drive strategic planning

1.3 KPI / Monitoring & Evaluation

- What KPIs were designed to be tracked as part of the D&R process?
- What was the rationale behind choosing the KPIs?
- To what extent was risk management considered in the design phase as an element of D&R?
- Are the KPIs chosen the most appropriate to measure performance against the goals of D&R?
- Are there adequate mechanisms for feedback to be captured and implemented to improve the D&R initiative?
- Are we better able to track the progress of D&R initiatives across the key facets of the reform?
- Have new and clarified RAAs contributed to stronger risk management?
- Are there any quantitative indicators for increased authority at the country level, increased procurement, or budget approvals at the regional level?
- How frequently are KPIs measured and reported? Which team is responsible for tracking KPIs?
- Are feedback loops from KPIs built in as a part of the strategic planning process?

1.4 Resource Management

- What was the macro-picture of the intent behind the new approach to resource mobilization and allocation?
- Was there any assessment regarding risks/rewards associated with a new RMA?

- To what extent is UNHCR engaged in joint fundraising efforts with UN country teams to access human/developmental funding?
- To what extent have the changes to resource allocation and mobilization improved the agility of operations (measured e.g., in the amount of resources mobilized, or the appropriateness of budget structures for intended purposes.?)
- How has UNHCR allocated resources to operations that do not have options for raising additional funding locally?
- What are the challenges faced in adopting the new RAF?
- Interdependency with oversight: The extent to which the central management/oversight of the new resource allocation framework (RAF) provided the right balance between direction and flexibility?
- Interdependency with Resource allocation framework: Did the revised RAF provide sufficient flexibility to utilize the funds raised locally?
- Interdependency with Functions and Staffing: The extent to which the RAF matched the changes in functions/skills at different levels in the organization to further the objective of being more effective at the point of delivery?

2. Processes

2.1 Partnership Management

- What was the rationale behind offering more accountability and authority to RBs/COs to undertake partnerships at regional levels?
- Is the partnership management framework coherent across different regions? Are there any good examples of regional partners onboarded due to greater authority to RBs/COs?
- What is the extent of local fundraising that has increased due to greater authority?
- Has the effectiveness at the point of delivery improved due to better engagement with partners?
- Are there examples of better mobilization of local partners as a result of increased authority as part of D&R? Are there any challenges in raising funds locally?
- Did HQ and RBs provide ample support to engage with partners and onboard/increase the scope of partnerships?
- Interdependency with Functions and Staffing: Are the functions related to partnership staffed with relevant skills to operationalize partnerships including with strategic partners and non-traditional partners?

2.2 Operational Delivery

- Were the revised thresholds defined for procurement the most appropriate?
- Are there standardized templates and procurement thresholds being followed throughout the organization?
- To what extent have the COs/RBs been able to make procurement decisions at a regional level?
- Is there an improvement in response time to emergencies?
- Are there examples of faster, more flexible responses to large-scale emergencies/ unexpected needs at the country level?
- What are existing challenges regarding regional approvals for procurement especially in the context of emergencies?
- Interdependency with partnership: Did the revised partnership framework enable improved operational delivery?
- Interdependency with resource management: Did the revised RAF enable more authority for procurement decisions?

3. People, Organization and Governance

3.1 Organizational Architecture

- What was the conceptual design (prototype) of the structures and core functions at the RBs, country, and HQ?
- What was the rationale for the establishment of MCOs and the changes over the time period covered?

- What was the rationale for physically relocating people on the ground?
- What was the rationale behind the core design of the RBs (4 functional pillars)?
- To what extent have the COs been strengthened due to the physical relocation of RBs and creation of MCO?
- How well was the organizational architecture/structure of RBs adapted and implemented across each region?
- How well has the Three Lines Model worked and how well followed?
- Did the relocation of RBs enable cost and efficiency gains in the medium/long term?
- Interdependency with KPIs- Is there regular monitoring of KPIs and data-driven decision-making

3.2 Responsibilities, Accountabilities and Authorities

- Is there sufficient staff buy-in regarding RAAs?
- Have the issues of responsibility and accountability that preceded the reform been addressed through the reform or not? How well is it working?
- What is the extent to which changes to RAAs have improved agility (measure e.g., in time taken to fill new positions/fulfil other administrative procedures such as supply?)
- How well are the RAAs understood at all levels of the organization?
- How is autonomy exercised and manifested?

3.3 Functions and Staffing

- What are the core RBs functions (four pillars)? What are some of the contextual roles and how has this varied across regions?
- What is the rationale behind the additional functions and skillsets in the field operations (incl. RBs)?
- Are sufficient measures undertaken by divisions to make evidence-based decisions including a mapping or quantitative analysis regarding the placement of additional technical and context-specific functions in CO and RBs?
- Was the Change Advisory Team, comprised of DIP, DRS, DPSM the New York Office and the Change Team useful in providing technical and prioritization requirements?
- To what extent have HRBPs in the regions been able to make HR decisions?
- What is the extent to which the right capacities are placed in the right places?
- What is the extent to which divisional footprint has changed in regions?
- What is the extent to which staff are better positioned to deliver work effectively?
- To what extent has the relocation of staff enabled UNHCR to better support the goals of One UN?
- Has the relocation of staff, including technical positions to the field, enabled UNHCR to become more effective at the point of delivery and with partners?
- What is the extent to which changes in functions and staffing have increased organizational agility in terms of appropriateness of local and regional planning and responses and responsiveness at a country level and changes to the operational context?
- Have adequate structures been developed and staffing completed based on the redistributed functions?
- What were the challenges faced in fulfilling staffing/skill gaps as per the new roles?
- How flexible were RBs in implementing country operation functions?
- What is the extent to which there has been a redistribution of functions and staffing as a result of Covid-19?
- Has there been a shift in priorities (more emergency etc.) as a result of external events influencing the type of functions/staffing?
- Interdependency with RAAs: Impact of new functions and staffing on RAAs
- Interdependency with Change and ways of working: Change management support and training opportunities to relocated staff
- Interdependency with KPIs- Regular monitoring of KPIs and data-driven decision-making
- Interdependency with Organizational architecture Impact of org. architecture on functions and staffing

3.4 Change Management/ Ways of Working

- Modes of engagement planned with the staff, pre and post D&R in order to get buy-in to the overall reform process?
- Was there a clear rationale and strategy behind transitioning to a different way of working?
- Was there any staff engagement survey undertaken with regard to D&R? Was the internal communication strategy appropriate?
- Is there any change management framework which is being followed in regard to D&R?
- What was the extent to which staff were adequately trained to take on their new positions?
- What was the extent to which possible changes in culture, processes and systems used to support D&R have increased the agility of the organization?
- The extent to which culture change initiatives were conducted as originally envisaged?
- What were the challenges faced during the reform process from a culture change perspective?
- Were findings from the staff surveys incorporated in the refinement of policies or processes?
- Has the transition been smooth for affected staff?
- Was targeted career transition support provided? (Career transition workshops, webinars on career management, coping with change at the individual level)
- What change strategies were introduced to respond to Covid-19? How successful were they in adapting to changes as part of D&R?
- What ways of working were implemented to work remotely?
- Interdependency with RAAs: How well did culture change programs help in driving the adoption of RAAs?
- Interdependency with Functions and Staffing: Did Affected staff receive ample support measures, including psychological assistance and retraining opportunities to meet the needs of their current role?
- Interdependency with KPIs: Is there regular monitoring of KPIs and data-driven decision-making undertaken by the change team?

3.5 Oversight/Risk Management

- What was the rationale or purpose of the 3L defense model?
- Are there any alternative models/control frameworks to maintain oversight?
- How well are internal controls working on minimizing the risks associated with issues with accountability and integrity as defined in RAAs?
- What is the extent of oversight extended by RBs and HQ over day-to-day operations?
- Has the 3L model impacted the agility or responsiveness of the field units?
- Is there sufficient clarity on the required composition and distribution of oversight functions to provide checks and balances to the decentralization process?
- How well is the 3L defense model adopted and working in practice?

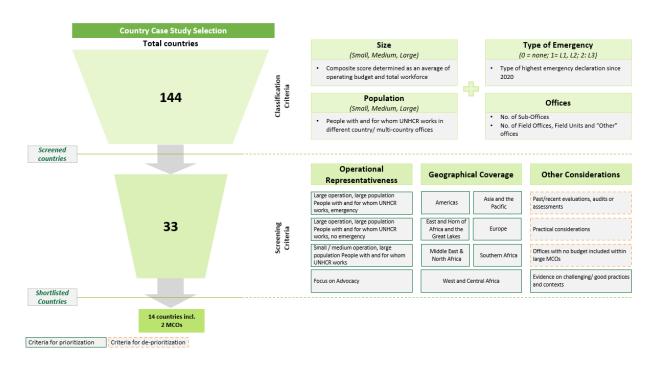
4. Technology

4.1 Technology Enablers

- To what degree have technology enablers been built to support the rollout of regionalization/decentralization org. reform?
- To what extent have the subsequent systems been designed in such a way as to support centralized and decentralized data management, ensuring security and accessibility at all levels?
- To what extent were decentralized resource planning components included within the enterprise resource planning system, enhancing the effective distribution and utilization of resources across multiple levels?
- What key aspects of technology can be reviewed for better realization of D&R going forward?

5.4 Sampling process for country case studies

Figure 8: Country case studies sampling process



The table below lists the list of countries selected following the sampling steps outlined in this proposal:

Table 2: Shortlisted countries

Region	Shortlisted countries
Asia and the Pacific	Indonesia, Pakistan
East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes	Uganda
Europe	Belgium MCO, Spain
Middle East and North Africa	Jordan, Saudi Arabia MCO
Southern Africa	Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola
The Americas	Ecuador, Guatemala
West and Central Africa	Central African Republic, Nigeria

5.5 Sampling process for vertical case studies

The selected four vertical case studies as well as the rationale for choosing them are as follows:

Table 3: Shortlisted vertical case studies with rationale

Theme Vertical Case Study	Rationale
Strategic Planning and	Pivotal for alignment with org. goals, ensuring organizational coherence
Resource Allocation Process	across various UNHCR operations and contexts.
	Key role for performance and risk management.
	Decision-making authority for resource allocation significantly affects
	ownership and impacts D&R adaptation to regional/local needs.
	Allows for impact reporting and alignment to global frameworks
	(GCR/SDGs).
Emergency Response	Agility of the organization is a key goal of D&R.
	Local decision-making.
	Core mandate/strategic importance for UNHCR as an organization within
	the broader UN system + humanitarian actors.
	Direct impact on people UNHCR works for and with.
External Relations and	Direct relevance by bringing UNHCR closer to its implementing and
Partnerships Management	cooperating partners enabling cooperation with regional, inter-
(Implementation and	governmental org., governments, UN entities and NGOs incl. non-
strategic partners)	traditional actors.
	Strategic partnerships strengthen UNHCR's competitive edge within the
	UN system and impact resource mobilization.
	Relevance to tap into the humanitarian-development nexus collaboration
	of the UN system.
Protection Function	Long-term resilient solutions (extent to which UNHCR works in the
	humanitarian, development, peace nexus)
	Key element of D&R success, ensuring decisions are made closest to the
	point of delivery (new ways of working with the protection pillar at RBs).
	 Direct impact on people UNHCR works for and with.

In addition to the topics listed above, a long list of other potential topics for vertical case studies was also considered. This includes, 1) Supply and Procurement 2) Recruitment and Staffing 3) Leadership and Culture 4) Information System and Technology. The final shortlist of the top four was decided in collaboration with the Evaluation Office and Core Group with inputs provided by the Field Reference Group as well.

Each vertical case study will follow a similar structured approach, with the aim of cutting across D&R facets. The below structure is subject to refinement and will be finalized in the next two phases.

1)	Introduction
	Introduction of the vertical case study
	Purpose and objective of the vertical case study
2)	Intent
	Explanation of the intent of D&R for the vertical case study
3)	Initiatives
	Description of the different D&R initiatives
4)	Outcomes
	Presentation of outcomes achieved as a result of D&R (this can include qualitative and
	quantitative feedback and other relevant metrics)

Comparison of the outcome against the initial intent to illustrate the effectiveness of the reform and inform recommendations

5) Impact

Analyze the impact that D&R had on the specific vertical case study Draw broader conclusions for the interlinkages between the D&R facets and the organization's ways of working

6) Recommendations

Set of recommendations based on the insights gained for further action and to inform the way forward

5.6 List of stakeholder interviews conducted pre-ToR and during the inception phase

The evaluation team has gone through the transcripts of interviews with stakeholders already conducted by EvO during the process of elaboration of TOR. Additionally, the evaluation team has conducted interviews with diverse stakeholders as part of the inception phase.

Table 4: List of stakeholders consulted for elaboration of ToR by the EvO

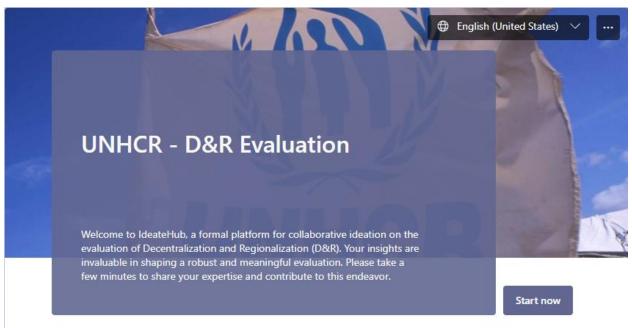
Name	Role/Position	Date of interview
Steve Corliss and Nadia Jbour	Director of Change and Senior Adviser	16 th of June, 2023
Steve Corliss, Nadia Jbour, Yasser Saad, and George Woode	Director for Change; Senior Adviser, Senior Change Management Adviser, Transformation and Change Service (TCS), Senior Transition Adviser, Office of AHC-O	23 rd of June, 2023
Arman Harutyunyan	Head of TCS	25 th of July, 2023
Alex Mundt	Principle Situation Coordinator, Ukraine (former member of Change Team during D&R design)	27 th of July, 2023
Stephan Grieb	Deputy Director, Division of Human Resources	27 th of July, 2023
Salvatore Lombardo	Former Chef de Cabinet	2 nd of August, 2023
Indrika Ratwatte	Regional Director, Bureau Asia & the Pacific	4 th of August, 2023
Emilie Irwin	Senior Policy and Guidance Coordinator, TCS	4 th of August, 2023
Alexandra Barbara Krause	Senior Policy Adviser, Office of DHC	10 th of August, 2023
Giovanni Pio, Tommaso Maria Paiar, Clemens Koerbler, Burcu Atzeni	UN Advisory Alliance	11 th of August, 2023
Field Reference Group	Field Reference Group	30 th of August, 2023
Joel Nielsen	Senior Transition Coordinator, DHR Global Learning and Development Centre (former member of Change Team during D&R design)	5 th of September, 2023
Daisy Dell	Former Director of Change Management	6 th of September, 2023
Hanne Raatikainen	Chief Risk Officer, Enterprise Risk Management Service	14 th of September, 2023
Guillaume Hendriks	UNHCR Internal Audit Service of OIOS	15 th of September, 2023

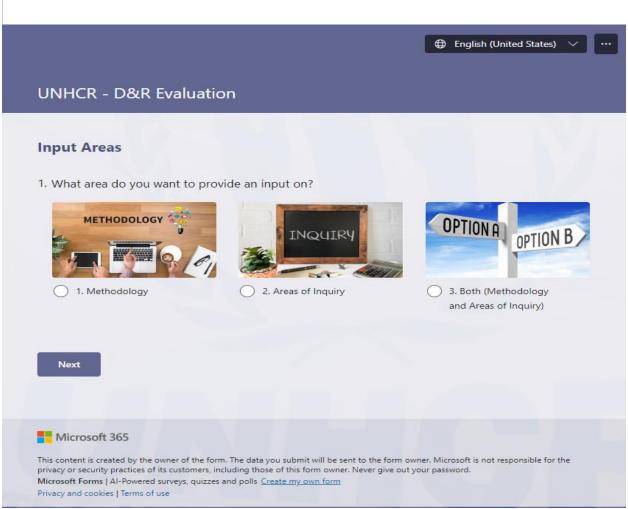
George Woode	Senior Transition Coordinator, Office of AHC-O	21st of September, 2023
Anthony Garnett and Marcel Grogan	Inspector General and Head of Strategic Oversight Service	26 th of September, 2023
Steven Corliss, Nadia Jbour, George Woode, Salam Shahin	Director for Change; Senior Adviser, TCS, Senior Transition Coordinator, Office of Assistant Office of High Commissioner Operations (AHC-O), Senior Executive Assistant, Office of Deputy High Commissioner (DHC)	28 th of September, 2023

Table 5: List of stakeholders consulted during the inception phase by Deloitte

Name	Role/Position	Date of interview
Arman Harutyunyan	Head of Transformation and Change Service (TCS)	2 nd of February, 2024
Anne-Marie Deutschlander	Deputy Director, Regional Bureau Europe	2 nd of February, 2024
Hans Baritt	Director, Division of Financial and Administrative Management (DFAM)	6 th of February, 2024
Anthony Garnett	Inspector General	7 th of February, 2024
Olivier Madjora	Senior Oversight Officer	7 th of February, 2024
Daisy Dell	Retired, Former Director of Change Management	13 th of February, 2024
Yukiko Iriyama	Chief of Emergency Preparedness Section (DESS)	14 th of February, 2024
Robin Ellis	Deputy Director, Division of Emergency, Security and Supply (DESS)	14 th of February, 2024
Raouf Mazou	Assistant High Commissioner for Operations (A-HCO)	15 th of February, 2024
Ritu Shroff	Director, Division of Strategic Planning and Results (DSPR)	16 th of February, 2024
Tayyar Sukru Cansizoglu	Deputy Director, Head of Annual Review and Budget	16 th of February, 2024
Elizabeth Tan	Director, Division of Internal Protection	22 nd of February, 2024

5.7 Collaborative ideation platform





3. Methodology and Area of Inquiry

D&R reforms)

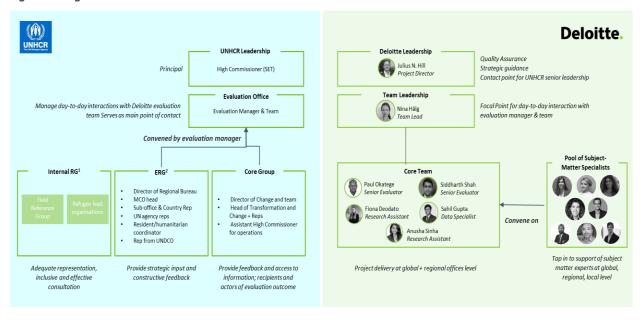
Enter your answer

As a part of the evaluation exercise we will be delving deeper on key areas of Inquiry related to design, implementations and outcome of the D&R reform. To accomplish this a sample of specific countries and business processes that should be considered for a deeper evaluation to ascertain the design, implementation and outcome of D&R

	i outcome of the D&R reform. To accomplish this a sample of specific countries and business processes that should be isidered for a deeper evaluation to ascertain the design, implementation and outcome of D&R
1	What countries would you recommend to be included in the sample for evaluation? Elaborate on the reason(s) for your choice (E.g., Size of the country, maturity, D&R success factors etc.)
	Enter your answer
	Who should be the key individuals in UNHCR that we should interview to undertake the evaluation of D&R Reforms? Indicate name, designation, geography of a potential interviewee you would like to include and why? (E.g., Senior Protection Officer in Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau)
	Enter your answer
1	Recommend a few vertical case studies (business processes) that should be evaluated end-to-end to ascertain whether D&R achieved the decided goals. (E.g., Local fund raising, Resource Allocation, Procurement etc.)
	Enter your answer
	Any other innovative methods for data collection and analysis that should be considered by the evaluation team for a robust evaluation?
	Enter your answer
	What are some of the things that you think worked well as part of the D&R reform? (E.g., Clearly defined accountability framework, culture transformation etc.)
	Enter your answer
	List a few key hypothesis (assumptions) that you would want to test as a part of this evaluation exercise
	(E.g., 1. The rollout of the D&R initiative has been cost neutral, as originally envisaged, 2. Agility and speed of decision making has increased for Regional Bureaux and Country Offices after the

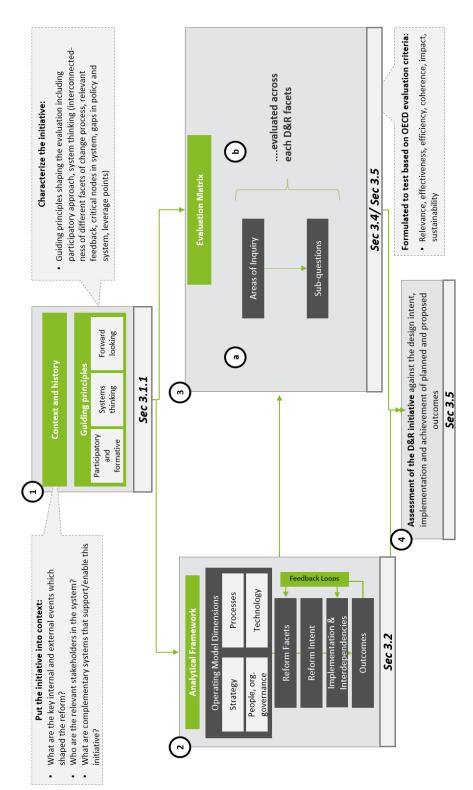
5.8 Team organizational chart

Figure 9: Organizational team chart



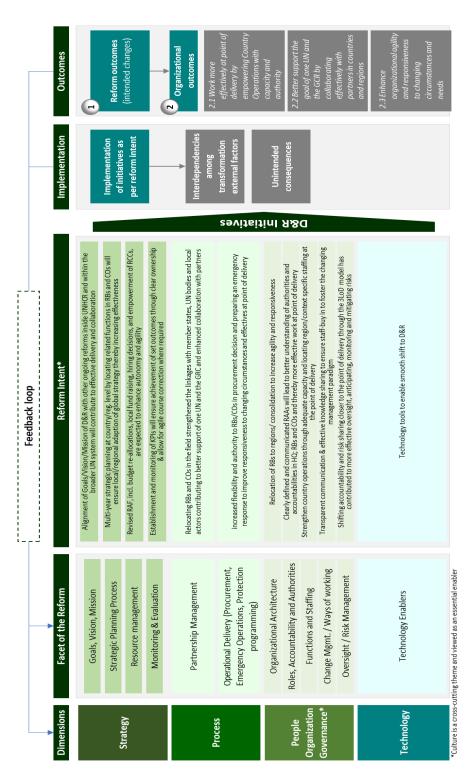
5.9 Evaluation approach

Figure 10: Evaluation approach



5.10 Analytical framework

Figure 11: Analytical framework



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