**3.1. Objectives of the evaluation**

1. Provide an independent assessment of approaches, strategies and interventions designed and implemented within UNICEF's Protective Environment programme in Tajikistan;
2. Assess UNICEF’s strategic positioning and programmatic choices made given government priorities and the changing socio-economic and political context, and COVID-19 challenge in Tajikistan;
3. Identify good practices which contributed to the achievement of intended results and draw lessons on challenges, gaps, and barriers that hindered the progress towards ensuring protective environment for the most vulnerable and marginalized children (looking beyond the traditional vulnerable groups);
4. Provide forward-looking recommendations on how to accelerate actions towards reaching the child-protection related targets set in the National Programme for Children 2030 and implementing the recommendations of the 2017 Concluding observations.

Lessons and recommendations should include but not be limited to reflect upon: a) effectiveness of integrated approach and convergence areas in PE programming; b) the appropriateness of type and combined use of implementation strategies; c) what UNICEF could do better and differently to enhance its contribution in Tajikistan; d) how UNICEF has strategically and operationally steered implementation of its PE programme in a constrained governance contexts; e) UNICEF’s readiness to react to the COVID-19 pandemic in the country and its implications in terms of creating/maintaining protective environment for children and f) how UNICEF should further mainstream inclusion, equity and gender equality in the forthcoming Country Programme 2023-2027.

**3.2. Scope of the evaluation**

The evaluation will cover strategies and interventions supported by UNICEF’s Protective Environment programme in Tajikistan over the period of 2016-2020 and specifically look into the structural and operational changes induced by 2018 SMR. Additionally, due to the overarching approach of the PE programme across the child’s lifecycle, the evaluation will be looking at the PE programme convergence with other programme components, e.g. on the access of children with disabilities to basic services. The evaluation will involve a broad range of stakeholders and beneficiaries due to cross-cutting nature of the issues dealt by the PE programme both a) horizontally – across several sectors dealing with protection of children, and vertically – at national and subnational levels. The Evaluation covers the PE programme portfolio and cross-cutting synergies in all geographical areas in Tajikistan where UNICEF has worked with a focus on: a) system level interventions at national level and b) more hands-on implementation of protective environments at the local level in the example of selected two-three districts, which will be defined during the inception phase.

The initial Theory of Change (ToC) for the PE programme was reviewed during the SMR (see Annex). The evaluation will examine the PE programme theory of change (ToC) in practice, its fit within an overall country programme ToC and coherence with other UNICEF programmes’ ToC.

The evaluation will focus on the following key components and implemented strategies of the PE Programme:

1. Alternative family care, the activities under this component include two major areas of change: policy and legislation and service provision
2. Justice for children, the activities under this component address three major strategies: policy and legislation, capacity building and service provision
3. Violence against children, with a particular focus on violence against girls/GBV, major strategy for this area is evidence generation and community mobilisation
4. Children with disabilities: major strategy is communication for social change and community mobilization. This will be cross-linked with other programme components interventions.
5. Children negatively affected by migration: mostly capacity building interventions.
6. Child Protection in emergencies and repatriation of children: mainly capacity building and service provision.
7. The role of the social services workforce in promoting and delivering child protection agenda within targeted areas and sufficiency and relevancy of the capacity building initiatives throughout the entire PE programme component.

**3.3. Evaluation Questions**

The questions that will guide this evaluation are aligned with the evaluation criteria developed by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) : relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, coherence and impact. To this end, the criteria in use reflect the new DAC guidelines in which the criteria “Coherence” is introduced, and the criteria of “Impact” addresses the ultimate significance and potentially transformative effects of the intervention. Application of a human rights-based approach to programming including an equity focus, as well as work to promote gender equality will also be examined. The evaluation questions outlined below will be reviewed and finalized during the inception phase:

**Relevance**

1. To what extent has UNICEF ensured that the needs of vulnerable boys and girls have been considered in the planning and implementation of the PE programme?
2. Have the implementation strategies been relevant for the context, including in emergencies or in covid-19 crisis?
3. Has the PE programme been able to deliver against the organizational strategic plan priorities, and the regional priorities?
4. Has the PE programme been adequately informed by the evidence? If no, what were the evidence gaps?

**Coherence**

1. To what extent other CP programme components, especially social policy and social protection, reinforced the PE programme to leverage the contribution that UNICEF makes towards expected results? How did the components of the PE programmes contributed to the overall goal on protecting most vulnerable using cross- sectoral and integrated approach while using vulnerability criteria developed within the office?
2. To what extent has UNICEF PE programme coordinated with development partners and other UN agencies to avoid overlaps, leverage contributions and catalyze joint work?

**Effectiveness**

1. To what extent have the PE programme results been achieved?
2. What were the most effective strategies, approaches or interventions that helped achieve the PE results?
3. What impeded the achievement of the results? What internal and external factors either contributed or hindered the achievement of the results?
4. How effective has the PE programme been in its contribution to social norm change?
5. Were there any unintended negative or positive outcomes and, if so, were they appropriately managed?

**Efficiency**

1. To what extent have the resources (financial and human resources) allocated by the CO been appropriate to support the implementation of strategies and achievement of PE programme’s results and, if not, what could be done to ensure resources match programmatic ambitions and needs?
2. Have opportunities to enhance programme effectiveness and mitigate risks been appropriately managed?
3. To what extent structural and operational changes resulting from the Strategic Moment of Reflection 2018 have contributed to the PE programme effectiveness?
4. Was there any noticeable management gap in implementation of the PE programme? If so, how did it affect the programme?

**Sustainability**

1. To what extent are the results of the PE programme at district, regional and national levels sustainable? Are the conditions to continue and/or scale up the PE programme interventions to benefit the most marginalized boys and girls in place?
2. In the shorter and longer-term, what opportunities can be identified to enhance sustainability of the programme and diminish risks?

**Impact**

1. To what extent can UNICEF be considered to have made a contribution to observed progress in the ensuring protective environments for girls and boys, especially the most vulnerable?
2. To what extent has UNICEF managed to advance child rights focusing on the most vulnerable boys, girls and youth at risk of being left behind whilst simultaneously making a contribution at scale?