

A young boy in a white t-shirt and dark shorts is captured mid-air, jumping over a large gap in a destroyed concrete structure. In the background, another person in dark clothing is running across a similar structure. The scene is set against a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. The overall image conveys a sense of resilience and overcoming adversity.

Strengthening Adaptive Programming across UNICEF

Internal Consultation
30 June 2022

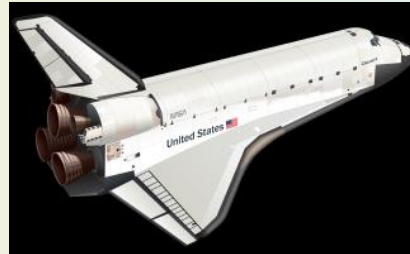
What kind of problems are we working on?

Simple Baking bread



- The formula is essential
- Tested to assure replicability of later efforts
- No particular expertise; knowing how to do it increases success
- Instructions on the quantity and nature of “parts” needed
- Produce standard products
- Certainty of same results every time

Complicated Rocket to moon



- Formulae are critical and necessary
- Sending one rocket increases assurance that next will be ok
- High level of expertise in many specialized fields + coordination
- Separate into parts and then coordinate
- Rockets similar in critical ways
- High degree of certainty of outcome

Complex Raising a child



- Formulae have only a limited application
- Solving one problem gives no assurance of success with next
- Expertise can help but is not sufficient; relationships key
- Can’t separate parts from the whole
- Every problem is unique
- Uncertainty of outcome remains

Chaotic Fighting fire



- “Rude surprises”
- Defy conventional administrative or policy responses
- Cause collective stress
- Cause and effect only possible in retrospect
- Stabilisation is key

What kind of approaches are needed?

Simple



- Cause and effect is known
- “Identify and repeat”
- Best practice databases; instruction manuals and training
- Fast food restaurants, car repairs, volume retailing, help desks

Complicated



- Cause and effect is knowable
- “Analyse the parts and optimise the whole”
- Prescriptive strategies
- Engineering, industrial production, insurance companies, public administration in well-ordered, developed settings

Complex



- Cause and effect determined in retrospect
- “Explore the space of possibilities and experiment”
- Systemic thinking
- Stock markets, social change, development, economic networks, political dynamics, innovation processes, investment climate, technological change, negotiations

Chaotic



- Cause and effect not discernible
- “Fire ready aim”
- Crisis management
- Disasters, revolutions, scandals, crashes

The Case for Adaptive Management



- Many of the development and humanitarian challenges UNICEF works to address are complex
- The goals might be clear, but the path to achieve change is not
- For complex problems the evidence of effective solutions is not strong, and there are weak assumptions and many uncertainties in theories of change
- Even for relatively less complex problems, adaptation and change can be essential
- Core principle for successful implementation: *“Manage adaptively through continuous learning”*



Ebola (DRC)



Covid-19 (East Asia & Pacific)



Reducing stunting (Zimbabwe)



Birth registration (Tanzania)



Social protection (Latin America and the Caribbean)



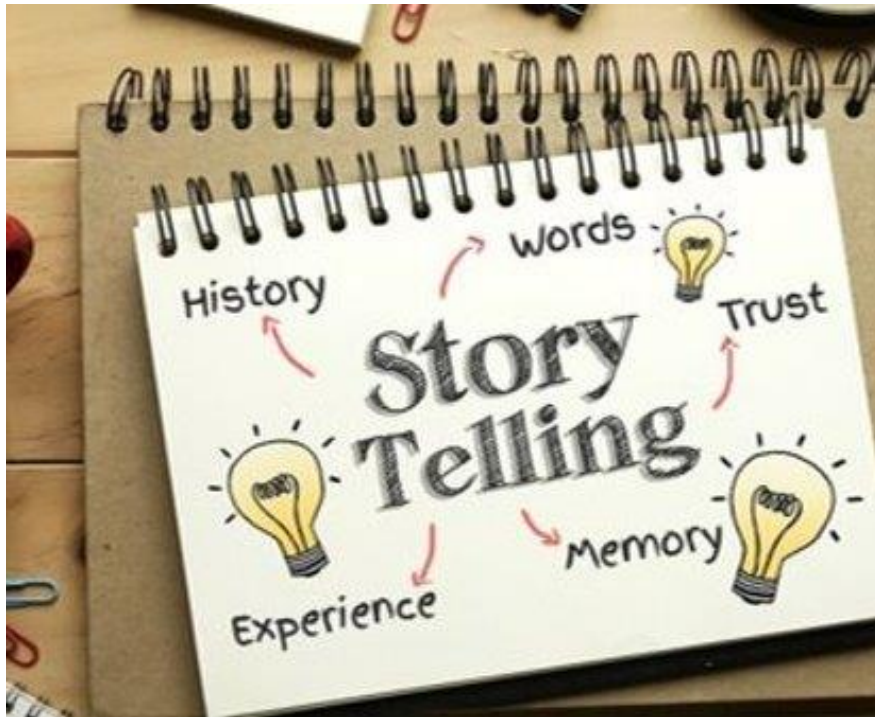
Water and sanitation (fragile states)



Education (Global)

AP is already happening in UNICEF!

Stories of Adaptive Change



1. When have you worked / needed to work adaptively in your projects and programmes
2. What was the context?
3. What was it about the problem that called for adaptiveness?
4. What actions were needed / taken?
5. What was the result for communities / partners / UNICEF?
6. What lessons did you take-away?



Group Task

- Individually: Recall your prepared experiences of adaptive working in UNICEF, past or present
- In groups of 4-5, take turns to listen to and tell a story and capture the details
 - use the Miro boards provided, 15 mins
- In your groups of 4, ask – what are the 3-5 concrete lessons emerging from our stories?
 - Capture using the Miro boards provided, 15 mins
- Back in plenary, share lessons with the wider group, discuss and agree common lessons across whole group
 - 15 mins



45 mins total

Enablers and Disablers

Enabler

Enabling leadership and culture of trust across staff and partners

Entrepreneurial approach to programming and operations

Capacity to work in contextually grounded and politically savvy ways

Enable learning and experimentation based on real-time monitoring

Localized and collaborative decision making

Disabler/Barrier

Risk-compliance and results structures and incentives

Heavy processes and procedures

Extractive information demands

Limited incentives and space for reflection and learning from failure

Inflexible resourcing and budgeting



Group Task: In plenary

Do you recognise these enablers and disablers? Would you add or change anything?

What could we do as a group to strengthen the enablers and diminish the disablers?



15 mins total

Long Term Goal: Create an enabling environment in UNICEF to facilitate more Adaptive Management approaches by integrating intentional agility in our programming framework to increase our effectiveness.

Short Term Goal: Development and operationalization of a high-level strategy that is informed by consultations with senior management and evidence, that moves us towards strengthening adaptive management in UNICEF.

Pillar #1: Engagement and coordination with UNICEF changemakers, management and external stakeholders on Adaptive Management

Change imperative

Coalition/network for change that is supported by senior management by-in to facilitate greater agility for programming and results to strengthen Adaptive Management approaches in UNICEF

Actions to Change

Consultations with UNICEF champions

Consultations with UNICEF Management

Consultations with external leaders on AM

Pillar #2: Evidence generation of Adaptive Management in action in UNICEF offices/programmes

Change imperative

Adaptive Management case-studies are systematically captured, analyzed and disseminated to strengthen the use of adaptive approaches in UNICEF

Actions to Change

Collection of case-studies of AM in UNICEF

Identification of champions using AM

Establish a community of practice on AM

Pillar #3: Identification of enablers, detractors and opportunities for Adaptive Management in UNICEF

Change imperative

Enabling environment for Adaptive Management approaches that are supported through our programming frameworks (e.g. workplanning processes, monitoring, learning etc.)

Actions to Change

Identification of enablers and barriers to AM

Align people, processes and systems to facilitate AM



Group Task: In plenary

Feedback on Today


- How did you find the process we have used in this session?
- Did you find the dialogue interesting and useful?

Any views or questions about the overall consultation process and next steps?

Emailed feedback also welcome



10 mins total

A blue and white racing yacht is shown from a high-angle perspective, leaning to its right as it cuts through a dark, choppy sea. The hull is bright blue and features the UNICEF logo and the text "for every child" in white. The white sails are also visible, with various sponsor logos including "GARMIN", "KAYAK", "CLIPPER", "ROUND THE WORLD", and "81-18". Several crew members in red gear are visible on the deck. The overall scene conveys a sense of adventure and resilience.

***“You cannot turn
the wind,
so turn your sail.”***

-Swahili proverb