



# **Unitaid's Evaluation Framework**

## Guidance

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## 1. Purpose and scope

**This document provides an overview of the Unitaid evaluation framework and approach to external evaluation applicable to Unitaid-funded investments. This guidance is intended to: i) inform current and prospective implementers of Unitaid-funded investments of Unitaid's evaluation requirements and processes and ii) guide potential evaluators in planning and conducting evaluations commissioned by Unitaid.**

**This document will be updated regularly to reflect developments in Unitaid's operating model and implementation of its 2023-2027 strategy.**

## 2. Background and Approach to Evaluations at Unitaid

External evaluations are an essential component of Unitaid's approach to performance management and monitoring, transparency, and accountability, and communicating results and learning. They form a key element of Unitaid's operating model, as outlined in the 2011 constitution<sup>1</sup> (Section 3, items 3.11-3.12), which mandated external evaluations of Unitaid grants, to be aligned with international evaluation standards.

In June 2022, Unitaid adopted a new strategy for the 2023-2027 period, outlining its approach to achieve the vision of equitable access to healthcare innovation to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all. The strategic framework (Annex 1) includes three Strategic Objectives (SOs): 1) accelerate the introduction and adoption of key health products; 2) create systemic conditions for sustainable, equitable access; and 3) foster inclusive and demand-driven partnerships for innovation. Two strategic principles underpin these objectives: 1) investing in health products that improve health outcomes with prevention, diagnosis, and treatment, that support people and communities to engage with their own health, that make health systems more efficient and resilient, and that make health care greener and more sustainable; 2) committing to equitable, intersectional, and people-centered approaches across Unitaid's model. Important new elements of the strategy include the definition of Programmatic Priorities that investments will focus on based on potential for impact and Unitaid's comparative advantage, a greater emphasis on engagement and collaboration with affected people and communities and working with partners in long-term strategic alliances to promote equitable access and minimizing the environmental footprint of Unitaid and the health products it supports.

With the adoption of this new strategy, Unitaid is introducing further refinements to its operating model, strengthening its approach to performance measurement and management to be more strategic, harmonized, outcome-oriented and focused on learning. External evaluations are one of many approaches that Unitaid applies to ensure effective performance to deliver global health impact and to generate learning to inform better decision-making. Other approaches include ongoing internal monitoring by project teams, annual external audits, partner engagement and consultation, and external verification by contracted agents (EVAs) (Figure 1). The external verification mechanism was introduced in 2017 to strengthen quality assurance. EVAs are conducted by pre-selected third-party suppliers and applied at two different stages: 1) during the Grant Agreement Development (GAD) to assess prospective implementer capacity and 2) during

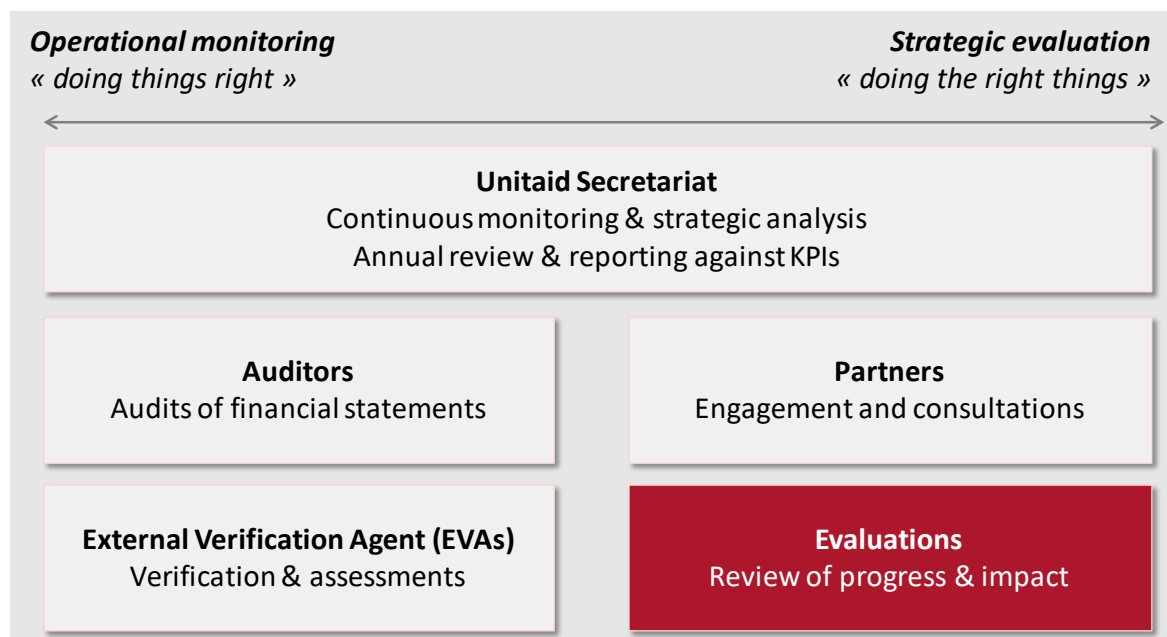
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1: <https://unitaid.org/assets/EB14-R08-Unitaid-constitution.pdf>.

implementation, as needed, to assess a prioritized set of programmatic, financial, procurement and supply management or risk issues.

Unitaid’s investments generate evidence in different ways (e.g., through clinical research, feasibility studies, cost effectiveness analysis, and other processes), with each portfolio dedicating a significant amount of resources to routine monitoring. As such, external evaluations are meant to complement the full range of performance management functions within Unitaid and not duplicate what is already captured through the investments themselves.

**Figure 1. Overview of Unitaid approaches to quality assurance and performance management**



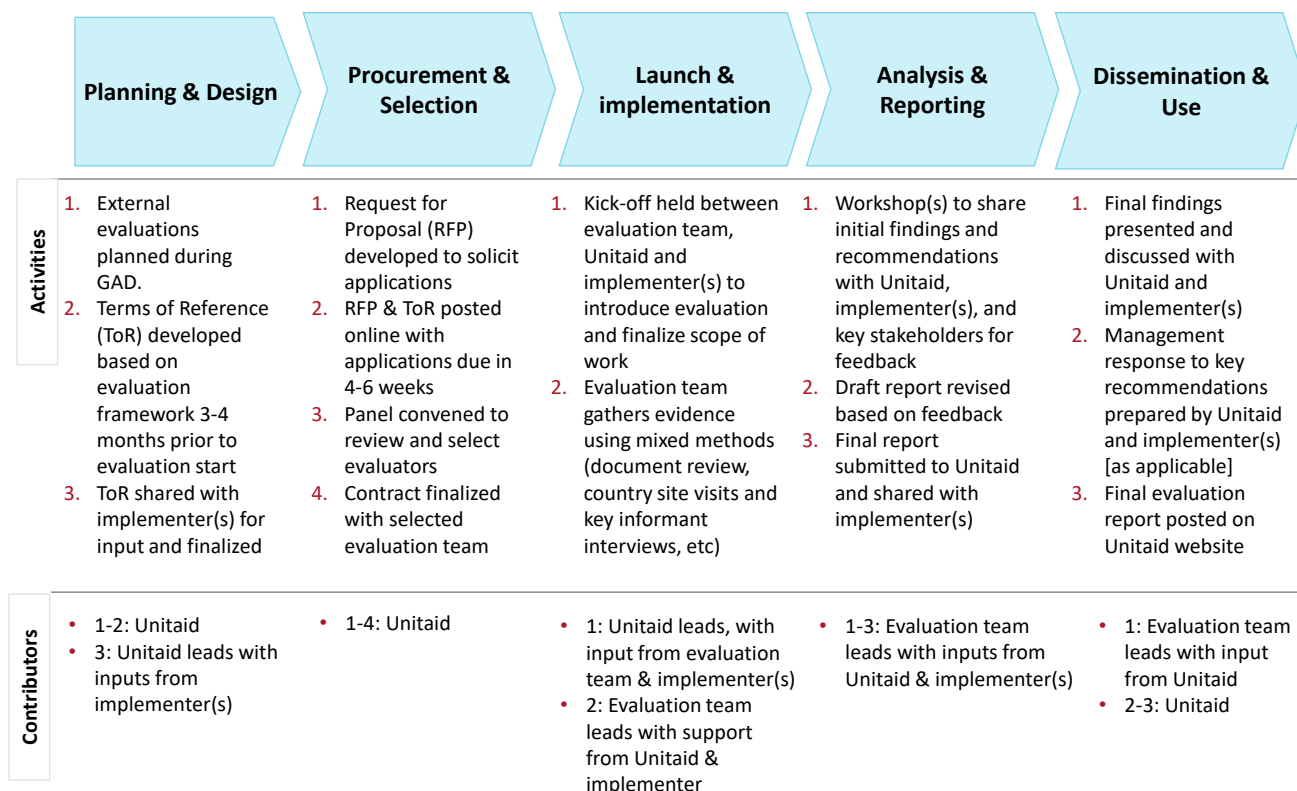
**Evaluation requirements and processes**

Unitaid typically conducts external evaluations within 12 months before or after grant closure. Mid-term evaluations are optional and may be substituted with other assurance mechanisms available at Unitaid (e.g., EVAs). Under its new strategy, Unitaid will, in most cases, group evaluations of investments focused on a specific Programmatic Priority or portfolio. Unitaid may decide to conduct prospective evaluations to provide an ongoing assessment over the course of implementation to facilitate real-time learning and course correction. In addition, Unitaid may commission thematic evaluations to review performance and capture learning within cross-cutting areas of its strategic framework or specific technical areas/ approaches.

External evaluations are commissioned, funded, and managed by Unitaid with the Results team overseeing the entire process. Figure 2 outlines the steps in the process. Evaluators are selected through an open, competitive procurement process that follows best practice, with clear terms of reference (ToR) outlining required experience and expertise. To promote efficient use of resources and environmental sustainability, as well as to ensure perspectives grounded in the realities of the countries and settings where our investments are implemented, Unitaid prioritizes selection of evaluators with a presence in the region/countries of implementation and ensures evaluators make use of existing data, research, and findings of previously completed evaluations where they exist.

Countries in which to conduct field visits to assess implementation progress are selected jointly by the Unitaid Secretariat and implementers. The extent of country level inputs, size of intervention, representativeness, and other specific country-related issues are all considered when choosing countries for visits. Evaluation reports are made publicly available on Unitaid’s website. Key findings and recommendations are discussed with the implementer and followed through where relevant by Unitaid project teams.

**Figure 2. Overview of Process for External Evaluation at Unitaid**



## Expectations of evaluation stakeholders

Figure 3 outlines a set of expectations for each key stakeholder to ensure a sound evaluation that upholds international principles and norms such as independence, impartiality, credibility, transparency, utility, timeliness, and inclusiveness.

**Figure 3. Expectations of evaluation stakeholders**

Stakeholder	Expectations for Evaluation
<b>Implementer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embrace external evaluation as an opportunity to independently assess implementation and contribution to improving equitable access to better health products/innovations</li> <li>• Exercise openness and transparency in sharing of relevant information and available data/reports with evaluators</li> <li>• Support evaluators to connect with implementing partners, government agencies and other relevant stakeholders as appropriate</li> <li>• Commit to act upon findings and recommendations</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluator</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adhere to international ethical guidance and evaluation norms and standards<sup>2</sup> throughout the evaluation, including design, data collection, analysis, reporting and dissemination</li> <li>• Use evaluation methods that meet international quality standards to generate credible, unbiased, and reliable evidence</li> <li>• Optimize use of existing data and ensure any additional data collection adds value and outweighs any costs</li> <li>• Ensure evaluative conclusions and recommendations are evidence-based, balanced and actionable</li> </ul>
<b>Unitaid</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exercise transparency and fairness in commissioning and selection of evaluators</li> <li>• Commit to dedicating necessary financial and human resources</li> <li>• Actively guide the evaluation and provide quality assurance</li> <li>• Maximize the utility and value for money of evaluations</li> <li>• Disseminate findings and recommendations as widely as possible</li> <li>• Act on findings and recommendations that relate to Unitaid</li> <li>• Draw lessons learned across evaluations and incorporate learning in ongoing and future investments/work for continual improvement</li> </ul>

## 3. Unitaid Evaluation Framework

The terms of reference for external evaluations are guided by Unitaid's evaluation framework (Figure 4). This framework is based on the internationally accepted evaluation framework of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC), including its principles<sup>3</sup> and criteria for grant evaluations<sup>4</sup>.

In 2022, Unitaid updated its evaluation framework to align with its 2023-2027 strategic framework and demonstrate the linkages between the OECD DAC evaluation criteria and Unitaid's Strategic Objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)<sup>5</sup> and reflect Unitaid's commitment to a culture of

2: [Detail of UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation \(unevaluation.org\)](https://www.unevaluation.org/).

3: DAC evaluation principles: independence, impartiality, credibility, transparency, utility, timeliness, and inclusiveness.

4: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

5: [https://unitaid.org/assets/Unitaid-strategy-2017-2021\\_Dec-2017.pdf](https://unitaid.org/assets/Unitaid-strategy-2017-2021_Dec-2017.pdf).

learning. As with the 2020 evaluation framework, the updated framework reflects recent evolutions within Unitaid, including:

- Unitaid's scalability framework (Annex 2), outlining the global and country-level conditions needed to facilitate scale-up of health interventions and ensure equitable access;
- Unitaid's revamped approach to risk identification and management that includes standardized project risk registers to classify, rate and manage strategic, implementation and sustainability/scalability risks; and
- Unitaid's greater emphasis on Implementer engagement with communities and civil society organizations to increase demand and adoption.

### Description of the framework and intended use

The evaluation framework consists of two interlinked tables (Table 1 – main table; Table 2 – supplemental table). The first table presents a set of illustrative evaluation questions organized according to Unitaid's strategic objectives. Accelerating the introduction and adoption of key health products (SO1) is central to Unitaid's model and is supported through establishing systemic conditions that promote equitable and sustainable access (SO2) and fostering demand-driven partnerships for innovation (SO3). The framework also includes several cross-cutting questions and questions related to learning and risk mitigation.

The second table maps how the strategic objective and cross-cutting evaluation questions address the OECD-DAC criteria:

- The **Effectiveness** and **Impact** criteria are addressed within the evaluation questions for the first two strategic objectives around accelerating introduction and adoption of key health products/innovations and creating systemic conditions for sustainable equitable access, both core drivers of public health and economic impact.
- The **Relevance** and **Coherence** criteria are addressed under the third strategic objective on fostering inclusive and demand-driven partnerships as well as under the cross-cutting question related to Unitaid's strategic principles.
- The **Efficiency** criterion relates to all three strategic objectives and is covered under the cross-cutting questions.
- The **Sustainability** criterion links to Unitaid's scalability framework and is addressed through evaluation questions across the three strategic objectives.

The framework serves as the basis upon which to develop the ToR that outline the purpose and scope of work for a specific evaluation. Evaluation questions are prioritized and tailored according to the focus and scope of the investments under evaluation, the timing of the evaluation and the information needs. Appropriate data sources and methods are then defined to respond to each evaluation question. The final set of questions and methodology are agreed between the evaluators and Unitaid during the launch of the evaluation.

Figure 4. Unitaid Evaluation Framework

Table 1. Unitaid Evaluation Framework – main table

Unitaid Strategic Objective	Illustrative Evaluation questions <i>(to be tailored to each evaluation)</i>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1. Accelerate the introduction and adoption of key health products</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To what extent did the investments accelerate the development and/or introduction of quality-assured, fit-for-purpose health products/innovations in LMICs?</li> <li>2. To what extent did the investments effectively apply market-shaping approaches, where necessary, to improve equitable access? [1]</li> <li>3. What progress was made in facilitating demand, adoption and scale-up and how impactful and sustainable are these gains? What have been the main factors influencing the adoption and scale-up?[2] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How have the investments contributed to an enabling <u>global</u> environment for scale-up?</li> <li>• To what extent have the investments helped establish <u>country</u> readiness for scale-up?</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>2. Create systemic conditions for sustainable, equitable access</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. How effectively did the investments establish an enabling environment for equitable access, including intellectual property, regulation, and structural determinants and what difference will it make longer-term? [1,3]</li> <li>5. To what extent did the investments support innovative supply models and approaches, including domestic manufacturing and technology transfer? What is the anticipated potential impact on access? [1,3]</li> <li>6. How well have the investments disseminated knowledge, evidence and lessons learned on equitable access? To what extent has this contributed to generating broader awareness and increased support from other stakeholders for these investment areas/for Unitaid's access work?</li> </ol>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>3. Foster inclusive and demand driven partnerships for innovation</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. To what extent have the investments been responsive to community needs and how effectively have Unitaid and implementers engaged with affected communities in the planning, design, implementation, and assessment of activities? Were approaches appropriately adapted/course corrected to respond to any changes in context? What programmatic priority synergies took place to ensure effective engagement, learning and sharing of knowledge?</li> <li>8. How well did the investments add value and maximize alignment/coherence and synergies with global partners, governments, in-country stakeholders, and civil society organizations (CSOs) during planning, design, implementation, and assessment to promote adoption and scale-up within existing systems?</li> <li>9. To what extent did implementers and Unitaid contribute to further development of global alliances/partnerships to support scale-up and sustainability of products/innovations supported through the investments?</li> </ol>



Unitaid Strategic Objective	Illustrative Evaluation questions <i>(to be tailored to each evaluation)</i>
<b>Cross-cutting</b>	10. How timely, cost-efficient, and cost-effective was implementation (considering both allocative efficiency and technical efficiency) and what factors have been considered to ensure that value for money has been achieved from an efficiency standpoint? [4] 11. To what extent did the investments align with Unitaid's strategic principles and commitment to equitable, intersectional, and people-centered approaches?
<div style="background-color: #4a698d; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">             Learning &amp; Risk Mitigation [5]           </div>	12. What have been the lessons learned and how have they been incorporated in the lifetime of the investments or across other Unitaid investments/interventions? Have lessons learnt been regularly disseminated by implementers and Unitaid? 13. Were key areas for strategic learning (learning agenda) identified at the outset, and plans developed and implemented to address them through the investments? To what extent has this learning been captured, shared and what influence has it had (or is anticipated to have)? 14. How effectively have strategic, implementation and sustainability/scalability risks been identified and managed over the course of implementation [6]?

**Notes:**

[1] Unitaid considers equitable access to mean that a product is affordable, available, sufficiently supplied, and quality-assured for LMIC settings. Whenever Unitaid (through its implementers) provides funding support (including through incentives, technical support, or other means) to developers, manufacturers, or suppliers of medical products, Unitaid requires that such developer, manufacturer, or supplier makes appropriate and legally binding commitments in order to ensure equitable access to the product by people in need in LMICs. The nature and scope of the commitments will depend on the product, the developer/ manufacturer, and the amount of the support provided. However, such commitments should usually ensure that the product is made available at an affordable price, in sufficient quantities, is quality-assured and registered in relevant LMICs. Note that ensuring equitable access and effective coverage for people in need also requires addressing structural barriers that prevent access, such as criminalization and consent laws that may restrict access to health services for marginalized populations.

[2] Refer to the Unitaid scalability framework (Annex 1).

[3] These questions apply to evaluations that include investments with a focus on these areas.

[4] Allocative efficiency refers to optimizing allocation of resources across interventions, geographies, and population groups to maximize impact; Technical efficiency refers to minimizing the costs of implementation while achieving the desired outcomes.

[5] Not an official strategic objective of Unitaid, but a core principle of how Unitaid works.

[6] Refer to Unitaid Project Risk Map and Risk Register.

**Table 2: Mapping of Illustrative Evaluation Questions by OECD-DAC criteria<sup>6</sup>**

Question	Relevance is the intervention doing the right things?	Coherence how well does the intervention fit?	Effectiveness is the intervention achieving its objectives?	Efficiency how well are resources being used?	Impact what difference does the intervention make?	Sustainability will the benefits last? <i>[Scalability]</i>
To what extent did the investments accelerate the development and/or introduction of quality-assured, fit-for-purpose health products/innovations in LMICs?			◆		◆	
To what extent did the investments effectively apply market shaping approaches, where necessary, to improve equitable access?			◆		◆	
What progress was made in facilitating adoption and scale up and how impactful and sustainable are these gains and what gaps remain? What have been the main factors influencing the adoption and scale-up? • How have the investments contributed to an enabling global environment for scale-up? • To what extent have the investments helped establish country readiness for scale-up?			◆		◆	◆
How effectively did the investments establish an enabling environment for access, including intellectual property, regulation, and structural determinants and what difference will it make longer-term?			◆		◆	◆
To what extent did the investments support innovative supply models and approaches, including domestic manufacturing and technology transfer? What is the anticipated potential impact on access?			◆		◆	◆
How well have the investments disseminated knowledge, evidence and lessons learned on equitable access? To what extent has this contributed to generating broader awareness and increased support from other stakeholders for these investment areas/for Unitaid’s access work?			◆		◆	◆
To what extent has the investment been responsive to community needs and how effectively have implementers engaged with affected communities in the planning, design, implementation, and assessment of activities? Were approaches appropriately adapted/course corrected to respond to any changes in context? What programmatic priority synergies took place to ensure effective engagement, learning and sharing of knowledge?	◆					
How well did the investments maximize alignment/coherence and synergies with governments, in-country stakeholders, and CSOs during planning, implementation, and assessment to promote adoption and scale-up?		◆				◆
To what extent did implementers and Unitaid contribute to further development of global alliances to support scale-up and sustainability of products/innovations supported through the investments?		◆				◆
How timely, cost-efficient, and cost-effective was implementation (considering both allocative efficiency and technical efficiency) and what factors have been considered to ensure that value for money has been achieved from an efficiency standpoint?				◆		
To what extent did the investments align with Unitaid’s strategic principles and commitment to equitable, intersectional, and people-centered approaches?	◆	◆		◆		

6: Updated in December 2019, available here: <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/revised-evaluation-criteria-dec-2019.pdf>.

## 4. Dissemination and Use of Evaluation Findings

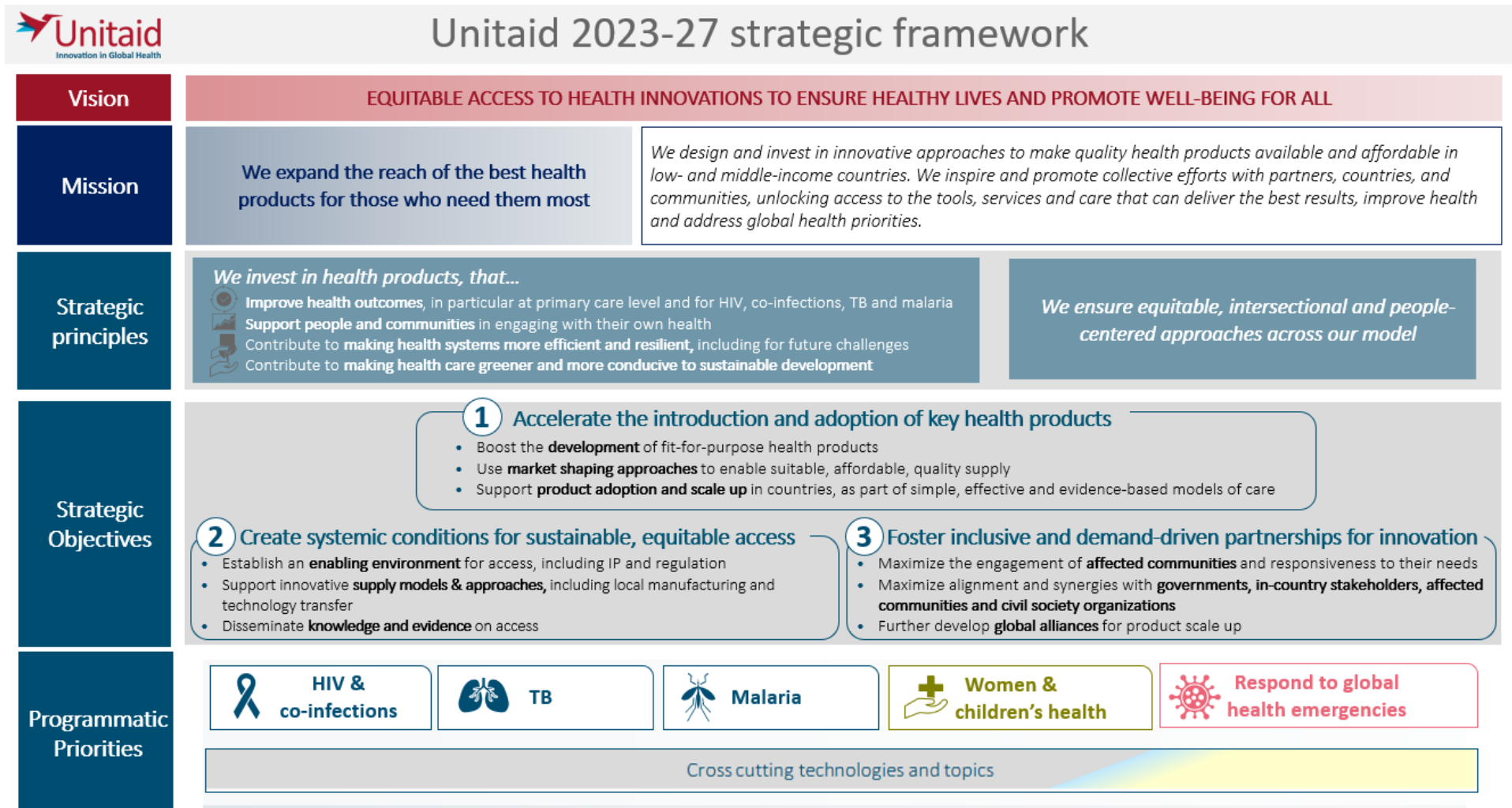
Evaluation findings, lessons learnt, and preliminary recommendations are shared directly by evaluators with implementers and the Unitaid Secretariat. Recommendations and management actions are refined and finalized through discussion between implementers and Unitaid and those for Unitaid internally within project teams and Unitaid's senior management. Evaluation recommendations are used to support the ongoing performance management of the active portfolio and to inform the design of future investments.

Results of evaluations are used by Unitaid to inform annual reporting on Unitaid's Strategic KPIs that are shared with the Executive Board. In addition, Unitaid disseminates evaluation findings widely within the Secretariat and periodically reviews completed evaluations to identify common themes and lessons learned to inform improvements in grant design and evaluation to maximize potential public health impact.

Final reports for evaluations are published on the Unitaid website at [unitaid.org/evaluations](https://unitaid.org/evaluations).

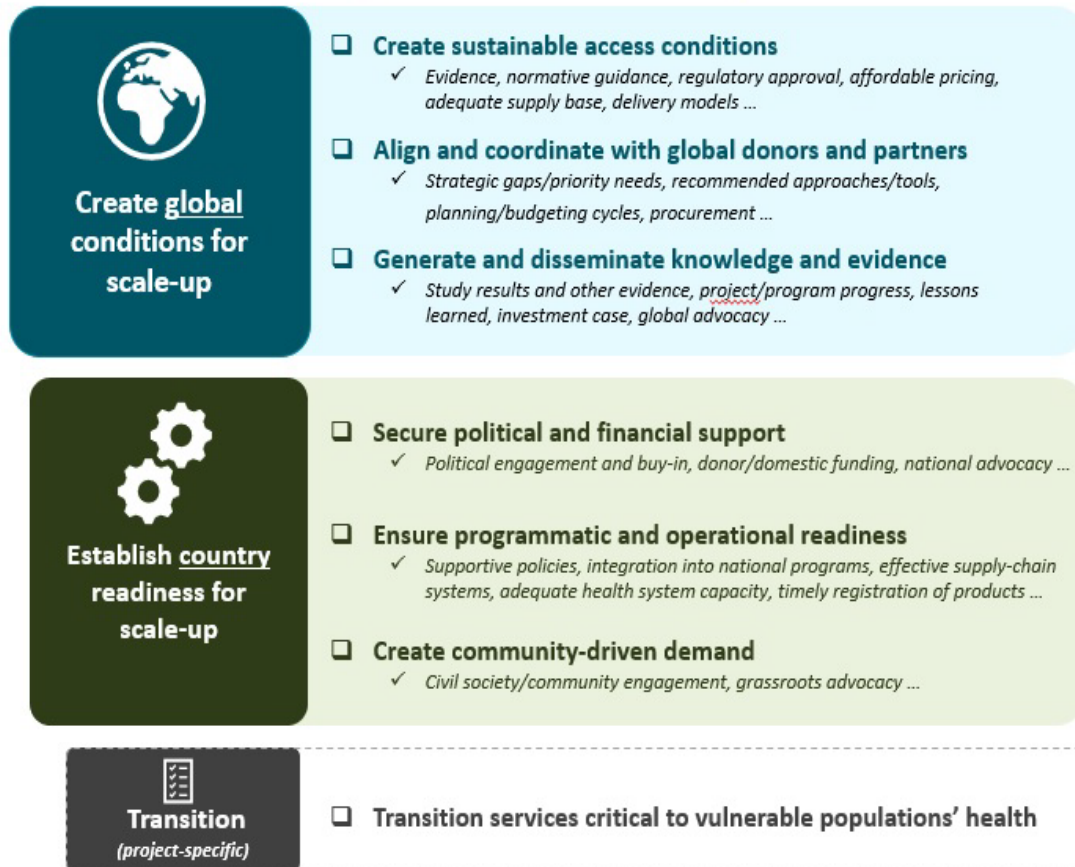
## 5. Annexes

### Annex 1. Unitaid's 2023-2027 Strategic Framework



**Annex 2. Unitaid Scalability Framework**

# Unitaid Scalability Framework: Key Success Factors



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