

# Example of report on statement of originality

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## **Management Issues and Challenges Faced by UNICEF UK**

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### **Executive Summary**

UNICEF UK is a renowned international humanitarian organization whose operations have impacted on millions of children. The organization's slow response to crises outside of the UK has placed it under immense scrutiny in recent years and has served to highlight several management issues. The slow response to the Ebola pandemic coupled with the relatively lack of operations within Syria means that UNICEF UK needs to reassess its management policy and redefine it such that it promotes the organization as fair. In the next three years, UNICEF UK should consider increasing its operations in the Middle East and Africa while focusing on narrower areas of need as a means of improving efficiency of services. Doing so will ensure that the organization gains a global reputation as a fair non-discriminatory organization focused to the well-being of children. Overall, there is need for UNICEF UK to address its current management hitches that have made it unable to respond in time to human crises. In so doing, the organization will not only be more efficient in terms of how it delivers services but will also attract more donors who will be interested in working with an organization with a global impact.

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Introduction

Despite notable achievements in ensuring that every child across the globe is safe, UNICEF UK faces several management challenges that mostly relate to how the organization has responded to issues facing children outside of the UK (Marc et al., 2015). This report seeks to analyze and comment on these management issues and further compare the organization's response to these challenges with that of comparator organizations. The report will conclude by providing recommendations on how the organizations should address the identified issues in the next three years.

Analysis of Key Management Issues Facing UNICEF UK

UNICEF UK came under global criticism for how it responded to the Ebola pandemic that hit Western Africa (Marc et al., 2015). Over the years, humanitarian organizations from the developed countries have been criticized for the slow pace with which they have responded to challenges facing developing countries. While UNICEF UK may not have intended to assert this belief, its slow response attracted similarities with other past incidences of perceived slow response. UNICEF UK has not been alone in its slow response as this trend has been noted among a host of other

humanitarian organizations based in developed countries (World Health Organization, 2015a). This however does not justify the approach, but highlights the urgency with which the organization should address the issue not only as a way of improving its operations but also setting a new trend for similar organizations.

Another management issue that UNICEF UK has faced in recent years relates to the role that the organization can play in helping children in war-torn Middle East countries (Dry, 2014). UNICEF UK has significant influence throughout the UK and there have been calls for the organization to use this influence to end the child labor that is currently prevalent in Lebanon and Jordan and that targets refugees from Syria (World Bank, 2015; Biondi, 2013). In regard to this issue, the organization can expect immense scrutiny by the international community for whatever decisions it makes. Coming up with effective decisions that reflect on the organization's mission and vision statements will go a long way in marking the reputation of UNICEF UK as one of the leading humanitarian organizations (Marc et al., 2015).

Analysis of the Comparator Organizations: World Vision International and American Red Cross

World Vision International is a humanitarian organization with a strong focus on development, advocacy, and more importantly, the needs of children. During the Ebola pandemic, World Vision was equally expected to play a critical role in helping the affected communities (World Vision International, 2015a). Unlike UNICEF UK however, World Vision responded swiftly and in time to provide protective equipment, create awareness, train and coordinate burials, and support efforts to try Ebola vaccines. As of June 2015,

the organization had helped over 1 million people in Sierra Leone alone highlighting a wide-felt presence of the organization's humanitarian activities across West Africa (World Health Organization, 2015a). One of the most important lessons that UNICEF UK can learn from World Vision relates to how to focus aid to a specific area of need. During the Ebola pandemic, World Vision specialized in creating awareness through public education sessions, radio, and television (World Vision International, 2015b). For an organization with the resources that UNICEF UK has, one would expect it to focus on one of the areas such as provision of medical equipment, public awareness creation, and financing research on Ebola treatment.

World Vision has also reacted in time to the Syrian crisis providing aid to millions of children hit by arguably the worst humanitarian disaster of our time (Osman et al., 2013). In the wake of a crisis that has affected over 12 million people, World Vision started providing assistance to Syrian refugees based in Lebanon in 2011 and expanded its programs in 2013 to assist refugees in Jordan, Turkey, and Northern Syria. In order to improve its assistance, World Vision initiated a category III emergency in 2013 that aimed at alleviating suffering while improving the lives of refugees with a strong focus on children (World Vision International, 2015c). The declaration of category III emergency by World Vision highlighted its commitment to the plight of refugees from the Syrian crisis. In order to gain a similar reputation to that of World Vision, UNICEF UK needs to change its approach to issues facing children out of UK (Watson and Clarke, 2014). This would involve, among others, initiating humanitarian programs in the Middle East as a way of bringing services closer to the neediest children. Changing people's

perspective of an organization might take a long time and there is need therefore for UNICEF UK to initiate long term and sustainable programs in the Middle East and Africa, two regions where its response to crises has been wanting (Abu-Sada, 2012).

The American Red Cross also provides important lessons for UNICEF UK in regard to swift response to human crises. The ARA responded swiftly to the Ebola crisis and was among the first international organizations to avail its services to the affected communities (American Red Cross, 2014a). The organization's main challenge was lack of enough funding rather than a perceived lack of willingness to respond in time. From the ARA, UNICEF UK can learn that despite limited funding, addressing human crises requires collaborated efforts as evident by ARA's collaboration with organizations such as Paul G (American Red Cross, 2014b), Allen Foundation, and the Humanitarian OpenStreetMap. The ARA also maintains a strong and wide-felt presence across Africa and the Middle East. This has ensured that the organization can reach out to communities whenever a crisis emerges. Developing and maintaining a rich network across the globe is therefore critical to UNICEF UK's ability to improve its performance outside of the UK (American Red Cross, 2014c).

#### Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the above analysis, one can note that while UNICEF UK remains one of the leading humanitarian organizations across the globe, there is need for management changes to be effected within the organization as a way of improving its operations and performance. The organization's management issues mostly relates to its response to crises outside of the UK

and more specifically those in the Middle East and Africa. World Vision, on the other hand, provides an ideal example of an organization that has improved its service delivery to the world's neediest regions (World Health Organization, 2015a).

UNICEF UK needs to include increased humanitarian programs to the Middle East and Africa as one of its objectives for the period running up to 2018. Working with other humanitarian organizations on the ground will improve the public's perception of the organization as well as its management policy. Currently, there is concern that UNICEF UK employs a discriminatory management policy that focuses on some regions at the expense of others. Attaining an equitable delivery of humanitarian services across the globe should therefore be one of the objectives of the organization for the next three years (O'donnell, 2002).

UNICEF UK might also consider the focus strategy when faced with a humanitarian crisis (Brantley and Taylor, 2013). The focus strategy involves specializing on area of need rather than aiming at covering all areas and is used to improve efficiency and quality of services offered. Employing the strategy with UNICEF UK would call for the top management to identify an area of a crisis that the organization is best equipped to effectively address. Focusing services to a narrow segment will reduce the organization's expenses and allow it to provide services to more regions of the world. This strategy will also allow the organization to attain an equitable delivery of services.

Moving forward, UNICEF UK needs to improve collaboration with other humanitarian organizations (World Health Organization, 2015a). Based on

past crises, it is evident that a well-coordinated operation is critical to any success. A lot depends on how humanitarian organizations collaborate with a common goal rather than the much each of these organizations achieve. As one of the 36 UNICEF committees based in the developed countries, UNICEF UK should consider collaborating closely with other UNICEF committees across Europe as a way of improving its performance (World Health Organization, 2015b).

Conclusively, there is need for UNICEF UK to address its current management hitches that have made it unable to respond in time to human crises. In so doing, the organization will not only be more efficient in terms of how it delivers services but will also attract more donors who will be interested in working with an organization with a global impact.

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