



Organizational unit: Year of report: 2021

Title of evaluation report: **UNFPA Regional Programme Evaluation: East and Southern Africa Regional Office 2018–2021**

Overall quality of report: Good Date of assessment: 5 December 2021

Overall comments: This is a thorough evaluation of an ambitious regional programme. It was carried out remotely due to the constraints of the covid pandemic. Nonetheless, the evaluators present a very detailed set of findings on the extent of the programme's success in meeting intended results. Cross-cutting issues are more succinctly addressed but do cover issues of disability in a main evaluation question, and in findings, conclusions and recommendations. The analysis includes supporting factors such as a disability specialist within the RO. The methodology could have been more specific about if/how evaluation participants included representation of persons with disabilities. Overall, the evaluators appear to have presented a useful set of conclusions and recommendations to guide the development of the next RP. There are a number of ways the report could have more closely met UNFPA evaluation standards, including by having a more thorough methodology section that provided more details on the evaluation participants, on what the case studies entailed, how the theory of change was integrated into the analysis, and on ethical practices followed. The absence of gender disaggregated data stood out. In addition, the report would be more accessible to intended audiences if different styles of formatting were used to distinguish different sections of the report and if more visual aids were used to convey key information.

Assessment Levels Very Good strong, above average, best practice Good satisfactory, respectable Fair with some weaknesses, still acceptable Unsatisfactory weak, does not meet minimal quality standards

Quality Assessment Criteria Insert assessment level followed by main comments. (use 'shading' function to give cells corresponding colour)

1. Structure and Clarity of Reporting	Yes No Partial	Assessment Level:	Good
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To ensure the report is comprehensive and user-friendly

1. Is the report structured in a logical way? Is the report easy to read and understand (i.e. written in an accessible language appropriate for the intended audience) with minimal grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors? Is there a clear distinction made between analysis/findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned (where applicable)?	Partial	A logical structure is used. However, it would be helpful if the different report sections and sub sections were more clearly distinguished from each other, i.e., through different and/or larger font and more spacing. There are a few noticeable errors, including that Recommendations are labelled as Conclusions in the Executive Summary.
2. Is the report of a reasonable length? (maximum pages for the main report, excluding annexes: 60 for institutional evaluations; 70 for CPEs; 80 for thematic evaluations)	Yes	The report is 72 pages which is reasonable length for a regional programme report.
3. Do the annexes contain – at a minimum – the ToRs; a bibliography; a list of interviewees; the evaluation matrix; methodological and data collection tools used (e.g. interview guides; focus group notes, outline of surveys)?	Partial	In addition to the required annexes, the final page of the report lists further annexes - Case Studies, ToR for the Evaluation Reference Group, Stakeholder Map and Theory of Change. However, the annexes are only available through links that do not work. It is good practice to include the actual annexes in the report or in a separate volume of the report.

Executive summary

4. Is an executive summary written as a stand-alone section, presenting the i) Purpose; ii) Objectives, scope and brief description of interventions; iii) intended audience; iv) Methodology; v) Main results; vi) Conclusions and Recommendations?	Yes	It is a self-contained section with all necessary elements.
5. Is the executive summary reasonably concise (e.g. with a maximum length of 5 pages)?	Partial	Although this section is within the guidelines, at 4 pages, it could be presented in a more accessible manner. Most of the presentation is in bullet point form and is text heavy. The discussion on Effectiveness is 3/4 page and, although well written, is more detailed than normally found in an Executive Summary

2. Design and Methodology	Yes No Partial	Assessment Level:	Good
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To ensure that the evaluation is put within its context

1. Is the development and institutional context of the evaluation clearly described and constraints explained?	Yes	The development context and the UNFPA response are succinctly presented.
2. Does the evaluation report discuss and assess the intervention logic and/or theory of change?	Partial	The RP goal, outcomes and outputs are provided in table 6. The ToC for each programme area are annexed, however they are not explained nor do they appear to have been assessed.

To ensure a rigorous design and methodology

3. Is the evaluation framework clearly described in the text and in the evaluation matrix? Does the evaluation matrix establish the evaluation questions, assumptions, indicators, data sources and methods for data collection?	Yes	The evaluation matrix is briefly referenced in the report text and then is attached. The matrix carefully sets out the questions, assumptions, indicators, data sources, and methods/tools.
4. Are the tools for data collection described and their choice justified?	Partial	Data was collected via document review, KIIs, a survey of CO staff, and case studies. Each is described, along with the rationale for their selection. However, more information on the case studies would be useful - including how these were conducted and total number. It would also be useful to include the number of documents reviewed and number of KIIs conducted, including for each stakeholder group. Lists of both are provided in the annexes but are not numbered.
5. Is there a comprehensive stakeholder map? Is the stakeholder consultation process clearly described (in particular, does it include the consultation of key stakeholders on draft recommendations)?	Partial	There is a spreadsheet that lists various organizations and contact information, along with brief notations on the status of the partnership in some cases. Young people and civil society were represented but there is no specific mention of representation of persons with disabilities. Mapping could go further by specifying roles and relationships between different groups. The consultation process is described, including feedback from the RO and ERG on the evaluation design and draft report.
6. Are the methods for analysis clearly described for all types of data?	Yes	It is noted that data from all sources was collated and clustered around respective evaluation questions. Quantitative data was analysed through descriptive statistical analysis. Contribution analysis was applied to qualitative data.
7. Are methodological limitations acknowledged and their effect on the evaluation described? Does the report discuss what was done to minimize such issues?	Yes	Three limitations are noted - the pandemic, non availability of some stakeholders, and data limitations. Mitigation is discussed for each.
8. Is the sampling strategy described?	Partial	KIIs were pursued based on the stakeholder map (and were purposively selected) and surveys were sent to all COs. It is not clear how subjects for case studies were selected.

This criteria is asking whether the methodological approach to determining the sample of

9. Does the methodology enable the collection and analysis of disaggregated data?	No	The lack of existing disaggregated data is noted as a limitation, but it is still unusual for no disaggregated data to be presented in the report. Primary data sources are also not differentiated. There is no disaggregation of evaluation participants and the tools do not request this information.
10. Is the design and methodology appropriate for assessing the cross-cutting issues (equity and vulnerability, disability inclusion, gender equality and human rights)?	Yes	The evaluation questions enable this. It is noted that the regional youth network, representing vulnerable populations, was among the key informants interviewed. The list of stakeholders consulted suggests there was representation from rights holder groups on issues of vulnerability.
3. Reliability of Data		
	Yes No Partial	Assessment Level: Very good
<i>To ensure quality of data and robust data collection processes</i>		
1. Did the evaluation triangulate data collected as appropriate?	Yes	Triangulation is enabled by the multiple methods and sources used, and evaluators note that systematic triangulation was done.
2. Did the evaluation clearly identify and make use of reliable qualitative and quantitative data sources?	Yes	Sources appear reliable. Both types of data are collected.
3. Is there evidence that data has been collected with a sensitivity to issues of discrimination and other ethical considerations?	Partial	The UNEG Ethical Guidelines are cited, however their application is not further described. The only specific ethical issue cited is confidentiality; it is discussed in the methodology section and as part of instructions in the interview protocol. Issues including data storage and security should have been addressed, particularly given that interviews were recorded.
4. Analysis and Findings		
	Yes No Partial	Assessment Level: Good
<i>To ensure sound analysis and credible findings</i>		
1. Are the findings substantiated by evidence?	Partial	There is frequent citing of how data was obtained with sources being identified in brackets at the end of many paragraphs. However data obtained through desk review is most often just cited generally as 'document review' rather than specifying the specific document.
2. Is the basis for interpretations carefully described?	Yes	The evaluators are thorough in explaining the basis for each finding. Both qualitative and quantitative data is used to do this.
3. Is the analysis presented against the evaluation questions?	Yes	This section is clearly organized by criteria and evaluation question. A boxed summary of key findings is helpfully presented under each question.
4. Are the cause and effect links between an intervention and its end results explained and any unintended outcomes highlighted?	Yes	The link are made clear. The section on Effectiveness presents achievements against targets and baselines by output for each outcome area in table format, and then further discusses those achievements. An example is the contribution of the RO on the introduction of SRHR integration into the Universal Health Coverage agendas in the region (p. 24). It is noted that the evaluation did not find any unintended results (p. 23).
5. Does the analysis show different outcomes for different target groups, as relevant?	Yes	Since much of the RP is focused on systems change that aims to support better health outcomes for marginalized groups, outcome-level results are appropriately discussed in terms of policy changes in different countries on key issues, use of guidance in education system, etc.
6. Is the analysis presented against contextual factors?	Yes	Contextual factors are consistently presented, i.e., the absence of a Gender Advisor in 2018 and budget cuts which led to underachievement in some areas under Output 8 on GBV.
7. Does the analysis elaborate on cross-cutting issues such as equity and vulnerability, disability inclusion, gender equality and human rights?	Yes	Cross-cutting issues including disability inclusion are briefly addressed under EQ4 on gender and human rights integration. UNFPA's work on multi-sectoral capacity to address GBV and harmful practices in humanitarian settings is later taken up in a discussion on Connectedness.
5. Conclusions		
	Yes No Partial	Assessment Level: Very good

To assess the validity of conclusions			
1. Do the conclusions flow clearly from the findings?	Yes	The relationship is evident, particularly with the corresponding questions, criteria and recommendations being highlighted for each conclusion.	
2. Do the conclusions go beyond the findings and provide a thorough understanding of the underlying issues of the programme/initiative/system being evaluated and reflect as appropriate cross-cutting issues such as equality and vulnerability, disability inclusion, gender equality and human rights?	Yes	The conclusions are sufficiently high level. Cross-cutting issues are reflected including for disability issues.	
3. Do the conclusions appear to convey the evaluators' unbiased judgement?	Yes	There is no evidence of bias.	
6. Recommendations			
	Yes No Partial	Assessment Level:	Very good
To ensure the usefulness and clarity of recommendations			
1. Do recommendations flow logically from conclusions?	Yes	The relationship is clear, particularly as the conclusion on which each recommendation is based is given.	
2. Are the recommendations targeted at the intended users and action-oriented (with information on their human, financial and technical implications)?	Yes	Recommendations are action-oriented - the target group is identified and operational implications are discussed. In several cases, budgeting issues are addressed.	
3. Do recommendations appear balanced and impartial and address, as relevant, key cross cutting issues such as equity and vulnerability, disability-inclusion, gender equality and human rights?	Yes	They are appropriately framed and address all cross-cutting issues.	
4. Are the recommendations prioritized?	Yes	They are categorized as high or medium priority, and by strategic and programmatic levels.	
7. Gender			
	0 1 2 3 (**)	Assessment Level:	Very good
To assess the integration of Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW) (*)			
1. Is GEEW integrated in the evaluation scope of analysis and indicators designed in a way that ensures GEEW-related data to be collected?		<p>a. Does the evaluation include an objective specific to assessment of human rights and gender equality considerations or was it mainstreamed in other objectives? (Score: 0-3) Although not an objective, consideration of x-cutting issues including gender equality are noted in the thematic scope = 3</p> <p>b. Was a standalone criterion on gender and/or human rights included in the evaluation framework or mainstreamed into other evaluation criteria? (Score: 0-3) Gender is considered under the Effectiveness criterium. = 3</p> <p>c. Is there a dedicated evaluation question or sub-question regarding how GEEW was integrated into the subject of the evaluation? (Score: 0-3) One of the main questions is "To what extent has UNFPA successfully integrated gender and human rights perspectives in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the Regional Programme?" = 3</p> <p>d. Does the evaluation assess whether sufficient information was collected during the implementation period on specific result indicators to measure progress on human rights and gender equality results? (Score: 0-3) There is a discussion on the extent this data is available = 3.</p>	
2. Is a gender-responsive methodology used, including gender-responsive methods and tools, and data analysis techniques?		<p>a. Does the evaluation specify how gender issues are addressed in the methodology, including: how data collection and analysis methods integrate gender considerations and ensure data collected is disaggregated by sex? (Score: 0-3) These issues are not addressed. Disaggregated data is not presented. = 0</p> <p>b. Does the evaluation methodology employ a mixed-methods approach, appropriate to evaluating GEEW considerations (collecting and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data, and ensuring the appropriate sample size)? (Score: 0-3) An appropriate mixed methods approach is used and both types of data are collected. = 3</p> <p>c. Are a diverse range of data sources and processes employed (i.e. triangulation, validation) to guarantee inclusion, accuracy and credibility? (Score: 0-3) There are a range of sources and methods. = 3</p> <p>d. Do the evaluation methods and sampling frame address the diversity of stakeholders affected by the intervention, particularly the most vulnerable, where appropriate? (Score: 0-3) The diversity appears appropriate for an evaluation of a regional programme. The evaluation did not consult with rightsholders as the RP does not work directly with them, however several civil society organizations did participate. It would have been helpful if the mission of these organizations were included in the stakeholder map so that diversity could be more clearly assessed. = 2</p> <p>e. Were ethical standards considered throughout the evaluation and were all stakeholder groups treated with integrity and respect for confidentiality? (Score: 0-3) UNEG Ethical Practices were mentioned and respect for confidentiality was evident, however there was no further explanation of how ethical practices were upheld = 2.</p>	

<p>3. Do the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations reflect a gender analysis?</p>	<p>a. Does the evaluation have a background section that includes an intersectional analysis of the specific social groups affected by the issue or spell out the relevant normative instruments or policies related to human rights and gender equality? (Score: 0-3) The Regional Context section provides this analysis, and references several frameworks including CEDAW, the Beijing Platform for Action (BPA), the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, the Maputo Protocol and the African Union Agenda 2063. = 3</p> <p>b. Do the findings include data analysis that explicitly and transparently triangulates the voices of different social role groups, and/or disaggregates quantitative data, where applicable? (Score: 0-3) This is not apparent = 0</p> <p>c. Are unanticipated effects of the intervention on human rights and gender equality described? (Score: 0-3) Unanticipated effects are not explicitly addressed = 0</p> <p>d. Does the evaluation report provide specific recommendations addressing GEEW issues, and priorities for action to improve GEEW or the intervention or future initiatives in this area? (Score: 0-3) There are multiple recommendations addressing ways to further RO work on a range of GEEW issues. It is useful that these are put in context by highlighting supporting factors such as the roving gender specialist dedicated to humanitarian development of country programmes. = 3</p>
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(*) This assessment criteria is fully based on the UN-SWAP Scoring Tool. Each sub-criteria shall be equally weighted.
 (**) Scoring uses a four point scale (0-3).

Overall Evaluation Quality Assessment

Quality assessment criteria (scoring points*)	Assessment Levels (**)			
	Very good	Good	Fair	Unsatisfactory
1. Structure and clarity of reporting, including executive summary (7)		7		
2. Design and methodology (13)		13		
3. Reliability of data (11)	11			
4. Analysis and findings (40)		40		
5. Conclusions (11)	11			
6. Recommendations (11)	11			
7. Integration of gender (7)	7			
Total scoring points	40	60		

Overall assessment level of evaluation report **Good**

The evaluation integrates adequately cross cutting issues of gender equality, human rights and disability inclusion, even though is not included as part of the evaluation objective.

Consideration of significant constraints (e.g. COVID-19 or civil unrest)

The quality of this evaluation report has been hampered by exceptionally difficult circumstances: Yes No

If yes, please explain:

