

Organizational unit: UNFPA Moldova Country Office **Year of report:** 2016

Title of evaluation report: The UNFPA 2nd Country Programme 2013-2017 Republic of Moldova. Final report, June 2016

Overall quality of report: Good **Date of assessment:** 23 September 2016

Overall comments: The evaluation report is structured around UNFPA standards. The evaluation design and methodology are clearly explained and the evaluation process is well detailed. Throughout the report, data sources are identified, data triangulation is applied and data is gender disaggregated, where possible. The evaluation questions incorporate cross-cutting issues, which are clearly referenced in the evaluation matrix. Credibility of primary and secondary data is established and limitations are made explicit and - in most cases – mitigated. Findings stem from rigorous data analysis and contextual factors are identified. Conclusions lack detail and do not consistently flow from findings. However, conclusions and recommendations are presented together, a useful approach to illustrate the link and logical flow between the two. Recommendations are prioritized and targeted but would benefit from more precise and specific language. The evaluation includes gender dimensions in the findings, conclusions and recommendations but there is no systematic approach to the integration of gender equality and the empowerment of women throughout the evaluation.

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

I. 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 easy to read and understand (i.e. written in an accessible language appropriate for the intended audience) with minimal grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors?	Yes	Comment: The report is comprehensive, logically structured, and is drafted in accordance with international standards. It includes all required sections and annexes. The report is 236 pages long and has much narrative text and fewer tables and figures. Therefore, it is time consuming to read and get easy understanding of findings and analysis. There is no chapter on Transferable Lessons learned, but that it not required by the ToR. Also, while there is no annex on "methodological instruments used", there is a column in the Evaluation Matrix (Annex 8) called "Methods and tools for the data collection." The 'Executive Summary' serves as a stand-alone document. It fulfills most structural requirements, including an additional section on 'Main findings', however it only lists the four programmatic areas covered by UNFPA and their associated budgets and does not provide much detail on the interventions applied. At 4 pages, it is within the page limits of an 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)	Partial	
3. Is the report structured in a logical way? Is there a clear distinction made between analysis/findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned (where applicable)?	Yes	
4. Do the annexes contain – at a minimum – the ToRs; a bibliography; a list of interviewees; the evaluation matrix; methodological tools used (e.g. interview guides; focus group notes, outline of surveys) as well as information on the stakeholder consultation process?	Partial	
<i>Executive summary</i>		
5. Is an executive summary included in the report, written as a stand-alone section and presenting the main results of the evaluation?	Yes	
6. Is there a clear structure of the executive summary, (i.e. i) Purpose, including intended audience(s); ii) Objectives and brief description of intervention; iii) Methodology; iv) Main conclusions; v) Recommendations)?	Yes	
7. Is the executive summary reasonably concise (e.g. with a maximum length of 5 pages)?	Yes	

2. Design and Methodology	Yes No Partial	Assessment Level:	Good
<i>To ensure that the evaluation is put within its context</i>		<p>Comment: The 'Design and Methodology' chapter provides a clear and detailed explanation of the evaluation process, evaluation questions and methodological choice. Techniques and tools for data collection are provided in a detailed manner, including a description of how site visits were selected (i.e. purposive sampling) and which team member traveled to those respective sites. Notably, the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Gender Equality Expert and Adolescent and Youth Expert traveled to sites which had programming in their respective areas of expertise. This demonstrates that efforts were made to consider gender and vulnerable groups in the evaluation design.</p> <p>Triangulation was applied throughout the evaluation as a validation mechanism and to mitigate challenges with limited work plans and key informant and final beneficiary interviews.</p> <p>Details of participatory stakeholders' consultation process are provided in detail, including the evaluation team's continuous work with the Evaluation Reference Group throughout the evaluation planning and implementation process.</p> <p>The evaluation questions incorporate cross-cutting issues; this is made clear in the evaluation matrix where details on evidence relating to cross-cutting issues and choice of target/most vulnerable groups are explicitly mentioned across evaluation questions.</p>	
1. Does the evaluation describe the target audience for the evaluation?	Yes		
2. Is the development and institutional context of the evaluation clearly described and constraints explained?	Yes		
3. Does the evaluation report describe the reconstruction of the intervention logic and/or theory of change, and assess the adequacy of these?	Yes		
<i>To ensure a rigorous design and methodology</i>			
4. 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		
5. Are the tools for data collection described and their choice justified?	Yes		
6. 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		
7. Are the methods for analysis clearly described for all types of data?	Yes		
8. Are methodological limitations acknowledged and their effect on the evaluation described? (Does the report discuss how any bias has been overcome?)	Yes		
9. Is the sampling strategy described?	Yes		
10. Does the methodology enable the collection and analysis of disaggregated data?	Yes		
11. Is the design and methodology appropriate for assessing the cross-cutting issues (equity and vulnerability, gender equality and human rights)?	Yes		
3. Reliability of Data	Yes No Partial	Assessment Level:	Good
<i>To ensure quality of data and robust data collection processes</i>		<p>Comment: Sources of data are identified consistently throughout the report within footnotes. A full list of interview respondents, a bibliography of reports consulted and a Stakeholder Matrix are also provided as Annexes. Data points are disaggregated by gender throughout the report, where possible.</p> <p>The credibility of primary and secondary data is established and limitations are made explicit in the 'Methodology' chapter. Limitations included incomplete work plans, limited data collection from key informants and final beneficiaries due to time constraints and the unexpected illness of a team member during the data collection period, and the risk of some loss of content through interpretation by a translator. The evaluation team adequately mitigates these limitations through triangulation of data sources and methodologies, however a clear strategy for mitigating the effects of lost content during translation is not provided.</p> <p>Disaggregated data by gender are presented in the Annex 4 "People interviewed and consulted."</p>	
1. Did the evaluation triangulate data collected as appropriate?	Yes		
2. Did the evaluation clearly identify and make use of reliable qualitative and quantitative data sources?	Yes		
3. Did the evaluation make explicit any possible limitations (bias, data gaps etc.) in primary and secondary data sources and if relevant, explained what was done to minimize such issues?	Yes		
4. Is there evidence that data has been collected with a sensitivity to issues of discrimination and other ethical considerations?	Partial		

4. Analysis and Findings		Yes No Partial	Assessment Level:	Good
<i>To ensure sound analysis and credible findings</i>		Comment: : Findings stem from rigorous data analysis, including document review, focus group discussions, key informant interviews and site visits. The evaluation team, however, was unable to collect quantitative primary data (p.5). Findings are organized according to programmatic area and evaluation questions, and a table reporting progress towards indicators is provided at the end of each section. Findings are also provided in detail in the 'Evaluation Matrix' in Annex 8.		
1. Are the findings substantiated by evidence?	Yes	Contextual factors are identified throughout the report, particularly when describing the unintended effects of interventions or barriers to reaching targets. In addition, a clear review of the context of Moldova in the various programme areas is provided in Chapter 3, which sets the stage for the discussion of interventions and findings throughout the report. Contextual factors are described and considered by the evaluation consultants in the analysis that is evident from the text and the Evaluation matrix. For instance, the authors state that "The enhancement of Moldova's capacities to absorb funds and implement international and European requirements will be particularly important in the context of the Government of Moldova's anticipated conclusion of an Association Agreement with the European Union" (p. 146). Cause-effect links are discussed when possible. The evaluation team pulled from many other evaluation reports that were conducted in the region and financed by UNFPA in order to triangulate findings related to beneficiary outcomes, including those professionals in the UNFPA trainings and the vulnerable groups they served. For example, UNFPA aimed to strengthen capacities of 411 health care providers through 12 2-day workshops in various areas. A monitoring visit to several workshops and its associated consultancy report 'Strengthening capacities of shelters and facilities of survivors of gender-based violence in providing sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning' reported that participants benefited from the workshops (p.54). Key informant interviews conducted by the evaluation team also revealed that staff at RH and PHC centers cited an increased awareness of integrated reproductive health services and this then promoted their involvement in counseling more women survivors of GBV and making subsequent referrals to shelters or day care (p52).		
2. Is the basis for interpretations carefully described?	Yes			
3. Is the analysis presented against the evaluation questions?	Yes			
4. Is the analysis transparent about the sources and quality of data?	Partial			
5. Are cause and effect links between an intervention and its end results explained and any unintended outcomes highlighted?	Yes			
6. Does the analysis show different outcomes for different target groups, as relevant?	Yes			
7. Is the analysis presented against contextual factors?	Yes			
8. Does the analysis elaborate on cross-cutting issues such as equity and vulnerability, gender equality and human rights?	Yes			
5. Conclusions		Yes No Partial	Assessment Level:	Fair
<i>To assess the validity of conclusions</i>		Comment: Conclusions and Recommendations are presented together in the Chapter 5. This structure is useful, as the reader is able to see the clear link, or logical flow, between conclusions and recommendations. The problem is that the connection with the findings is not always clear. Conclusions are not organized in priority order, however they are each assigned a priority level. An important issues is that conclusions lack detail and could be made more clear by providing specific reference to findings. For example, Conclusion 1 could provide examples of some of the national priorities the UNFPA Country Programme aligns with or Conclusion 2 would be made more useful by referring to the specific programmatic areas that are "thinly spread and administratively burdensome."		
1. Do the conclusions flow clearly from the findings?	Partial	The statement "UNFPA effectively uses the UN joint Business Operations Strategy as part of Delivering As One" may sound more SMART by providing examples (or keys of success) of effective use of the Operation Strategy. It should be evident from the Conclusions which processes, strategies, outputs, or outcomes are considered by the evaluation consultants as effective. The words "effective" or "effectively" are often used in formulating the conclusions in the report whereas the purpose of the evaluators to discover "the keys of success" and provide them in the conclusions.		
2. Do the conclusions go beyond the findings and provide a thorough understanding of the underlying issues of the programme/initiative/system being evaluated?	Yes			
3. Do the conclusions appear to convey the evaluators' unbiased judgement?	Yes			

6. Recommendations	Yes No Partial	Assessment Level:	Good
<i>To ensure the usefulness and clarity of recommendations</i>		Comment: Conclusions and Recommendations are presented together in the Chapter 5. This structure is useful, as the reader is able to see the clear link, or logical flow, between conclusions and recommendations. Conclusions are strategic, targeted and operationally-feasible. Each recommendation is assigned a priority level (though not in priority order) and an 'addressee', and also lists the operational implications.	
1. Do recommendations flow logically from conclusions?	Yes	Recommendations take into account stakeholders' consultations (Chapter 2 "Methodology" and Annex 4 "People interviewed and consulted").	
2. Are the recommendations clearly written, targeted at the intended users and action-oriented (with information on their human, financial and technical implications)?	Yes	The operational implications, though feasible, are sometimes vague and could be more directed at specific actions that should be made by the 'addressee'. For example, "Plan streamlined programmatic areas where the interventions are not spread thinly or are too disparate but rather work in harmony towards results and affecting indicators" is not as useful as the more specific recommendation to "Move from response to prevention in all programmatic areas as much as possible and minimize interventions where national stakeholders are empowered to carry on capacity development activities themselves, this might include the Women's Law Center for police response to Gender Based Violence..." which continues to provide examples of the specific programs this operational recommendation applies to.	
3. Do recommendations appear balanced and impartial?	Yes	A minor issue is that Recommendations may be more precise and specific avoiding such words as "greater emphasis.... more focus... greater extent...Strengthen the focus." Instead of these broad directions more specific words could be used answering the questions "how", "who", "what". For instance, instead of "greater emphasis" it is more operationally-feasible to recommend to the Addressee some strategy like providing financial or administrative, or logistic support	
4. Is a timeframe for implementation proposed?	Partial		
5. Are the recommendations prioritised and clearly presented to facilitate appropriate management response and follow up on each specific recommendation?	Yes		
7. Gender	0 1 2 3 (**)	Assessment Level:	Good
<i>To assess the integration of Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW) (*)</i>		Comment: The design and evaluation questions include gender dimensions consistently. Disaggregated data by gender are presented in Annex 4. The findings, conclusions and recommendations include a gender analysis.	
1. Is GEEW integrated in the evaluation scope of analysis and indicators designed in a way that ensures GEEW-related data to be collected?	2		
2. Do evaluation criteria and evaluation questions specifically address how GEEW has been integrated into design, planning, implementation of the intervention and the results achieved?	2		
3. Have gender-responsive evaluation methodology, methods and tools, and data analysis techniques been selected?	2		
4. Do the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations reflect a gender analysis?	2		
(*) This assessment criteria is fully based on the UN-SWAP Scoring Tool, see Annex 7. Each sub-criteria shall be equally weighted (in correlation with the calculation in the tool and totalling the scores 11-12 = very good, 8-10 = good, 4-7 = Fair, 0-3=unsatisfactory).			
(**) Scoring uses a four point scale (0-3). 0 = Not at all integrated. Applies when none of the elements under a criterion are met. 1 = Partially integrated. Applies when some minimal elements are met but further progress is needed and remedial action to meet the standard is required. 2 = Satisfactorily integrated. Applies when a satisfactory level has been reached and many of the elements are met but still improvement could be done. 3 = Fully integrated. Applies when all of the elements under a criterion are met, used and fully integrated in the evaluation and no remedial action is required.			

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		89	11	
Overall assessment level of evaluation report		Good		
	Very good very confident to use	Good confident to use	Fair use with caution	Unsatisfactory not confident to use

- (*) (a) Insert scoring points associated with criteria in corresponding column (e.g. - if 'Analysis and findings' has been assessed as 'Good', enter 40 into 'Good' column).
 (b) Assessment level with highest 'total scoring points' determines 'Overall assessment level of evaluation report'. Write corresponding assessment level in cell (e.g. 'Fair').
 (c) Use 'shading' function to give cells corresponding colour.

If the overall assessment is 'Fair', please explain

- How it can be used?

- What aspects to be cautious about?

Where relevant, please explain the overall assessment Very good, Good or Unsatisfactory

Consideration of significant constraints

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

If yes, please explain: