



Organizational unit: Year of report: 2019

Title of evaluation report: SIXTH UNFPA COUNTRY PROGRAMME: SIERRA LEONE [2015-2019]

Overall quality of report: Good Date of assessment: 15 April 2019

Overall comments: The evaluation of the country programme shows clearly where it has achieved outputs and contributed to achieving outcomes by use of a carefully designed theory of change and collection of data mostly through document analysis and interviews. It notes that its interview and field visits used a purposive sample but showed that by triangulation the findings were supported by the data. One weakness was an absence of findings about the achievement of outcomes, other than those connected with UNFPA's work with the UN country team. The conclusions flow clearly from the findings and lead to a set of prioritized recommendations mostly directed to the formulation of the next country programme. The most precise recommendations, rated very high, are directed to practical programme delivery and are clearly based on the findings.

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:	Very 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	The report is organized and well written. It is understandable and clear, with minimal errors.
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 body of the report is 73 pages, with an additional 47 pages for the annexes.
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	Following the structure provided in the UNFPA Handbook on Conducting Country Programme Evaluations, the report is structured in a logical manner. A distinction is made between analysis/findings, conclusions, and recommendations.
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?	Yes	The Annexes are a separate file and contain each of the minimal items except for information on the stakeholder consultation process; that is integrated within the other annexes and is summarized in both the Executive Summary and Chapter I: Introduction.

Executive summary

5. Is an executive summary included in the report, written as a stand-alone section and presenting the main results of the evaluation?	Yes	The Executive Summary is well-written as a stand-alone section, presenting the main results of the evaluation.
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	There is a clear structure of the executive summary. It includes brief description of intervention, the objectives of the evaluation, methodology, findings serving as conclusions and recommendations. In the recommendations it notes the intended audience.
7. Is the executive summary reasonably concise (e.g. with a maximum length of 5 pages)?	Yes	The Executive Summary is a concise and well written 5 page section.

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. Does the evaluation describe the target audience for the evaluation?	Yes	The target audience is described in the evaluation as the UNFPA country office and national counterparts. "This exercise would enhance accountability of UNFPA CO for the relevance and performance of its Country Programmed, and broaden evidence-based design of the next programme cycle" (p. 1).
2. Is the development and institutional context of the evaluation clearly described and constraints explained?	Yes	The development and institutional context is clearly described in the following sections: 2.1.1 Political, Economic and Social Context, 2.1.2 Situation analysis of Sexual and Reproductive Health, 2.1.3 Adolescents and Youth Reproductive Health, 2.1.4 Gender Equality and Empowerment Context, and 2.1.5 Population Dynamics Context.
3. Does the evaluation report describe the reconstruction of the intervention logic and/or theory of change, and assess the adequacy of these?	Yes	The evaluation report describes the reconstruction of the intervention logic and theory of change, and assesses the adequacy of these in the section 3.2 "UNFPA response through the Country Programmed." Figure 2 "Reconstructed Intervention logic..." provided a clear picture of the theory of change.

To ensure a rigorous design and methodology

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	The evaluation framework is clearly described in the section 1.3 "Methodology and process" and in more detail in the annex 2 "Evaluation matrix," including the Evaluation Questions, Focus Area, Assumptions to be assessed, Indicators, Sources of Information and Methods and tools for data collection.
5. Are the tools for data collection described and their choice justified?	Yes	The tools of data collection - documentation review, content analysis, interviews, focus group discussions, site visits and observation - are identified and explained. The tools were tailored to the specified evaluation questions and context of the situation at hand.
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	While there is no comprehensive stakeholder map, the overall stakeholder selection process is described (p. 4), and the stakeholder consultation process is clearly described (p. 4) and includes a description of the consultation of key stakeholders on draft recommendations (phase 4). The stakeholders consulted are described in the annexes.
7. Are the methods for analysis clearly described for all types of data?	Yes	Some methods of data analysis are noted by type of data and methods of validation, including triangulation and cross-comparison of findings, to ensure validity. The methods for analysis are clearly described for all types of data: quantitative data were reviewed as secondary data from CP documents. The consultants applied content analysis, contribution analysis, analysis of results chains (activities, outputs and outcomes), and triangulation (pp. 3-4).
8. Are methodological limitations acknowledged and their effect on the evaluation described? (Does the report discuss how any bias has been overcome?)	Yes	Methodological limitations are acknowledged and their effect on the evaluation are described in the evaluation approach and section 1.4. The main limitations of the evaluation were limited time and resources to collect representative samples and low response rates for certain interview categories (p. xiv). The report discusses how a potential form of bias has been mitigated for instance: "To avoid the possibility of bias from the presence of UNFPA staff, all interviews were conducted by the evaluation team in private without any UNFPA agency staff present" (p. 5).
9. Is the sampling strategy described?	Yes	The sampling strategy is briefly described in the different parts of the report: executive summary (p. xiv), methodology (p. 4) and limitations (p. 5). The team worked with the evaluation manager and CO to select major stakeholder categories: "while there was some opportunity for a randomization process for the training follow-up interviews, all other samples were purposive and not truly representative of the target populations of stakeholders, trainees and client/beneficiaries" (p. 5). The evaluators noted that it was not possible to draw a representative sample given the time and resources available and that, therefore, purposive sampling was used, based on recommendations from the CO and national counterparts.
10. Does the methodology enable the collection and analysis of disaggregated data?	Yes	While the methodology enables the collection and analysis of disaggregated data by types of stakeholders (for instance, UNFPA country office staff, strategic partners, and beneficiaries) and by districts, it does not explain how the evaluation will collect and analyze gender disaggregated data.
11. Is the design and methodology appropriate for assessing the cross-cutting issues (equity and vulnerability, gender equality and human rights)?	Partial	There is some evidence in the text that the design and methodology are appropriate for assessing the cross-cutting issues, for instance, the evaluators mention that "Relevant also are the cross-cutting issues of monitoring and evaluation, and communication systems, human rights, gender mainstreaming within UNFPA's work," but the evaluation does not provide further details.
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 was applied through comparing data obtained from different sources: desk review; semi-structured group and individual interviews with stakeholders; group and individual follow-up interviews with former and current staff of UNFPA SL CO; focus group discussions; site visits in four districts and the capital city.
2. Did the evaluation clearly identify and make use of reliable qualitative and quantitative data sources?	Yes	The evaluation clearly identified qualitative and quantitative data sources (annex 4 "List of individuals interviewed", annex 6 "List of documentation for review") and discusses their quality in the Limitation section of the report.
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	The evaluation made explicit possible limitations in primary and secondary data sources and explained what was done to minimize such issues in the section 1.4 Limitations.
4. Is there evidence that data has been collected with a sensitivity to issues of discrimination and other ethical considerations?	Yes	The evaluation team was careful to note that all interviews were conducted in private without any UNFPA staff present (p. 5) and in two protocols (Interview Guide for UNFPA Country Office staff (p. 34) and Interview Guide for Implementing Partners, . 38) stressed the need for confidentiality.
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?	Yes	The findings are substantiated by evidence: documents are cited, for instance, New-born and Child Health Policy (2011-2015); and references are made, for instance, "One of the Principals of Schools of Midwifery confirmed this" (p. 25). Some references could, however, be more specific. For example, the report notes the following: "Analysis of documents, annual reports from the implementation partners and CO Programme Officers showed the 6th Country Programme contributed to national priorities in SRHR through 4 outcomes of the Programme" (p. 24)" and could have been more specific by including the title of the documents.
2. Is the basis for interpretations carefully described?	Yes	The basis for the evaluators' interpretations or analysis is carefully described, including by noting the sources of triangulated data used to arrive at the interpretation and gathering data on outputs for instance in Table 6 "Summary of the 6th Country Programme Performance (2015-2019)
3. Is the analysis presented against the evaluation questions?	Yes	The analysis is presented against the evaluation questions. There is a brief summary to clarify how the evaluation question has been answered.
4. Is the analysis transparent about the sources and quality of data?	Yes	The analysis is transparent about the sources and quality of data (see also comment in 3.2).
5. Are cause and effect links between an intervention and its end results explained and any unintended outcomes highlighted?	Partial	Cause and effect links are summarized in Table 6 which shows the relationship of outputs, indicators and outcomes. Cause-effect links were primarily made between UNFPA interventions and the achievement of outputs (in the form of increased "capacity" of the persons trained, reached or equipped). There was little reference to the connections between outputs and outcomes. There is no evidence to suggest the evaluators considered unintended outcomes.
6. Does the analysis show different outcomes for different target groups, as relevant?	Yes	The analysis is focused on specific activities and outputs showing different ones for different groups and therefore as relevant and, to the extent data were available, showed outcomes for the target group.
7. Is the analysis presented against contextual factors?	Yes	The evaluation elaborates on the contextual factors in most instances, for example, as captured in this quote: "However it must be noted that there are emerging controversies associated with the census result. UNFPA is currently assisting the national statistical agency to resolve the problem" (p. 34). Contextual factors such as the salary scales for persons trained in maternal health are another example.
8. Does the analysis elaborate on cross-cutting issues such as equity and vulnerability, gender equality and human rights?	Yes	The analysis elaborates on the extent to which cross-cutting issues such as equity and vulnerability, gender equality and human rights are integrated into the country programme, including for example, under: "Outcome 3 "Advanced gender equality, women's and girls' empowerment and reproductive rights, including for the most vulnerable and marginalised women, adolescents and youth," and under Output 5 of the Outcome 2 "Increased capacity of partners to design and implement comprehensive programmes to reach marginalised adolescent girls... "
5. Conclusions	Yes No Partial	Assessment Level: Very good
<i>To assess the validity of conclusions</i>		
1. Do the conclusions flow clearly from the findings?	Yes	The conclusions are organized by level (strategic, programmatic) and within that by evaluation questions. As such, there is a clear link to the findings that led to 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	The conclusions go beyond the findings by capturing their connection with overarching elements of the programme being evaluated. As an example, the evaluators discuss that "The SL CO's communication strategy has been effective in promoting the visibility of the CO's activities through traditional and social media. A great synergy was developed between the communication unit and programme clusters, and this ensured increased and effective communication of the activities of the CO ... " (p. 63).
3. Do the conclusions appear to convey the evaluators' unbiased judgment?	Yes	The conclusions appear to convey the evaluators unbiased judgment.
6. Recommendations	Yes No Partial	Assessment Level: Very good
<i>To ensure the usefulness and clarity of recommendations</i>		
1. Do recommendations flow logically from conclusions?	Yes	Each recommendation has a references to the conclusions from which it flows.
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 recommendations are clearly written. They are targeted at the intended users (Audience/Action). They are action-oriented (with information on Operational Implications, especially for those recommendations targeted at the programmatic level, which are "high priority").
3. Do recommendations appear balanced and impartial?	Yes	The recommendations are impartial and balanced.
4. Is a timeframe for implementation proposed?	Yes	The timeframe for implementation of the recommendations is essentially for the next country programme.

5. Are the recommendations prioritized and clearly presented to facilitate appropriate management response and follow up on each specific recommendation?	Yes	Each recommendation are rated very high, high, or medium. Context and operational implications allow an appropriate response to the recommendations.
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7. Gender	0 1 2 3 (**)	Assessment Level:	Good
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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?	2	The scope of analysis (as reflected in the objectives) does not include specific mention of assessing the extent to which the country programme integrated gender equality and the empowerment of women. While there is no standalone criterion on gender and human rights, these issues are mainstreamed into other evaluation criteria as cross-cutting issues, for example: "Relevant also are the cross-cutting issues of ... human rights, gender mainstreaming within UNFPA's work" (p. 1), but there are no specific formulations in the criteria. There is a dedicated evaluation question, as well: Evaluation question 2 specifically addresses how GEEW has been integrated into interventions and results achieved "To what extent has the CP integrated gender and rights-based approaches?".
2. Is a gender-responsive methodology used, including gender-responsive methods and tools, and data analysis techniques?	2	The evaluation does not specifically note how data collection and analysis methods integrate gender considerations and ensure data collected is disaggregated by sex, but the evaluation methodology employs a mixed-methods approach, appropriate to evaluating GEEW considerations and a diverse range of data sources (and processes) were employed, including triangulation. Diverse stakeholders were also consulted, but did not include a full diversity of target populations.
3. Do the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations reflect a gender analysis?	2	The evaluation has a background section that includes an intersectional analysis of the specific social groups such as adolescents and youth (section 2.1.3), as well as women (section 2.1.4), but does not include a list of relevant normative instruments or policies related to human rights and gender equality. The findings include data analysis that, on the whole (though not always) triangulates the voices of different social role groups and disaggregates quantitative data. Unanticipated effects of the intervention on human rights and gender equality are not clearly highlighted in the report. The evaluation report provides specific recommendations addressing GEEW issues such as # 5 "UNFPA should always strive to improve its signature value in ... gender equality and women's empowerment...".

(*) This assessment criteria is fully based on the UN-SWAP Scoring Tool. 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	40	60		
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: