

UNFPA Management Response to the Joint Evaluation of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation: Accelerating Change						
Evaluation Report Issue Date [DD/MM/YY]	<u>Evaluation report tag</u> [choose 1 from the list below]: 1. Country Programme Evaluation (CPE) 2. Regional Programme Evaluation (RPE) 3. Programme Level Evaluation (non-CPE or RPE evaluations) 4. DAO (Delivering as One) Evaluation 5. UNDAF Evaluation 6. Humanitarian Evaluation 7. Meta-Evaluation 8. Evaluation Approach Paper 9. Evaluability Assessment	<u>Additional attributes</u>  [joint, impact or institutional]	Responsible UNFPA Business Unit (Unit to be most directly involved in the implementation) [indicate 1 only]	Head of Responsible Business Unit <b>Final approver</b>	Responsible Unit Managing/Coordinating Focal Point [name and email address]	Date of submission
Sep 27, 2021	Programme Level Evaluation	Joint Evaluation (UNFPA-UNICEF)	Technical Division UNFPA	Julitta Onabanjo	Mireille Tushiminina tushiminina@unfpa.org	12/07/2021

EVALUATION RECOMMENDATION(S) AND PROPOSED ACTION POINT(S) [List all recommendations below as they appear in the Evaluation Report]		
Recommendation No. 1:	<p><b>Strengthen global policy and advocacy strategies.</b></p> <p><b>Recognizing the need to accelerate efforts to meet the Sustainable Development Goal target to end FGM by 2030, it is recommended that the Joint Programme prioritize its global policy and advocacy work to reinforce the urgent need to intensify efforts to tackle FGM. Given emerging data around the geographical scale of the issue, although the Joint Programme cannot realistically have an operational presence in all contexts, it can utilize its global presence to raise awareness about the geographical coverage and continue to investigate and flag emerging trends. It can also strategically optimize knowledge sharing opportunities and collaborations with non-Joint Programme countries.</b></p> <p>Acceleration of efforts and a multisectoral coordinated response is required to tackle FGM in order to meet the Sustainable Development Goal target of ending FGM by 2030, and to outpace the impact of demographic trends. Within a multi-stakeholder effort, the Joint Programme is uniquely positioned as a global advocate and policy convenor, drawing on its comparative strengths in evidence generation, to inform policy dialogue. The Joint Programme should ensure that it uses its “global vantage point” to gather data (as appropriate) around global trends, including geographical coverage (where data is emerging), humanitarian and FGM linkages,</p>	<p><b>Priority:</b></p> <p><b>Urgency: High</b> <b>Impact: High</b></p>

and cross-border FGM. With emerging evidence that FGM is likely present in over 90 countries, it is also opportune to strategically share knowledge and facilitate collaborations where appropriate.  
 Given the ambitions of the Sustainable Development Goals to eliminate FGM by 2030, the Joint Programme should consider aligning its post-2021 programming across the nine-year trajectory (2021-2030), with the target central to the programming goal, and monitoring against key milestones on the path to reach the Sustainable Development Goals.

**Management Response to Recommendation acceptance status**  
 [Accepted/Partially Accepted/Rejected] **Accepted**

*If recommendation is partially accepted or rejected, provide reasons:*

- There have been ongoing efforts by the Joint Programme in terms of global advocacy recognizing that while the programme interventions are in a specific number of countries the prevalence of the practice is taking on a more global picture. Among other advocacy efforts: Global level - Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), European Development Days (EDD), and Human Rights Council (HRC) high level panels on FGM; Regional level – African Union (AU) and Regional Economic Communities (RECS); Country level - Donor field visits; and Evidence-based policy brief
- The Joint Programme already engages in promoting south-to-south / south-north learning and collaboration and this will be strengthened.
- The Joint Programme is developing a monitoring and evaluation framework for the measurement of its advocacy and policy influence efforts, and this will be complemented by milestones and a change pathway of how the programme intends to reach the SDG target.

*If recommendation is accepted or partially accepted, list, below, action(s) that will logically lead to its implementation, ideally within a year of the date recommendation was issued*

Action point title	Action point text	Due date (MM/DD/YY YY)	Lead implementing unit [specify one per action point only]	Lead implementing and reporting staff <b>Owner</b> [specify one per action point only]	Additional units involved in implementation (if any)
1.1. Develop an advocacy strategy and action for the positioning of the elimination of FGM	1.1.1 Develop and rollout an advocacy strategy and action plan for a global and strategic positioning of the abandonment of FGM in all contexts whether development or humanitarian or post-conflicts from a resilience-building perspective.	09/30/2022	Joint Programme Coordination (UNFPA-UNICEF)	Joint Programme Coordinator	Regional Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF) Country Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF)

	1.1.2 Conduct an assessment of the FGM Joint Programme's advocacy interventions	09/30/2024	Joint Programme Coordination (UNFPA-UNICEF)	Joint Programme Coordinator	Regional Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF) Country Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF)
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<b>Recommendation No. 2:</b>	<p><b>Strategically strengthen and support implementation of accountability systems.</b></p> <p><b>It is recommended that the Joint Programme develops a comprehensive strategy that articulates its roles in strengthening and supporting the implementation of accountability systems. This should also map out the different accountability systems at the global, regional and national levels, enabling the identification of further potential areas of support. Operationally, it is recommended that the Joint Programme continues to build on and expand upon the work achieved during Phase III with the African Union in conjunction with the Spotlight Initiative and use it as an opportunity for learning across the Joint Programme. It should also expand and intensify engagement with other regional entities as appropriate. In addition, at the national level, it should continue to build on and expand upon the national and subnational efforts to strengthen political commitment and enhanced accountability systems (linked to Recommendation 3).</b></p>	<p><b>Priority:</b></p> <p><b>Urgency: High</b></p> <p><b>Impact: High</b></p>
	<p>Whilst it is recognized within the Joint Programme that, as part of a collective effort, accountability mechanisms need to be strengthened to ensure that national governments are meeting their global and regional commitments on FGM, there is a lack of comprehensive strategy and clarity about what this means in practice. The Joint Programme has successfully supported elements of the accountability “ecosystem”, including at the global level, but there is a lack of overarching strategy that sets out and maps the commitments and related responsibilities in a manner that compels actions from member states and how the Joint Programme can draw on its comparative strengths to support the accountability “system” at the different levels.</p> <p>There is also a need to provide guidance to Joint Programme staff about accountability and what it means in practice.</p>	
<p><b>Management Response to Recommendation acceptance status</b> [Accepted/Partially Accepted/Rejected]</p>	<p><b>Partially Accepted</b></p>	
<p><i>If recommendation is partially accepted or rejected, provide reasons:</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Joint Programme has engaged with the African Union to develop an accountability framework to address harmful practices, and this is being finalized. Next step will focus on the implementation of this framework.</li> <li>• There are countries where there is commitment at the highest level of the government to reinforce the national accountability mechanism and this effort needs to be strengthened/reinforced.</li> <li>• UN Human Rights Council resolution on the ‘Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation’ (FGM) equally provides the Joint Programme with opportunity to anchor its work on accountability in the next phase of the Programme.</li> </ul>	
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2.1. Mapping FGM related accountability mechanisms	2.1.1 Conduct a mapping and develop a compendium of accountability mechanisms relevant to hold national and subnational governments, regional bodies and global institutions compliant with existing and future commitments on the elimination of FGM.	12/31/2022	Joint Programme Coordination (UNFPA-UNICEF)	Joint Programme Coordinator	Regional Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF) Country Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF)
2.2. Support the implementation of FGM related accountability mechanisms	2.2.1 Based on the work already done with the AUC Health, Humanitarian and Social Development, work at political level with the African Union Panel of the Wise and youth influencers as champions for the implementation of the accountability mechanism.	12/31/2022	Joint Programme Coordination (UNFPA-UNICEF)	Joint Programme Coordinator	Regional Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF) Country Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF)

<b>Recommendation No. 3:</b>	<p><b>Advocate for fully funded national, legal and policy frameworks, including to address complex situations such as medicalization and cross-border FGM.</b></p> <p><b>Continue to support countries to develop a conducive legal and policy framework by advocating for anti-FGM laws and costed national plans for the abandonment of FGM, as well as advocating for the allocation of resources to those plans, FGM-related budget tracking and analysis, and resourced monitoring and reporting frameworks to monitor progress. In countries where legal and policy frameworks are in place, more emphasis should be given to translating the national laws into laws at the state/country level and to developing a clear strategy to support governments enforcing the law, with attention to the potential perverse effects that law enforcement could have. In countries where national governments are tackling complex situations around FGM, the Joint Programme should continue to build on its achievements to date. In particular, to prevent medicalization, it should place greater emphasis on changing health-care providers' behaviours (beyond their knowledge and attitudes). To counteract cross-border FGM, the Joint Programme should build on and learn from the positive achievements in East Africa, and regional offices should play a leading role in convening key actors and in facilitating dialogue and</b></p>	<p><b>Priority:</b></p> <p><b>Urgency: High</b> <b>Impact: High</b></p>
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	<p><b>agreements. Increased attention should also be given to emerging issues including “internal cross-border” movements to practice FGM.</b></p>				
	<p>Given the Joint Programme’s success in contributing to the advancement of conducive legal and policy frameworks, in post-Phase III it is recommended that the Joint Programme continue to do so, with emphasis in those contexts where such a legal and policy framework is not yet in place, and where anti-FGM laws at national level still have to be fully implemented at lower administrative levels (such as at state and county levels). More focus should also be placed on understanding how to address the major challenges that prevent law enforcement, as well as on learning from the good practices of law enforcement to be replicated in different contexts, after being contextualized. These should also take account of the potential negative effects that law enforcement could have, particularly on vulnerable groups such as children.</p> <p>Post-Phase III, the Joint Programme’s support to national governments to tackle complex issues around FGM should be enhanced in particular areas. With regard to the medicalization of the practice, the Joint Programme should continue to support building the capacity of health-care providers to act as agents of change. However, innovative approaches should be looked for to ensure that the behaviour of health-care providers towards the medicalization of FGM changes. With regard to cross-border FGM, the Joint Programme should sustain the momentum generated in East Africa and drawing on that success, the Joint Programme, and particularly regional offices, should play a leading role in convening actors and facilitating dialogue and agreements also in other areas affected by cross-border FGM.</p>				
<p><b>Management Response to Recommendation acceptance status</b> [Accepted/Partially Accepted/Rejected]</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b></p>				
<p><i>If recommendation is partially accepted or rejected, provide reasons:</i></p>	<p>Some countries have already developed a costed national action plan. There is a need to expand and reinforce these initiatives.</p> <p>The existing UNFPA Impact40 tool and WHO FGM Calculator can be used to inform the process and initiative at national level.</p> <p>There will be continuous advocacy and support for the development and implementation, including adequate resourcing of anti-FGM legislations, policies, strategies and programmes at regional, national and subnational levels.</p>				
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<p>3.1. Advocacy and support for the development and</p>	<p>3.1.1 With existing budget tracking tools, provide support to at least 3 countries to carry out budget analysis and</p>	<p>12/31/2022</p>	<p>Joint Programme Coordination (UNFPA-UNICEF)</p>	<p>Joint Programme Coordinator</p>	<p>Regional Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF)</p>

implementation of anti-FGM Law and Policy frameworks	prepare budget briefs to conduct evidence-based budget advocacy at different levels.				Country Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF)
	3.1.2 Support countries to develop an investment case for realizing a national vision of eliminating FGM and promote innovative financing.	12/31/2022	Joint Programme Coordination (UNFPA-UNICEF)	Joint Programme Coordinator	Regional Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF) Country Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF)
	3.1.3 Develop and roll out an innovative financing and resource mobilization strategy for elimination of FGM and advancing target SDG 5.3 with clear indicators and targets.	12/31/2022	Joint Programme Coordination (UNFPA-UNICEF)	Joint Programme Coordinator	Regional Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF) Country Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF)

<b>Recommendation No. 4:</b>	<b>Strengthen linkages with other streams of work towards enhanced access to quality services for FGM prevention, protection and care.</b>	<b>Priority:</b>  <b>Urgency: Medium</b> <b>Impact: Medium</b>
	<p><b>The Joint Programme should strengthen its linkages and synergies with other harmful practices in particular child marriage, enhancing the opportunity to work on the shared drivers of both harmful practices for more efficient programming.</b></p> <p><b>It should also strengthen cross-sectoral linkages for more systematic and coordinated programming (including education, health, child protection, youth and others). Within programming, the Joint Programme should continue to strengthen the access and linkages to services for FGM prevention, protection and care, as well as the quality of services. The Joint Programme has a comparative strength in the area of FGM prevention but in order to progress towards FGM abandonment, the Joint Programme's protection and care service provision should continue to be enhanced through partnerships and linkages with other organizations and services providers.</b></p>	
	<p>The evaluation highlighted the need to be more intentional in addressing linkages between harmful practices (cognizant that the linkages vary in different contexts) providing the opportunity to address the underlying drivers of gender inequality. The evaluation proposes different options for doing this, and convergence could occur in an incremental way.</p> <p>There is also scope to ensure that cross-sectoral linkages are optimized, and that there is more systematic programming (for example with education, health, gender, child protection, youth). This should be within the Joint Programme's interaction with other UNFPA and UNICEF sectoral programming (which is often more intuitive</p>	

	<p>at the country level and less evident at the regional and global level) and is linked to the cross-sectoral mainstreaming in national policies and plans (Recommendation 3).</p> <p>In terms of provision of services, the evaluation recognizes that access to services for FGM prevention, protection and care is fundamental and should continue post-Phase III. However, within a context of limited resources, the Joint Programme should continue to invest in its comparative strength and focus its work on FGM prevention. It therefore makes sense to strengthen the partnerships and linkages with other organizations and service providers (including those providing gender-based violence prevention services and SRHR services) to support women's and girls' right to access the necessary care as well as to raise awareness about services.</p>				
<b>Management Response to Recommendation acceptance status</b> [Accepted/Partially Accepted/Rejected]	<b>Accepted</b>				
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4.1. Support convergent and cross-sectoral linkage programming	4.1.1 Develop and rollout a resources toolkit to guide governments and partners in strengthening their approaches towards cross-sectoral programming and services integration including capacity building of relevant personnel (pre- and post-service) in development and humanitarian context.	12/31/2022	Joint Programme Coordination (UNFPA-UNICEF)	Joint Programme Coordinator	Regional Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF) Country Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF)
4.2. Advocacy for the strategic FGM elimination positioning	4.2.1 Conduct advocacy efforts to strategically positioning and linking FGM elimination with other work streams including in development, humanitarian actions and resilience-building programmes.	12/31/2022	Joint Programme Coordination (UNFPA-UNICEF)	Joint Programme Coordinator	Regional Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF) Country Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF)

<b>Recommendation No. 5</b>	<p><b>Accelerate usage of the ACT Framework to generate data on social norm change.</b></p> <p><b>The Joint Programme should now focus on utilizing the ACT Framework to generate data on social norm change, given the extensive work and</b></p>	<p><b>Priority:</b></p> <p><b>Urgency: Medium</b></p> <p><b>Impact: Medium</b></p>
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	investment that has been made on this tool, and accompany it by capacity support as needed, and a reflection and learning process. A medium-to-long term strategy for the application of the ACT Framework and/or other tools available to measure social norm change should be developed to provide consistency and guidance across the Joint Programme.				
<b>Management Response to Recommendation acceptance status</b> [Accepted/Partially Accepted/Rejected]	Accepted				
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Action point title	Action point text	Due date (MM/DD/YY YY)	Lead implementing unit [specify one per action point only]	Lead implementing and reporting staff <b>Owner</b> [specify one per action point only]	Additional units involved in implementation (if any)
5.1. Roll out of the ACT Framework	5.1.1 Launch the roll out plan to operationalize the ACT framework in at least 5 countries to help monitor the change in social norms change as related to FGM.	12/31/2022	Joint Programme Coordination (UNFPA-UNICEF)	Joint Programme Coordinator	Regional Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF) Country Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF)

<b>Recommendation No. 6</b>	<b>Build the post-Phase III of the Joint Programme to be gender transformative.</b>	<b>Priority:</b>  <b>Urgency: High</b> <b>Impact: High</b>
	<b>The post-Phase III of the Joint Programme should clearly articulate and agree that FGM programming aspires to be gender transformative and recognize that this is aligned with the approaches and comparative strengths of both agencies. To enhance understanding of what gender transformative means in practice across the Joint Programme, efforts should be made to integrate practical tools within programming, as well as collating examples of gender-responsive and gender-transformative approaches.</b>	
A gender-responsive approach is the current foundational framing of the Joint Programme, with gender-transformative approaches being seen as more of an aspiration. Within the post-Phase-III design, gender transformative should be considered the default position. When specific contextual factors are not conducive to		

this, that should be explained/justified and solid gender-responsive approaches applied instead. However, the design of post-Phase III of the Joint Programme should note that gender transformative is not always appropriate in all contexts at all times and trying to be gender transformative when it will do more harm than good OR claiming to be gender transformative when not fully understanding what that means, is counterproductive.

**Management Response to Recommendation acceptance status**  
[Accepted/Partially Accepted/Rejected] **Accepted**

*If recommendation is partially accepted or rejected, provide reasons:*

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6.1. Capacity development on gender transformative approach (GTA)	6.1.1 Design a context-specific capacity development package on Gender Transformative Approach (GTA) to ensure a clear and common understanding across all levels of the programme, including implementing partners.	12/31/2022	Joint Programme Coordination (UNFPA-UNICEF)	Joint Programme Coordinator	Regional Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF) Country Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF)
	6.1.2 Develop and rollout a gender transformative assessment tool to identify drivers, bottlenecks and explore opportunities to develop a roadmap of actions to drive interventions across the gender continuum.	12/31/2022	Joint Programme Coordination (UNFPA-UNICEF)	Joint Programme Coordinator	Regional Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF) Country Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF)
	6.1.3 Develop a living library of concrete, real-life FGM examples of gender transformative, gender responsive, gender neutral, and gender-harmful activities (resource hub, knowledge, global committee on social norms).	12/31/2023	Joint Programme Coordination (UNFPA-UNICEF)	Joint Programme Coordinator	Regional Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF) Country Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF)

<b>Recommendation No. 7</b>	<b>Continue considered use of public declarations of abandonment as an indicator of progress, yet, in the future it should be both strengthened and clearly presented as a step in the process of change rather than the end goal of the process, which needs to be a sustained/permanent change in</b>	<b>Priority:</b> <b>Urgency: Medium</b> <b>Impact: Low</b>
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	<p><b>behaviour. The Joint Programme should continue to use public declarations of abandonment as an indicator of progress, but with consideration of some adjustments and reflections.</b></p>				
	<p>The use of public declarations of abandonment as an indicator of social norm change has been debated throughout all phases of the FGM Joint Programme. The evidence from this Phase III evaluation suggests that public declarations of abandonment remain a useful indicator of attitudinal change but that this does not necessarily automatically translate into behavioral change. Therefore, while retaining the public declaration of abandonment as an indicator of progress, in the future it should be clearly articulated as a step in the process of change, rather than any level of final outcome.</p>				
<p><b>Management Response to Recommendation acceptance status</b> [Accepted/Partially Accepted/Rejected]</p>	<p><b>Partially Accepted</b></p>				
<p><i>If recommendation is partially accepted or rejected, provide reasons:</i></p>	<p>Even though there is evidence of the effectiveness of community public declaration of FGM abandonment based on a strong community empowerment programme for the elimination of the FGM, the FGM Joint Programme always used the “Public Declaration of FGM Abandonment” as marker of progress toward the full abandonment of the practice. The “Public Declaration of FGM Abandonment” is the culmination of a process that include information, education, laws, influential opinions and alternatives to the practice and services. In the results framework of the post phase III, to strengthen and sustain the changes, “Public Declaration of FGM Abandonment” as a short-term indicator is supplemented by the establishment of a community-level surveillance system to monitor compliance with the commitment made by communities during the public statement.</p>				
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<p><b>Action point title</b></p>	<p><b>Action point text</b></p>	<p><b>Due date (MM/DD/YY YY)</b></p>	<p><b>Lead implementing unit [specify one per action point only]</b></p>	<p><b>Lead implementing and reporting staff <b>Owner</b> [specify one per action point only]</b></p>	<p><b>Additional units involved in implementation (if any)</b></p>
<p>7.1. Assessment of the effectiveness of the public declaration</p>	<p>7.1.1 Assess the effectiveness of Public Declarations of FGM Abandonment and document good practices in implementing community-level surveillance systems for the sustainability of the commitment and the emergence of positive new norms.</p>	<p>12/31/2022</p>	<p>Joint Programme Coordination (UNFPA-UNICEF)</p>	<p>Joint Programme Coordinator</p>	<p>Regional Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF) Country Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF)</p>

<b>Recommendation No. 8</b>	<p><b>Incorporate a humanitarian approach within the post-Phase III Joint Programme design.</b></p> <p><b>There are many opportunities to strengthen the nexus working for the abandonment of FGM by strengthening both the preparedness aspects within development programming and the response aspects within humanitarian programming. Internally, the post-Phase III of the Joint Programme should develop a specific humanitarian approach within the design. Externally, and linked to Recommendation 1 with regard to Joint Programme reach, the post-Phase III of the Joint Programme should include, within an advocacy strategy for broader reach, a component of working with and influencing the gender-based violence area of responsibility to include FGM more visibly within global gender-based violence in emergencies guidelines and minimum standards. Influence should be targeted at the global level: if change is enacted here with regard to having FGM more recognized within global-level gender-based violence prevention guidance, this will automatically trickle down to country responses.</b></p>	<p><b>Priority:</b></p> <p><b>Urgency: Internally: High / Externally: Medium</b></p> <p><b>Impact: High/Medium</b></p>			
	<p>While the Joint Programme is implemented across a number of contexts with either protracted or cyclical humanitarian crises, in the first three Phases of the Joint Programme there has been limited humanitarian consideration. However, the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic has brought humanitarian considerations – both the impact of a situation like a pandemic on FGM rates, and the ability of the Joint Programme to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances – into sharp focus. The response of the Joint Programme to the COVID-19 pandemic highlights the ability of the Joint Programme to adapt to humanitarian situations and this flexibility and consideration of humanitarian contexts should be deliberately applied more broadly, beyond the pandemic.</p>				
<b>Management Response to Recommendation acceptance status</b> [Accepted/Partially Accepted/Rejected]	<b>Accepted</b>				
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8.1. Humanitarian - peace - development nexus to FGM programming	8.1.1 Advocate for further integration of FGM into the GBV and Child Protection Areas of Responsibilities during humanitarian emergencies, including integration of FGM into IASC, cluster TOR.	12/31/2023	Senior Management of UNFPA and UNICEF	Technical Division Director, UNFPA Programme Division Director, UNICEF	Regional Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF) Country Offices (UNFPA-UNICEF)
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