

# Evaluation Results

UNFPA Evaluation Office  
September 2018



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## Mid-Term Evaluation of the UNFPA Supplies Programme (2013-2020)



## Geographic Coverage

46

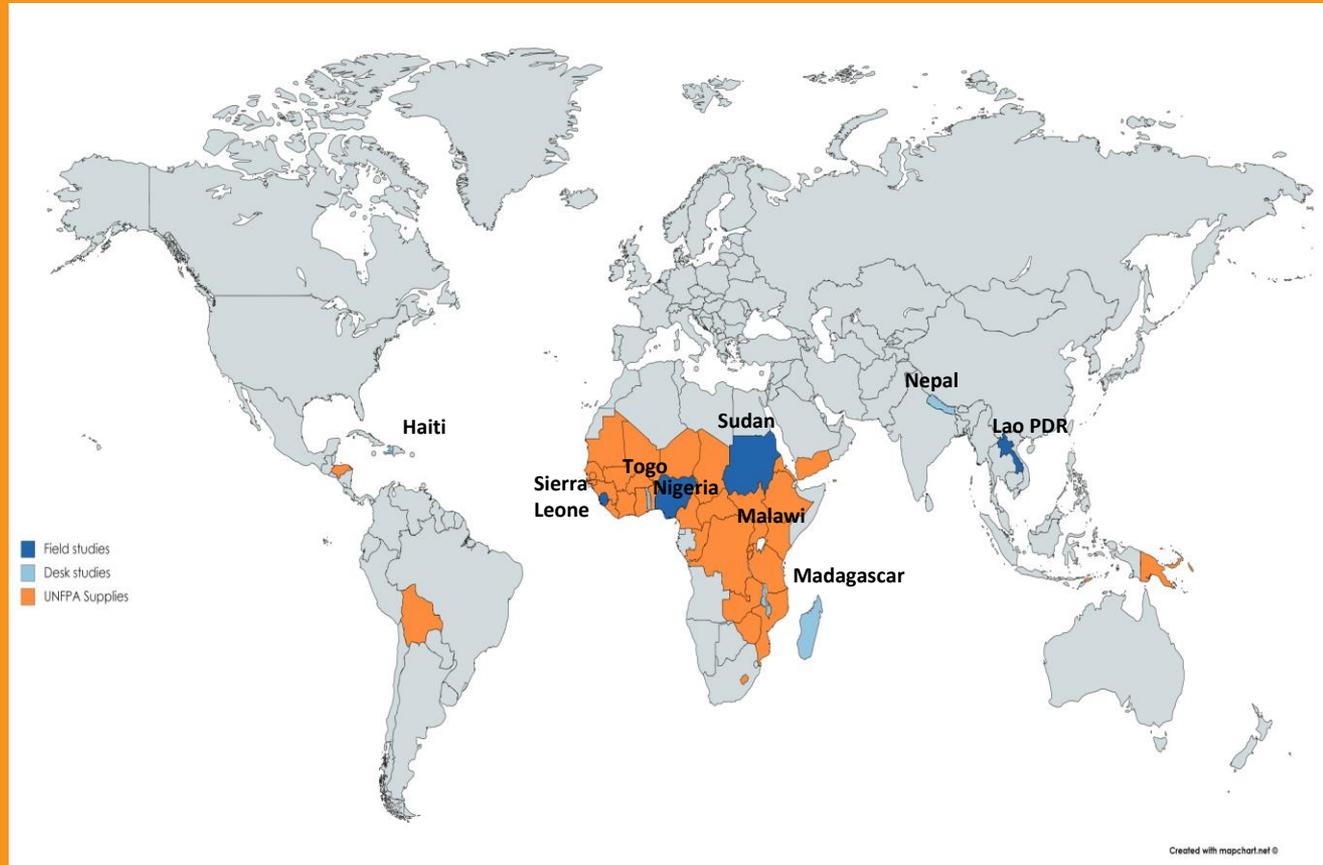
Programme focus countries

4

Field case study countries

5

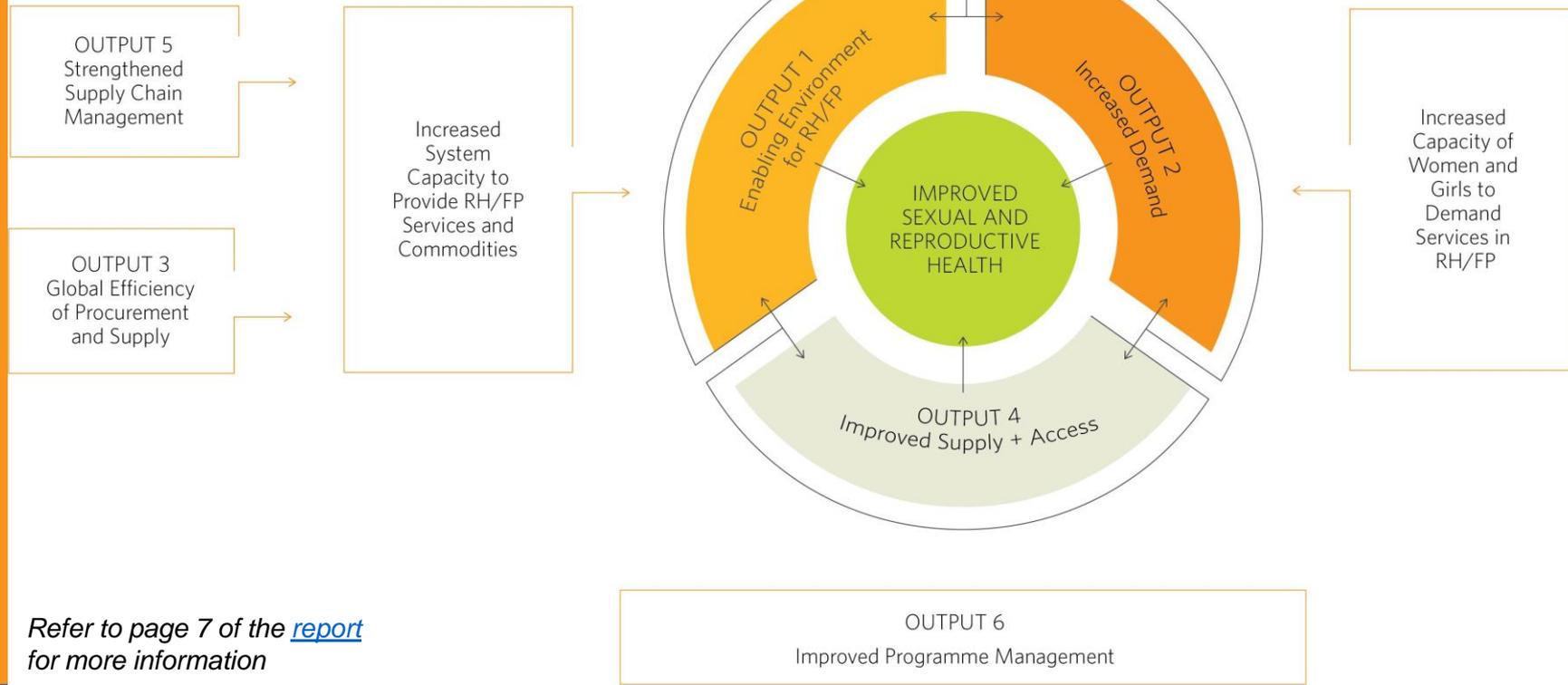
Desk case study countries



Refer to page 2 of the [report](#) for more information

# A simplified Theory of Change for UNFPA Supplies

Increased National Capacity to Provide Sustained Leadership in Reproductive Health Commodity Security

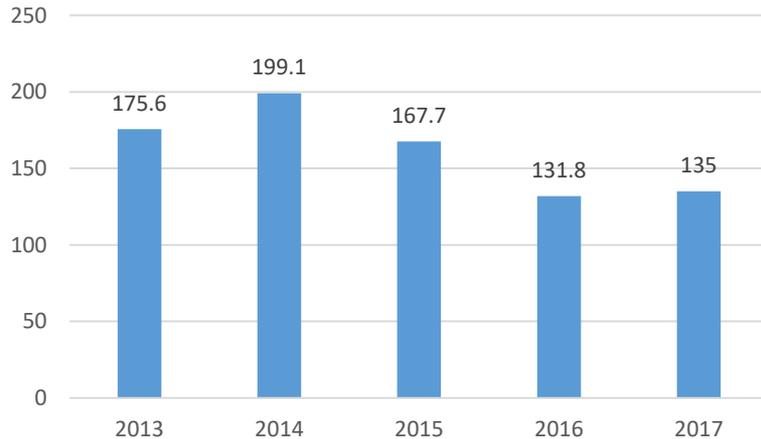


Refer to page 7 of the [report](#) for more information

Refer to page 7-8 of the [report](#) for more information

# Resource Trends and Sustainability

### Annual Expenditures 2013 to 2017 (Million USD)

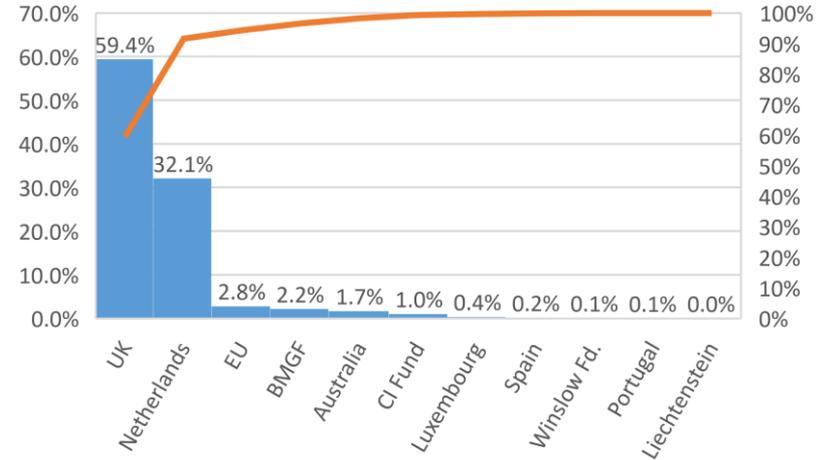


Expenditures peaked in 2014

Plateaued at around USD 130 million going forward

In some case study countries reductions to levels below identified need

### Contributions to UNFPA Supplies 2016: Total = 112.9 M USD



Heavy reliance on UK and Netherlands

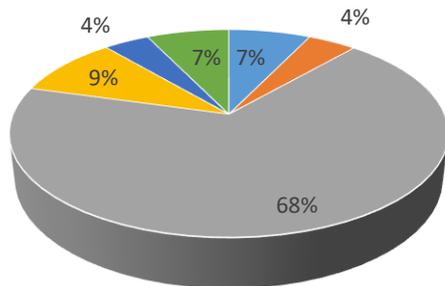
Smaller contributors are important for other roles

Sustainable?

Refer to page 8 of the [report](#) for more information

## UNFPA Supplies expenditures by output

Share of programme expenditures by output: 2016

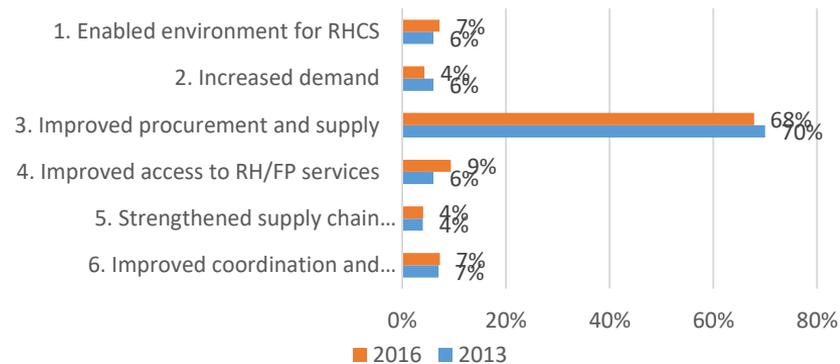


- 1. Enabled environment for RHCS
- 2. Increased demand
- 3. Improved procurement and supply
- 4. Improved access to RH/FP services
- 5. Strengthened supply chain management

Provision of commodities dominant expenditure in 2016

Technical assistance to SCM remained just 4 percent of total

Share of Programme Expenditures by Output: 2013 and 2016



Stable expenditure pattern from 2013 to 2016 although beginning to see drop in support to demand creation

Strengthening SCM always a small portion of expenditures



## Conclusions and Supporting Findings

- Cluster A** Strengthening the enabling environment
- Cluster B** Addressing demand and improving access
- Cluster C** Addressing gender equality and social inclusion
- Cluster D** Improving efficiency of procurement
- Cluster E** Programme coordination and management
- Cluster F** UNFPA Supplies in humanitarian settings

## Conclusion A.1

### Strengthening the enabling environment

- Effective vehicle for promoting family planning as a priority intervention
- Fosters positive environments conducive to 'normalizing' family planning and its integration into primary health services
- UNFPA has not made full use of UNFPA Supplies as a platform for global and national leadership

Refer to page 66 of the [report](#) for more information

## Supporting Findings

- Enabled and supported countries to: develop reproductive health policies and strategies; articulate and advance FP 2020 commitments; complete Costed Implementation Plans
- Enabled COs engage with national authorities to promote services for marginalized populations
- Provided platform for COs to promote integration of family planning into primary care
- Partners look to UNFPA for leadership
- UNFPA could have cultivated its leadership role more actively by: using its influence to find entry points to extend family planning policy; broadening financing options

## Conclusion A.2

### Strengthening the enabling environment

- Limited success in broadening sustainable sources of financing for RHCS and family planning
- UNFPA Supplies, a dominant source of family planning products used by the public sector
- Lack of effective tools and incentives to assist COs in advocating for increasing investments in procuring RH/FP commodities

Refer to page 66 of the [report](#) for more information

## Supporting Findings

- Some success in encouraging explicit budget lines and commitments (often under FP 2020) for family planning commodities, but often not followed through
- Most countries make very small commitments or none at all
- Change in management process (2016-2017) attempts to address sustainability at country level by using objective criteria to “graduate” countries and reverse the ratio of commodity support to technical assistance
- New approach lacks flexibility and leaves UNFPA Supplies without tools to influence national governments to increase investment in RHCS

## Conclusion B.3

### Addressing demand and improving access

- UNFPA Supplies contribution to increased demand is especially important in low prevalence countries where current supply capacity may exceed demand.
- By working in partnership, programme demonstrates link between demand creation and strengthened FP service delivery
- Investments in demand creation through community engagement are very small, but decision to discontinue investments in demand creation has been counterproductive in some contexts

Refer to page 68 of the [report](#) for more information

## Supporting Findings

- Modest levels of funding channeled through national and international NGOs
- Attempted to engage with communities to influence/change social norms and attitudes towards family planning
- In most countries, UNFPA Supplies efforts are met by steady growth in demand – sometimes accelerated by other drivers of social change
- In some countries, growth in demand has been slow and demand levels remain very low – below levels which can be supplied
- Here critical issue is what resources can be used to support demand creation and community engagement

# Increasing demand in different contexts

Source: [Track20.org](http://www.track20.org/download/pdf/S_Curve_One_Pager.pdf).  
[http://www.track20.org/download/pdf/S\\_Curve\\_One\\_Pager.pdf](http://www.track20.org/download/pdf/S_Curve_One_Pager.pdf)

Refer to page 21 of the [report](#) for more information

Nigeria (national)  
Sudan

Lao PDR  
Sierra Leone  
Nigeria (Kaduna)

**Stage 3: High Prevalence**  
Growth slows and eventually stops as mCPR reaches its maximum.

Nigeria (Lagos)

**Stage 1: Low Prevalence**  
Little or slow growth.

**Stage 2: Growth**

Length of period and speed of growth varies; but there is potential for rapid acceleration.

## What it means for program priorities

During this stage efforts are needed to change social norms around family planning, stimulate demand, and establish the infrastructure and providers to deliver quality family planning services.

During this stage it is important to make sure there are no barriers to services by ensuring contraceptive availability, high-quality services, and continued demand generation. It is also during this stage that countries want to achieve and maintain rapid growth to maximize their ability to transform their population and benefit from the demographic dividend.

During this stage efforts should prioritize equity in mCPR among different sub-groups to ensure that no women are being left behind. Programs at this stage need to focus on long-term sustainability, continued improvements in service quality, and expanding the range of methods available.

## What it means for goal setting

Since mCPR will not have much change annually, focus should be on precursor indicators that looks at changes in demand for FP and increased access through system expansion.

At this stage realistic, but ambitious mCPR goals should be established.

At this stage, rather than focusing on further growth, goals and objectives should be focused on equity indicators and government financial commitments.



## Contrasting levels of demand: the Sudan

### Alta Widet Primary Health Centre

*Mothers wait for medical consultations while family planning services are not sought (only eight consultations for family planning that day)*

Refer to page 23 of the [report](#) for more information



## Planned Parenthood clinic, Lunsar

*In contrast here, women and girls wait patiently in long queues for family planning services throughout the day.*

## Contrasting levels of demand: Sierra Leone

Refer to page 23 of the [report](#) for more information

## Conclusion B.4

### Addressing demand and improving access

- Significant contribution to expanding access to family planning products and services
- Extended the reach of mobile services, increased the range of contraceptive options, promoted task shifting, strengthened capacity of midwives
- But stock-outs in some countries negatively affect the ability of clients to access their preferred method

Refer to page 66 of the [report](#) for more information

## Supporting Findings

- Focus on increasing reach and mix of services in all countries studied
- Often a focus on outreach for long acting reversible contraceptives (LARCS)
- Focus on youth friendly services
- Contribution to economic access by promoting free family planning services and integration with other free health care initiatives
- Stock-outs constitute continued challenges in supply which limit choice
- In some countries resistant health worker attitudes impede access for some clients

# Conclusion C.5

## Addressing gender equality and social inclusion

- Positive contribution to ensure RH/FP services are accessible to marginalized women, girls, youth and adolescents.
- Contributed to efforts to address gender equality through community engagement to remove socio-cultural barriers to access for women and girls.
- Supported selected aspects of a HRBA to family planning: accessibility of commodities and services; wider methods choice; support to equitable and non-discriminatory services.
- Not yet systematically applied existing UNFPA guidance to operationalize progressive realization of rights within contraceptive service delivery.



## Supporting Findings

- Invested in improved access and availability in all countries
- In many countries, targeted young women and girls at risk of early pregnancy
- The extent of marginalized groups/ women and girls targeting varies among countries according to context (Sierra Leone vs. Sudan)
- Gains in access and social inclusion placed at risk due to stock-outs at SDPs

Refer to page 69 of the [report](#) for more information

## Conclusion D.6

### Improving efficiency of procurement and strengthening SCM

- UNFPA has achieved the position of **world's leading procurer of family planning commodities** (mainly through UNFPA Supplies); has capability to use purchasing power to affect global markets.
- UNFPA Supplies has used this strong market position to: develop tools for national needs assessment and procurement; effectively encouraged suppliers to produce, hold and manage stocks, improve quality assurance.
- In 2013-2017, efforts hampered by short-term and inflexible nature of cash-flows (recently partially addressed by the bridge financing mechanism).

## Supporting Findings

### Achievements

- Improved global forecasting
- Strengthening quality assurance
- Major increases in the value and volume of commodities procured
- Strengthened pre-procurement validation of fit needs/budgets/quantities procured

### Challenges persist

- Cash flow issues and inability to make multi-year financial commitments
- Potential for streamlining the ordering process
- Improving transparency and information sharing with implementing partners shipments
- Clarifying the roles of RO, CO, CSB, PSB (especially as seen from a CO perspective)

Refer to page 70 of the [report](#) for more information

## Conclusion D.7

### Improving efficiency of procurement and strengthening SCM

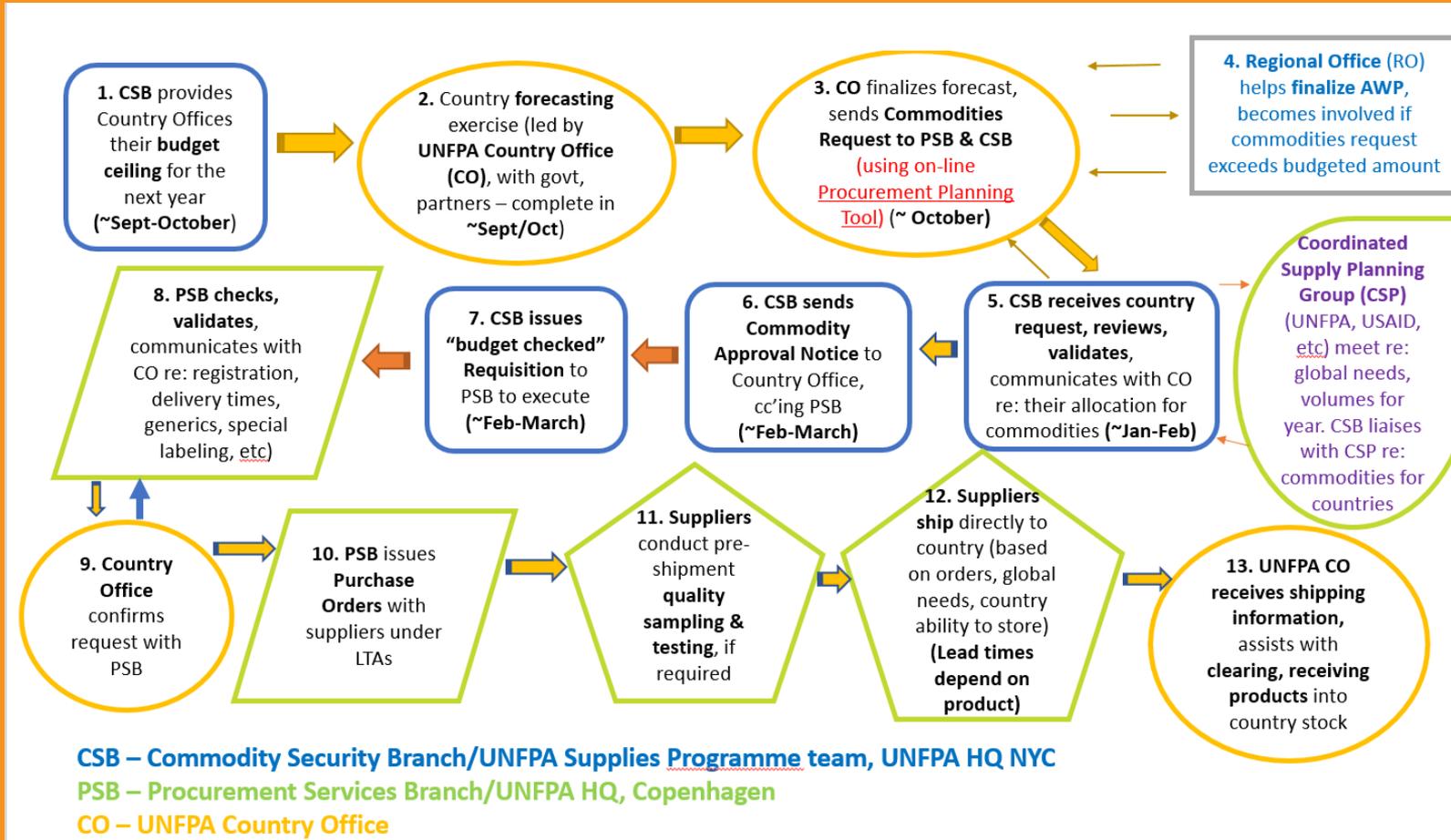
- Provided important support to fill gaps and address specific weaknesses in national and local capacities for supply chain management
- In some countries, supported the development of national strategies for integrating and improving supply chains
- In other countries, COs have not yet been able to capitalize on the importance of UNFPA Supplies to promote a government-led national consensus on how supply chains should be strengthened, or which roles should be played by external partners

Refer to page 70 of the [report](#) for more information

## Supporting Findings

- Invests modest amounts in strengthening supply chains for RH/FP commodities in almost every country
- Moves to “informed push” delivery systems; positive effect on reducing stock-outs
- Supply chains remain fragmented and weak in many countries (with parallel systems)
- UNFPA seen as a leader in support to SCM at national level with considerable convening power
- Opportunity for UNFPA Supplies to provide a platform for COs to assist in reaching a consensus on national strategy in support of improved SCM
- Question around UNFPA technical ability to support strengthening of SCM (identified in the recent UNFPA Strategy for SCM)

## UNFPA Supplies ordering process through country offices, PSB and CSB



Refer to Annex 7 in [Volume 2](#) of the report for more information

## Conclusion E.8

### Programme coordination and management

- Contributed directly to strengthening government-led platforms for coordinating national action, external support to RH/FP commodity security at national level.
- This is evident around operational issues of procurement and shipping. This contribution makes UNFPA a valued partner at global and national level.
- In COs (where the UNFPA Supplies team is very small) systems and processes for quantifying need, assigning budgets, validating procurement, dealing with suppliers and actual procurement and shipping can be overwhelming. These processes are somewhat opaque from the perspective of implementing partners.

## Supporting Findings

- National authorities and development partners view UNFPA CO staff as “good development partners” who provide valued support and technical expertise
- UNFPA Supplies “team” also viewed as effective in advocacy for policy change using UNFPA Supplies as an effective lever
- There remains an opportunity for COs to better leverage the programme and have greater influence on “higher level” strategies and policies – such as SCM
- In most COs, the RH/FP team is very small and can be disrupted by transfers and staff changes

Refer to page 71 of the [report](#) for more information

## Conclusion F.9

### UNFPA Supplies in humanitarian settings

- Helped to improve the effectiveness of UNFPA organizational response to meeting the RH/FP needs of women and girls during humanitarian emergencies.
- However, response times have been uneven; lack of clear understanding of when, where and under what circumstances to pre-position commodities, although relevant guidance is under development.

Refer to page 72 of the [report](#) for more information

## Supporting Findings

- UNFPA Supplies provides an annual funding allocation and retains a stock of kits with suppliers ready to be shipped to emerging humanitarian contexts
- UNFPA Supplies funds have been used to train local emergency response personnel in the use of MISP
- Working relationships with implementing partners of UNFPA Supplies strengthened the UNFPA response to humanitarian situations in some countries
- Issues relating to demand (including social barriers to access) and to weak supply chains for RH/FP commodities are particularly acute during humanitarian situations. In some cases, a separate supply chain must be created to handle RH/FP commodities

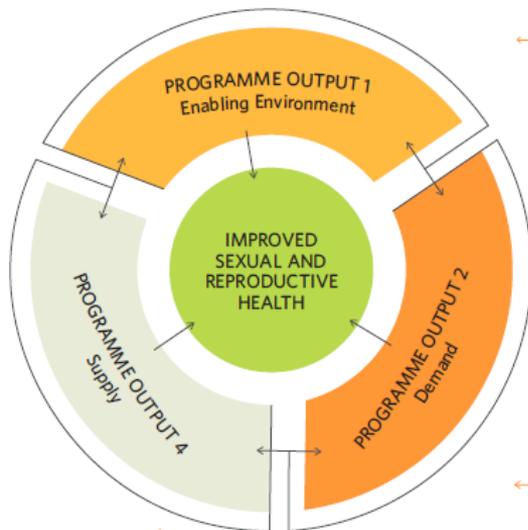
## Strengths and Challenges Leveraging the role of UNFPA Supplies



Supply,  
Enabling  
Environment  
and Demand:

## UNFPA Supplies Strengths and Challenges

Adopted from:  
Engender Health,  
SEED programming  
model



### PROGRAMME OUTPUT 1: Enabling Environment

#### STRENGTHS

- Supported development of enabling strategies
- Leader in RH/FP globally and at the country level
- Enables UNFPA promotion of family planning
- Global leadership role in diversifying markets
- Commodities, technological assistance and logistics support valued by national authorities
- Use of emergency supplies to reach women and girls in humanitarian settings

#### CHALLENGES

- Lack of incentives and limited progress in expanding national expenditures on RH/FP
- Missed opportunities to provide leadership of the family planning agenda
- Limited influence in building common approaches among UN agencies (SCM, humanitarian indicators)
- Overcoming challenges to total market approach

### PROGRAMME OUTPUT 2: Increased Demand and Access

#### STRENGTHS

- Support to community engagement
- Effective NGO partnerships to link demand creation and service provision through outreach
- Focus on reaching remote, isolated and marginalized populations
- Focused attention to marginalized youth
- Increased range of contraceptive options
- Strengthened delivery capacity
- Elements of a rights-based approach and effort to address to gender equality

#### CHALLENGES

- Demand creation and community engagement activities limited in scale and not well documented
- Discontinuing investments in demand creation potentially disruptive in low demand contexts
- Where demand outstrips supply capacity, stock-outs endanger hard won gains
- Rights-based approach (including equity and social inclusion) and gender equality concepts not systematically operationalized

### PROGRAMME OUTPUT 4: Improved Procurement and Supply Chain Management Capacity

#### STRENGTHS

- Leading position to shape global markets
- Development of tools for forecasting, strengthening LMIS and improved supplier performance
- Effectively assuring commodity quality
- Supporting selected elements of SCM at country level
- Contributing to national SCM strategies

#### CHALLENGES

- Limited flexibility in cash flow impedes market shaping
- Weaknesses in global demand planning
- Persistent delays in shipments to some countries
- Lack of a coherent strategy for strengthening SCM in some countries
- Persistent problems in last mile distribution
- Need to strengthen UNFPA technical capacity in SCM

Refer to  
page 66 of  
the [report](#)  
for more  
information

## Leveraging the essential role of UNFPA Supplies

Since 2015, changes to the operation and management of UNFPA Supplies have aimed at improving programme focus and prioritizing the commodity procurement and supply function while encouraging broadening sources of financial resources (and sustainability) at global and national level.

There is an opportunity to more effectively leverage UNFPA Supplies to strengthen the UNFPA's leadership role at global and national level.

Refer to page 72 of the [report](#) for more information



Opportunity to further refine decision rules and approaches to:

- establishing the annual allocation of funding to each country;
- determining the split between technical assistance and commodity support to better reflect national contexts – in particular in relation to gaps in national systems of services and supply and to changing levels of demand



Opportunity for UNFPA to take a stronger leadership position in the global and national “policy space”. Includes taking a more active approach to market shaping, promotion of a total market approach and leveraging countries toward national sustainability



# Recommendations

# 1. Asserting leadership

UNFPA, as a matter of organizational priority, should take steps to capitalize fully on the critical importance of UNFPA Supplies as a lever for asserting its leadership role in reproductive health and family planning at global, regional and national level (including in humanitarian contexts).

## Operational Actions

- Senior management to leverage UNFPA Supplies in global platforms
- Division-wide engagement by Technical Division on strategic direction
- Coordination of policy engagement between SRH programmes and UNFPA Supplies
- Effective communications by CSB and PSB on importance of UNFPA Supplies as a platform
- RH/FP and UNFPA Supplies teams at RO/CO level to work collaboratively
- COs have access to needed skills

Directed to: UNFPA Technical Division, CSB, PSB, ROs and COs

Refer to page 74 of the [report](#) for more information

## 2. Sustainable Financing

- Commodities Security Branch and UNFPA country offices, with involvement from other units of UNFPA, should implement a flexible approach that is tailor-made to national contexts with a view to broadening and deepening the sources of sustainable financing for RHCS.
- It should reflect the evidence and experience of 'what works' in terms of incentivising and supporting domestic resource mobilisation, including lessons learned by other global funds on co-financing policies and innovative financing mechanisms.

## Operational Actions



- CSB to update and disseminate guidelines on transition to domestic resources
- CSB to adopt a more targeted approach to resources allocation reflecting national context
- Work plans and budget allocations based on evidence-based needs analysis of supply and service delivery
- Assessment of UNFPA Supplies capacity and capability
- Working with other global health funds and partners on innovative financing mechanisms

Directed to: CSB, ROs and COs

Refer to page 74 of the [report](#) for more information

### 3. Adequate attention to demand generation

- The Commodity Security Branch and UNFPA country offices should develop an evidence-based process for defining needs and assessing funding gaps for demand generation in priority countries and assess the capacity and capability of UNFPA to support high priority interventions.
- This should form the basis for determining the role and comparative advantage of UNFPA among other health partners in supporting demand generation interventions.

### Operational Actions

- Strengthened CSB to develop process for defining needs and assessing funding gaps for demand generation
- Assessment of UNFPA Supplies technical capacity in order to clarify role in supporting demand generation
- Collection and analysis of data in order to assess outputs and outcomes of demand generation
- UNFPA leadership at country level to support national processes and plans which consider demand generation
- Country offices to assist national authorities to establish demand generation strategies
- Technical Division-wide collaboration to ensure systematic assessment of demand at country level
- UNFPA to systematically document experience, lessons learned and best practices in demand generation

Directed to: UNFPA Technical Division (Notably CSB and SRH Branch) and COs

Refer to page 75 of the [report](#) for more information

## 4. Human-rights based family planning services

UNFPA Supplies should ensure the systematic application of a human rights-based approach to the provision of family planning services. This should include specific guidance on how to improve gender equality and social inclusion by addressing socio-cultural barriers to access to reproductive health and family planning services and commodities.

### Operational Actions

- Communication of existing guidance (including minimum and recommended standards) and development of the capacity of country offices and implementing partners to apply a human rights-based approach to family planning services
- Systematic use of a human-rights based approach as one of the results criteria used in programme monitoring and reporting for UNFPA Supplies

Directed to: Gender Human Rights and Culture Branch, CSB, ROs and COs

Refer to page 76 of the [report](#) for more information

## 5. Shaping global markets and reducing opacity of processes

UNFPA Supplies should build on progress already achieved and continue to support improved national demand forecasting and annual supplies planning and quantification. Efforts should be directed towards making the procurement, shipment, and delivery process more visible to implementing partners

### Operational Actions



- CSB, ROs and COs to work with in-country partners to develop simplified/timely quantification processes
- PSB, CSB and COs to streamline communication processes and commit to full visibility throughout the procurement, shipment and delivery process
- UNFPA Supplies to proactively communicate information on the status of shipments in real time to all stakeholders
- UNFPA Supplies to put in place mechanisms to address bottlenecks in a timely manner
- PSB/CSB to clearly outline the boundaries of UNFPA procurement roles and responsibilities with regard to product procurement and shipment to ensure timely intervention

Directed to: CSB, PSB, ROs and COs

Refer to page 76 of the [report](#) for more information

## 6. Coordinated, risk-based approach to supply chain management

- UNFPA country offices should support national governments to coordinate a multi-partner approach to providing assistance to an agreed, nationally-led, coherent strategy and programme for managing and strengthening supply chains.
- This should reflect a differentiated, risk-based approach to supply chain management, which adapts distribution models and supply chain interventions according to the risk profile of a given country.
- Include agreed technical and financial supporting roles (while recognizing the context of broader health supply chain systems) and support to countries with post-emergency or protracted emergency settings with a view to moving away from emergency kit procurement and creating sustainable medical commodity supply chains.

## Operational Actions



- CSB and country offices to develop a differentiated, risk-based approach to SCM across priority countries
- Support national efforts to lead development of a coordinated approach to strengthen supply chains
- Technical capacity in SCM available to COs
- Capacity development for Supply Chain Managers to support humanitarian partners to move away from emergency reproductive health kits to strengthened supply chains for medical commodities
- UNFPA Supplies support to capacity development for budget planning in transition from humanitarian to development contexts
- Establish mechanisms for measuring effectiveness and UNFPA Supplies contribution to strengthening SCM

Directed to: UNFPA TD (CSB and Humanitarian and Fragile Contexts Branch), PSB, ROs and COs

Refer to page 77 of the [report](#) for more information

## 7. Responding to variations in national context

UNFPA Commodity Security Branch and country offices should strengthen monitoring and oversight of programme planning, budgeting and implementation at country level in order to ensure that the programme addresses gaps and needs in:

- (a) the balance between demand generation, access to services, service delivery quality and security of supply;
- (b) the national strategy and approach to strengthening supply chain management;
- (c) national strategies and policies regarding access to reproductive health and family planning services;
- (d) national capacity for broadening and deepening sustainable investments in RHCS in general, and in procurement of commodities in particular;
- (e) efforts made by development partners and the private sector to provide or improve services at the national level.

## Operational Actions



- Develop a systematic, evidence-based process for defining commodity and technical assistance needs and funding gaps
- Assessment of UNFPA's capacity and capability to support high priority activities in order to clarify its role and comparative advantage
- CSB and country offices to implement robust monitoring arrangements to ensure commodities are reaching intended beneficiaries
- CSB to reinforce oversight of programme planning in focus countries
- Regional and country offices to develop or acquire capability to accurately assess national needs and capacities
- Flexibility in the allocation of UNFPA Supplies national-level budgets
- CO staff to demonstrate skills to effectively link UNFPA Supplies interventions to larger health systems development processes

Directed to: CSB, ROs and COs

Refer to page 77 of the [report](#) for more information

## Need more information?

Look out for:

- [Evaluation Report](#)
- Executive Summary (in [En](#), [Fr](#), [Sp](#))
- [Evaluation Brief](#)
- [Infographics](#)
- [Country Notes](#) (Lao PDR, Nigeria, the Sudan, Sierra Leone)
- Management Response

Available on our website:

<https://www.unfpa.org/admin-resource/mid-term-evaluation-unfpa-supplies-programme-2013-2020-0>



Thank you