



©UNFPA. Evaluation Workshop in Yaoundé, Cameroon. April 11-15, 2016

IMPACT

The UNFPA Evaluation Office Newsletter

Issue 4. May 2016



Welcome to the fourth issue of **Impact**. This issue spotlights a number of new Evaluation Office reports, and highlights recent capacity development initiatives.

I am happy to present the results of the thematic evaluation of **UNFPA support to population and housing census data to inform decision-making and policy formulation (2005-2014)**. This is the first of three thematic evaluations conducted by the independent Evaluation Office under the 2014-2015 transitional budgeted evaluation plan to be completed this year.

I am also pleased to introduce a new type of Evaluation Office report: a **synthesis of lessons learned from UNFPA Country Programme Evaluations (2010-2013)**. This is first and foremost a lesson learning product, presenting findings in an accessible and user friendly format. In light of the significant improvement in quality of UNFPA country programme evaluations, it is the intention of the Evaluation Office to produce this report every two years.

The latest **annual report on evaluation** notes the successful effort to improve the quality of UNFPA country programme evaluations. The Executive Committee has decided to award certificates of achievement to 12 country offices in recognition of the good quality reports completed in 2014. The awards primarily acknowledge collaborative effort at country level. However, improvement

in quality also reflects the efforts by the Evaluation Office and regional offices to provide systematic quality assurance to country offices.

In recent years, there have also been efforts to strengthen evaluation capacities across UNFPA. I am delighted to report that work in this area will step up in the course of 2016 with the arrival of **Susanne Mattsson** and **Muriel Weyermann** in the Evaluation Office at the start of this year.

The commitment of the Evaluation Office to evaluation capacity development does not only relate to UNFPA staff, but also to the young evaluators of the future. Since February, the Evaluation Office has piloted an internship programme to provide an opportunity for five post-graduate students, **Kelly, Robert, Rosalie, Swetha** and **Vaisnavi**, to gain practical work experience of evaluation alongside their academic studies. I wish them all well as their internships come to a close and they embark on their professional careers.

Andrea Cook

Director, Evaluation Office UNFPA



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UNFPA support to population and housing census data to inform decision-making and policy formulation (2005-2014)

by Alexandra Chambel



This evaluation was conducted by the UNFPA independent Evaluation Office together with a diverse, multidisciplinary team of independent evaluators and thematic experts from **ICON Institute Public Sector consultants**. Its purpose was to assess the contribution of UNFPA support to strengthening national capacity for the production and availability of census data and its use in evidence-based decision-making and policy formulation.

In line with the UNFPA evaluation policy, the evaluation aims to meet both accountability and learning needs. The results of the evaluation have informed the **midterm review of the UNFPA 2014-2017 Strategic Plan** and the **UNFPA strategy for the 2020 census round**.

The results and lessons of the evaluation have served, as a key secondary data source, to the first independent system wide evaluation of the contribution of the United Nations development system to strengthening national statistical capacity. The results of this joint evaluation exercise will be disclosed over the summer.

The evaluation followed a participatory approach, guided by an evaluation reference group and featuring a consultative process: including systematic engagement with key stakeholders at country, regional and global levels.

The analytical framework was based on the reconstruction of the theory of change and focused on **seven evaluation questions** looking at how relevant and aligned, effective, efficient and sustainable was UNFPA support to census.

Key data sources of evidence included **six country case studies (Peru, Palestine, Tajikistan, Myanmar, Mauritania and Kenya)**, desk-based analysis (including remote interviews) in seven countries (**Bangladesh, Brazil, Cameroon, Belarus, Indonesia, Iraq and Rwanda**), two global surveys (one to National Statistical Offices and one to UNFPA country offices), key informant interviews and study of documentation at regional and global levels. Almost 800 people were consulted during the evaluation, through individual interviews or group discussions. To ensure reliability and validity, evidence sources were well-triangulated, and internal and external validation mechanisms were applied. The evaluation utilised contribution analysis, context analysis and comparative analysis to produce concrete findings.

Overall, UNFPA support to the 2010 census round was largely positive, highly relevant and delivered efficiently. UNFPA was successful in strengthening national capacities for the production and availability of census data which resulted into an increased availability of census data worldwide (more countries have conducted a census in the 2010 than in the 2000 round, and only 21 countries have not, due to conflict situations or political instability).

The evaluation highlights a very solid strategic positioning of UNFPA as a census player worldwide. This contrasts with support to census ranking rather modestly among UNFPA strategic priorities. The evaluation also points to risks associated with the erosion of expertise and human resource imbalances in this area.

The evaluation reveals the preeminent focus of the 2010 census round on enhancing the production of census related data, with rather less attention to data analysis, dissemination and use of census data in policy-making. The value for money of census operations, already high

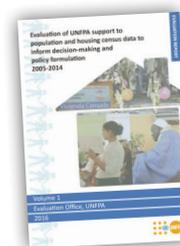
for data production, could be considerably enhanced if there is greater attention to the use of data.

The evaluation clearly shows that population censuses are statistical operations of a highly technical nature, but with significant socio-political implications that vary in relation to national context and capacities. The evaluation found that quality assurance mechanisms, including ensuring effective census governance, are highly variable and points to a lack of clear up to date and accessible guidance for census support, particularly in politically sensitive contexts.

The evaluation recommends a consolidation of the position of UNFPA on population and housing censuses: continuing and expanding the provision of support guided by a clear strategy and guidance for the 2020 census round.

The evaluation calls for exploitation of the full potential of census data, providing suggestions on how to incorporate use of data as a focus of the UNFPA census support. The evaluation recommends exploring the links between the census, national surveys and other data for development, including administrative sources and big data to increase value for money and the effectiveness of census support.

Finally, the evaluation prompts UNFPA to explore new funding mechanisms to support dissemination and use of data for development, including census-related data, and to tap into the full potential of south-south cooperation.



[Read the report](#)

Knowledge sharing

Workshop in Yaoundé

by Louis Charpentier and Hicham Daoudi

In April 2016, the Evaluation Office, in collaboration with the **West and Central Africa Regional Office**, conducted a four-day evaluation training workshop in **Yaoundé, Cameroon** for 19 francophone countries across Africa.

This is the 6th training workshop led by the EO on conducting Country Programme Evaluations (CPEs). In total, 36 participants (including some government partners) attended the workshop. In responding to the post-course survey, 86% of the 28 respondents reported that the training modules were very useful.

The workshop was also a unique opportunity for colleagues from **Burkina Faso, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mauritania, Madagascar and Senegal**, to share lessons learned and good practices from their experience in the management of a CPE.

Training materials and additional resources are available in French. Please, [contact the Evaluation Office](#) for details.

Country Programme Evaluation Awards

by Muriel Weyermann

The Evaluation Office is pleased to announce that the following UNFPA Country Offices are awarded a **certificate of achievement** for their good quality Country Programme Evaluation reports: **Angola, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Burkina Faso, DPR Korea, El Salvador, Swaziland, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uruguay, Uzbekistan and Zimbabwe.**

The Executive Director, the Director of the Evaluation Office and the Executive Committee acknowledge the distinct improvement in the quality of the Country

Programme Evaluation reports in recent years and honour the collaborative efforts that resulted in these good quality Country Programme Evaluation reports of 2014.

In addition, a **certificate of excellence** was awarded to the **Uruguay Country Office** for their innovative approach in terms of dissemination of evaluation results and strong engagement with national partners.



Meeting UNFPA evaluation needs through UNDAF Evaluation in Lao PDR

by Thomas Lammar

UNFPA Laos has utilized the Delivering as One approach to meet its Country Programme evaluation needs. In 2014, the CO supported the Government of **Lao PDR** with thematic evaluations of two major components of the UNFPA Country Programme. Through these thematic evaluations and the Family Planning and Population Situation Analyses in 2015, there was a solid evidence-base to guide future prioritization and strategizing for both the Government and the CO. Consequently, the CO felt a full-fledged CPE was unnecessary.

Considering the UN strategy to increase inter-agency cooperation, the CO decided to focus efforts on the planned UNDAF evaluation, rather than a country programme

evaluation. This would provide information on UNFPA contribution to UNDAF outcomes and UNFPA's role in the broader UN development assistance context.

UNFPA, as chair of the UN M&E group, which included UNDP and UN Women, led the conceptualization of a harmonized approach for the UNDAF evaluation.

The findings from the UNDAF evaluation, while broad, currently guide the development of the CO sixth Country Programme and the UN Partnership Framework.

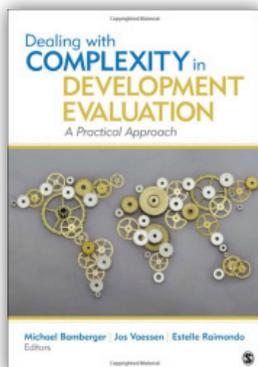


INSPIRATION CORNER

Dealing with Complexity in Development Evaluation *A practical approach*

by Michael Bamberger, Jos Vaessen and Estelle Raimondo

2016



Evaluation Reports

Bangladesh Country Programme Evaluation

Earlier this year, the Evaluation Office completed an independent [evaluation of the eighth Bangladesh country programme \(2012-2016\)](#).

This completes the cycle of independent country programme evaluations for each UNFPA region.

The other countries in this cycle have been: [Bolivia](#) (2011), [Cameroon](#) (2011), [Madagascar](#) (2012), [Lebanon](#) (2014) and [Turkey](#) (2014). Details of all these reports can be found on the Evaluation Office [website](#) and the [UNFPA evaluation database](#).



[Read the report](#)

Progress on family planning and adolescents and youth evaluations

In 2014, the Evaluation Office (EO) launched the thematic evaluation of [UNFPA Support to Family Planning \(2008-2013\)](#) and [UNFPA support to adolescents and youth \(2008-2014\)](#), which are now in their final stages.

For family planning, the country case study reports for the field-based studies are now available on the [EO website](#) ([Bolivia](#), [Burkina Faso](#), [Cambodia](#), [Ethiopia](#), and [Zimbabwe](#)).

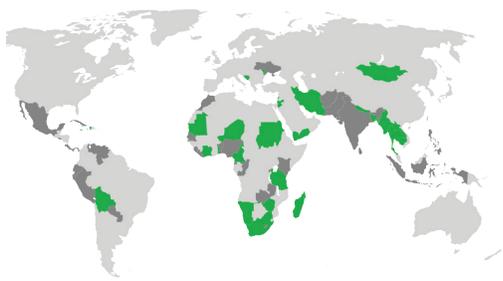
The final report will be issued in **July 2016** and will be presented to the Executive Board in September 2016.

For adolescents and youth, the five country case studies ([Egypt](#), [Nicaragua](#), [Côte d'Ivoire](#), [Ethiopia](#) and [Kyrgyzstan](#)) and three regional case studies ([ESARO](#), [APRO](#) and [LACRO](#)) are being finalized and will soon be made available.

The final report will be finalized in **August 2016** and will be presented to the Executive Board in January 2017.

Lessons learned from UNFPA Country Programme Evaluations

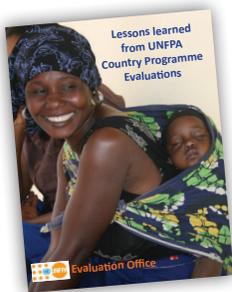
This report brings together the findings from a sample of 30 UNFPA CPE reports, conducted and quality-assessed between 2010 and 2013. CPEs provide a valuable body of evidence. However, to date this resource has been under-utilised by UNFPA in terms of general lesson learning.



CPEs included CPEs conducted but not included

Evidence from the reports was drawn out and distilled according to UNFPA evaluation criteria (**Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability, Coordination** and **Added Value**) as well as other areas of particular importance to UNFPA (**Reaching Disadvantaged and Vulnerable Groups, National Ownership, South-South Cooperation** and **Monitoring Systems**).

This report is intended primarily for the UNFPA Executive Board and management, as well as staff at headquarters, regional and country levels. It is hoped that the report will **inform and guide UNFPA strategies, programmes and operational systems**.



[Read the report](#)

RECENT COUNTRY PROGRAMME EVALUATIONS

- [Albania \(2012-2016\)](#)
- [Botswana \(2010-2014/16\)](#)
- [Burkina Faso \(2011-2016\)](#)
- [Chad \(2012-2016\)](#)
- [Sudan \(2013-2016\)](#)
- [Vietnam \(2012-2016\)](#)

ALL THE REPORTS



[Evaluation Database](#)

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