

**Statement on the 2018 Annual Report on Evaluation  
by the Director, UNFPA Evaluation Office**

**Mr. President,  
Members of the Executive Board,**

It is my pleasure to present the 2018 annual report on the evaluation function.

Organized around **nine key performance indicators**, the report provides a comprehensive overview of the performance of the function, including key achievements and areas for growth and improvement.

The evaluation function's contribution to coherence in evaluation across the United Nations, as well as its support to national evaluation capacity are also discussed. Looking ahead, the 2019 programme of work and budget for the Evaluation Office are presented.

**Mr. President,  
Distinguished Delegates,**

Please allow me to begin with a few words on the Evaluation Office's alignment with and **contribution to the ongoing UN reform process**.

The ambitious reform lays the groundwork for strengthened coherence and collaboration within the UN development system. Fully committed to its implementation, the Evaluation Office (and function more broadly) took concrete steps in 2018 to align with the objectives of the reform.

First, I am pleased to report that the Evaluation Office significantly increased the number of joint and system-wide evaluations planned: nearly 50% of evaluations planned in 2019 and 2020 are joint or system-wide. The Evaluation Office also increased engagement in system-wide work, working within the United Nation Evaluation Group (UNEG), to advocate for the

integration of evaluation within the revised UNDAF guidance and the UN Funding Compact.

As in previous years, the function continued to contribute to coherence and collaboration within the UN by actively engaging within UNEG, participating in United Nations regional evaluation groups, collectively undertaking UNDAF evaluations, contributing to and reporting against the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, and participating as a member of the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation Steering Group.

**Mr. President,**

I will now turn to the **evaluation function's performance**.

An independent strategic review of the evaluation function was finalized in 2018, resulting in, *inter alia*, a revised evaluation policy. The revised 2019 evaluation policy, approved by the Board in the first regular session of 2019, aligns with internal UNFPA strategic frameworks, including the UNFPA strategic plan 2018-2021, and global normative frameworks, including the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. The revised policy is the result of a comprehensive consultative and transparent process carried out throughout 2018.

Within this overarching frame, and the continued efforts by the function to strengthen clarity and transparency in reporting, the Evaluation Office developed a set of nine key performance indicators against which the function is to be assessed. This is the second year the Evaluation Office is reporting against these indicators.

Out of nine key performance indicators, two have achieved their targets, four are on track, and three require improvement. Please allow me to take each in turn.

First, on those **indicators for which the targets have been met.**

Continuing the trend of previous years, management responses were submitted for all corporate and decentralized programme evaluations. Similarly, 100% of completed evaluations, at both decentralized and centralized level, together with their quality assessment, were posted on the evaluation database, an open and publicly available website. Both indicators have met their target, and are expected to continue to do so in the years to come.

Turning now to indicators that are **on track** to be achieved.

**The implementation rate of planned evaluations** improved significantly from previous years, with 92 per cent implemented in 2018 compared to 55 per cent in 2017. The development of a new financial ring-fencing mechanism contributed significantly to this improvement.

The annual implementation rate of **evaluation recommendation actions also improved**, reaching nearly 90 per cent, a notable increase from 2014, when only 77 per cent of recommendation actions were implemented.

**Evaluation coverage** increased from 80 per cent in 2017 to 90 per cent in 2018, signaling an important expansion of the evaluative evidence available for decision-making, including for the development of country programmes.

Finally, as in previous years, nearly **all country offices** were staffed with a monitoring and evaluation focal point or officer. UNFPA has six regional monitoring and evaluation advisors and, in 2018, all posts were filled.

**Mr. President,  
Members of the Executive Board,**

Although significant progress has been made in most indicators, there is scope to further strengthen the use of evaluative evidence in country programme

development, and investment in the evaluation function. In addition, in 2018 we registered a potentially negative trend in the quality of evaluation reports.

I will take each in turn.

**First, on the quality of evaluations.**

While considerable progress has been made in the **quality of evaluation reports since 2014**, the percentage of reports assessed as ‘good’ or higher decreased from 95 per cent in 2017 to 80 per cent in 2018. However, in absolute terms, only two reports were assessed as ‘fair’, while 5 out of 10, or 50 per cent, were assessed to be of ‘very good’ quality. Critically, no reports were rated ‘unsatisfactory’. While we will continue to monitor the evolution of this indicator carefully, we do not believe this to be a systemic issue.

**Second, on the use of evaluative evidence.**

The Evaluation Policy and the 2018-2021 Evaluation Strategy place a strong emphasis on the importance of the use of evaluation results to inform programming at UNFPA, including the development of country programmes. With the aim of monitoring the performance against this priority, the Evaluation Office developed a new key performance indicator and is reporting on it for the first time this year.

While evaluation informed all new country programme documents approved by the Executive Board in 2018, the level and quality of use – that is, the degree to which country programme design was clearly informed by recommendations from a country programme evaluation - varied, with only 79% (15 out of 19) of country programme documents meeting the quality requirement.

**Please allow me now to turn to financial resources.**

On the whole, the budget invested in evaluation has increased year on year from 2014 to 2018 at both corporate and decentralized levels.

The amount budgeted in 2018 for the evaluation function was \$8.40 million, with \$4.23 million budgeted at the central level (the Evaluation Office) and \$4.17 million budgeted at the decentralized level, representing 0.96 per cent of the total UNFPA programme expenditure for 2018. While in absolute terms the amount invested in the evaluation function increased, there remains scope to improve the overall amount invested as a percentage of total UNFPA programme expenditure, with the aim of reaching 1.4%.

**Mr. President,  
Distinguished Delegates,**

Before turning to UN coherence and national evaluation capacity development, please allow me to say a few words on centralized evaluations

I am pleased to report that 100% of centralized evaluations scheduled in 2018/2019 have been completed or are on track to be completed. The Evaluation Office will manage eleven evaluations in 2019, six of which will be completed in 2019, and the remaining five in 2020. As shared in my opening, 50% of these will be joint or system wide.

**Mr. President,  
Distinguished Members of the Executive Board,**

As I shared earlier, the Evaluation Office is fully committed to enhancing coherence among the evaluation functions within the UN and supporting strengthened national evaluation capacity.

Please allow me to speak first on UN coherence and then turn to national evaluation capacity development.

UNFPA Evaluation Office supports UN coherence through sustained collaboration with other United Nations entities, including through the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), the Inter-Agency Humanitarian

Evaluation Steering Group, and the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, as well as through the conduct of joint, system-wide, and UNDAF evaluations.

In 2018, the Evaluation Office continued to actively participate in the Interagency Humanitarian Evaluation steering group. Reflecting the increase in humanitarian support, in 2018 the Evaluation Office became a member of the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP), the global network of NGOs, UN agencies, members of the Red Cross/Crescent Movement, donors, academics and consultants dedicated to improving response to humanitarian crises.

The function has increasingly engaged in joint and system wide evaluations, continuing and deepening the trend from previous years. At the regional and country level, UNFPA actively supported UNDAF evaluations managed by the United Nations system in 2018, through technical and/or financial support.

**Mr. President,  
Distinguished Members of the Executive Board,**

Please allow me to say a few words on the function's work on supporting national evaluation capacity development, a central pillar of UNFPA's evaluation policy.

An area of growing importance, UNFPA contributed **to national evaluation capacity development** through active engagement in multi-stakeholder partnerships. Developing the capacity of youth in evaluation was also prioritized.

A member of several multi-stakeholder partnerships, in 2018, the evaluation function further strengthened its partnership with EvalYouth – an EvalPartners' global movement of young evaluators that engages up to 20,000 youth all over the world. UNFPA led a coalition of UN entities deploying young evaluation professionals as UN Youth Volunteers across the UN system. This collaboration supports the inclusion of youth voices in

evaluations and the capacity development of youth through skills development and knowledge transfer.

The function also engaged in multi-stakeholder partnership to enhance the **demand for and use of** country-led evaluation by national policy-makers, further supporting national capacity. The Office participated in EvalColombo2018, a global event organized by the Global Parliamentary Forum for evaluation and other key stakeholders held at the Parliament of Sri Lanka. As a follow-up, UNFPA and UNICEF supported a similar event at the Parliament of Morocco, convening parliamentarians from the Middle East and North Africa region.

Finally, in 2018, the Evaluation Office also contributed to several events to strengthen both the production of and demand for country level evaluations. These included participation in an evaluation week organized by the Government of China and the Asian development Bank, as well as contribution to an Inter-ministerial conference on South-South and triangular cooperation.

Taken together, these and other activities reflect the function's ongoing commitment to supporting strengthened national evaluation capacity.

**Mr. President,  
Members of the Executive Board,**

This year marks the 50th anniversary year for UNFPA and the 25th anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the UN reform process underway, the international development community has redoubled its efforts to advance sustainable development, peace and human rights, including through the implementation of internationally agreed development goals.

Evaluation plays a central role in improved effectiveness, accelerated rights fulfillment, and the acceleration of the implementation of the SDGs by surfacing what works, what doesn't, for whom, where and why.

In this spirit, I'd like to underscore the Evaluation Office's continued commitment to the production of credible and useful evaluative evidence to support UNFPA – and indeed the broader development community working on sexual and reproductive health and rights – end maternal mortality, the unmet need for family planning, and gender based violence and harmful practices, the organization's three transformative results.

This concludes my presentation, **Mr. President**. I thank the Executive Board for the continued support and guidance.