



UNFPA - because everyone counts

Statement by Marco Segone
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on
Item on evaluation

2020 Annual Report on Evaluation by the Director, Evaluation Office
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**Mr. President,
Distinguished Members of the Executive Board,**

It is my pleasure to present the 2020 annual report on the evaluation function.

The annual report captures: a) the performance of the evaluation function as measured through a set of key performance indicators, b) the evaluation function's contribution to coherence in evaluation across the United Nations, and c) its support to national evaluation capacities development.

This year annual report also presents the steps taken by the Evaluation Office in responding and adapting its evaluation function to the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Further, the report presents the 2021 programme of work and budget for the Evaluation Office.

**Mr. President,
Distinguished Delegates,**

Please allow me to begin with a few words on the **Evaluation Office's efforts to adapting the evaluation function to the COVID-19 crisis and generating evaluative evidence to inform the delivery of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.**

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented UNFPA with considerable challenges. Even more than usual, UNFPA has been required to be adaptive, refocusing and repurposing its work to meet the multifaceted aspects of the pandemic.

In this context, the Evaluation Office acted quickly by adapting its centralized evaluation approach and data collection methods, as well as guiding country offices in adapting their own country programme evaluations.

Taken together, regular technical support and constant real-time adaptation to the COVID-19 pandemic throughout 2020 ensured that the UNFPA evaluation function remained on track and continued to deliver high quality evidence to frame the response and recovery from the pandemic.

**Mr. President,
Distinguished Delegates,**

As part of its commitment to the **United Nations reform**, the Evaluation Office continued to support United Nations coherence in evaluation through sustained collaboration with other United Nations entities, including through UNEG as well as joint and system-wide evaluations.

At strategic level, the Evaluation Office, within the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) network, has contributed to the drafting of the system-wide evaluation policy. The Evaluation Office also took part in several system-wide initiatives related to the response to COVID-19 pandemic, including the UNEG working group on COVID-19; the Global COVID-19 Evaluation Coalition; and support to the evaluative exercises of the Multi-Partner Trust Fund and the Global Humanitarian Response Plan.

Regarding collaborating in at least one joint or system-wide evaluation, UNFPA continued to significantly exceed this commitment, as 57 per cent of centralized evaluations were either joint or system-wide.

UNFPA also participated in several joint programme evaluations at the country level and continued to actively support Cooperation Framework evaluations through technical and financial support across all regions.

Mr. President,

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

Despite the extraordinary circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, eight out of the nine key performance indicators registered strong performance in 2020.

Regarding indicators for which the targets have been met, for the second year in a row, all evaluations were quality-assessed as 'good' or higher. Further, the design of all new country programme documents was clearly informed by evaluation, marking a significant improvement from 2018, when only 79 per cent of country programme documents met this requirement.

In addition, management responses were submitted for all evaluations and made public.

Regarding indicators that are almost achieved, 97 per cent of offices have conducted at least one country programme evaluation within two cycles. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, 89 per cent of the planned evaluations were implemented. Further, nearly all UNFPA country offices were staffed with monitoring and evaluation focal point or officer.

Let me know move to the indicators that require improvement. While the implementation rate of centralized recommendations, which tends to lag behind organizational average, has improved by nine percentage points in 2020, this indicator (at 68 per cent) remains below the target of 85 per cent.

Investment in evaluation has more than doubled from 2014 to 2020 and UNFPA continues to demonstrate its commitment to the evaluation function. While this is welcomed, continued increase in investments in evaluation will remain necessary to help reach the range of 1.4 to 3%, as already committed to by Management and in line with the Evaluation Policy.

In addition to the nine key performance indicators, for a second year in a row, UNFPA 'exceeded requirements' of the UN Gender equality SWAP evaluation performance indicator (EPI). In response to the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy, the Evaluation Office developed a new guidance note to ensure systematic integration of disability inclusion in all types of evaluations.

At the corporate level, I am also pleased to report that 100% of centralized evaluations scheduled in 2020-2021 have been completed or are on track to be completed as planned.

To maximize the **utility and use of evaluative evidence**, the Evaluation Office continued to generate evaluative insights across UNFPA strategic plan outcome areas and organizational effectiveness and efficiency priorities.

**Mr. President,
Distinguished delegates,**

Now please allow me to say a few words on the function's work on supporting national evaluation capacity development and multi-stakeholder engagement, a central pillar of UNFPA's evaluation policy.

In alignment with the **United Nations' Decade of Action**, the Evaluation Office together with Global EvalYouth Network and the Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation rolled out the '*Decade of Evaluation for Action campaign*'. In a short time, this multi-stakeholder advocacy campaign mobilized more than 130 global, regional and national partners to accelerate action to build national evaluation capacities to inform the progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

In addition, UNFPA continued to support strategic initiatives and events in order to mobilize a range of stakeholders and share good practices and lessons learned on how to strengthen inclusive national evaluation systems. The Evaluation Office also continued to promote the participation of young people in evaluation, and build their professional capacities.

Mr. President,

The road to an equitable and sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic requires that decisions, now more than ever, are guided by timely and reliable evidence.

In this context, the Office's proposed work programme for 2021 will continue to play its part by producing relevant, good-quality and timely evaluative evidence for an informed recovery.

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

