



INDEPENDENT COUNTRY PROGRAMME EVALUATION

LEBANON

2010-2014

CONTEXT

This report is the result of the evaluation of the UNFPA third country programme in Lebanon, covering the period 2010-2014.

The country programme has three components: (a) reproductive health and rights (allocated with USD 5.5 million), (b) population and development (allocated with USD 2.0 million); and (c) gender equality (allocated with USD 2.0 million).

OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The objectives of the evaluation were: (1) to provide an independent assessment of the relevance and performance of the UNFPA third country programme for Lebanon; (2) to provide an analysis of how UNFPA positioned itself to add value in an evolving national development

context; (3) to draw key lessons from past and current cooperation with a view to providing useful recommendations for the next programming cycle.

The evaluation covered all activities (including soft aid activities) planned and/or implemented during the period 2010-2013 within each programme component.

As a complement to the assessment of the three programme components, the evaluation team also conducted an assessment of the programme monitoring and evaluation system.

METHODOLOGY

The evaluation was structured around two categories of criteria: (i) the evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability for the assessment of the three programme components; and (ii) the criteria of coordination and complementarity for the analysis of the strategic positioning of UNFPA in Lebanon.

The data collection tools used by the evaluation team throughout the evaluation consisted in: (i) a detailed review of all the documentation available regarding the country programme and the main national public policies; (ii) semi-structured interviews with main



stakeholders (including implementing partners); (iii) focus group discussions with final beneficiaries.

Besides Beirut, four field visits were conducted, respectively in the cities of Akkar, Halba, Baalbek and Sibliin.

Triangulation was ensured through systematic cross-checking of data and information sources on the one hand, and data collection tools, on the other hand. Specific attention has been paid to the formulation of evidence-based findings by rigorously relating all findings to the supporting facts and data displayed in annexes in general, and to the evaluation matrix in particular.

During the course of the evaluation, the evaluation team faced some methodological constraints, consisting mainly in information gaps in the programme documentation and in the limited availability of some stakeholders for in depth interviews. In the reproductive health and rights component, it was not possible to formally meet with representatives from the Ministry of Public Health, which posed a serious additional challenge. However, the evaluation team managed to a large extent to mitigate these constraints and limitations through the consultation of a wider range of informants.

MAIN FINDINGS

The objectives of the UNFPA 3rd country programme for Lebanon were based on an accurate understanding of the Lebanese context, both in terms of addressing the needs of the population and aligning with national priorities. After 2012, the UNFPA country office in Lebanon demonstrated good response capacity in adjusting its programme to the new context of the Syrian crisis.

In the area of reproductive health and rights, UNFPA has achieved tangible results with

regard to the sensitization of young people on HIV/AIDS and some reproductive health issues. UNFPA also contributed to ensuring a sufficient and regular supply of reproductive health commodities in areas identified as receiving a high influx of Syrian refugees. Results were more limited with regard to improving the access of vulnerable groups to reproductive health services. UNFPA also faced challenges in seeking to reinforce reproductive health services at primary health care level.

In the field of population and development, UNFPA focused its interventions on the strengthening of the national policy framework on ageing, and more particularly on the most vulnerable groups attending public and charitable institutions. The support of UNFPA proved instrumental for documenting the situation of this population group and for providing standards for an accreditation scheme for elderly institutions.

In the field of gender, UNFPA was successful in raising the technical capacity of the National Commission for Lebanese Women and related NGOs, thus contributing to increased advocacy efforts towards the Government with regard to women empowerment, gender equality and the fight against gender based violence.

In the implementation of the programme, UNFPA regular resources were made available in a timely manner, although with several reallocations within annual work plans in order to mitigate the effect of the late transfer of the financial contributions of the Government for critical activities. UNFPA was successful in raising significant external resources to respond to the consequences of the Syrian crisis.

UNFPA has made a key contribution to the coordination among UNCT members, especially through its participation in the working groups addressing the needs of Syrian refugees. UNFPA

has also sought to achieve complementarity between its interventions and those of other UN agencies, although this could have benefitted from a more systematic approach.

MAIN CONCLUSIONS

The UNFPA 3rd country programme for Lebanon has been adequately designed with regard to the context of Lebanon and the needs of the population, based on the conduct of needs assessment and using a fruitful participatory approach.

UNFPA demonstrated a quick response capacity to the needs of Syrian refugees and contributed to strengthening reproductive health services in areas with high influx of refugees. However, the lack of a joint vulnerability profiling by the humanitarian community until the end of 2013 has **hindered the targeting of some interventions to the most vulnerable** refugee groups.

The implementation of the UNFPA 3rd country programme for Lebanon has been **hindered by the lack of national policy frameworks**.

UNFPA has built upon the Lebanese vibrant civil society to establish adapted implementation channels and select appropriate partners. Implementation modalities were adjusted to the need to strengthen the capacity of implementing partners.

Most interventions of UNFPA have been designed and implemented with a concern for

sustainability. In many cases, institutionalized involvement of the civil society, notably in National Commissions, was instrumental. Grass roots and emergency- orientated civil society organizations did not have the same potential for taking over UNFPA interventions.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

UNFPA should continue adjusting its interventions based on the regular conduct of needs assessments and a participative approach. UNFPA should build upon this approach, in particular to seek to establish closer links with the grassroots level.

UNFPA should advocate among stakeholders for increased flexibility in order to address emerging critical issues and the prioritization of the most vulnerable groups among the Syrian refugees based upon assessments of the needs of different communities and settings. UNFPA should address simultaneously the needs of refugees and those of vulnerable groups among the host communities.

UNFPA should enhance the level and intensity of policy dialogue in the three areas covered by the country programme.

UNFPA should ensure that a sustainability plan is agreed upon with different stakeholders at the beginning of each project, together with a clear exit strategy. Implementing partners' capacity should be strengthened for the adoption of UNFPA supported interventions.

EVALUATION TEAM

UNFPA Evaluation Office

Team Leader: Hicham Daoudi

Research Assistant: Olivia Roberts

Experts

Reproductive Health: Isabelle Cazottes

Population and Development / Monitoring and Evaluation: Max Hennion

Gender Equality: Najwa Ksaifi

Any enquires about this evaluation should be addressed to:

Evaluation Office, United Nations Population Fund

E-mail: evaluation.office@unfpa.org

Phone number: +1 212 297 5218

Full document can be obtained from UNFPA web-site at:

<http://www.unfpa.org/admin-resource/lebanon-country-programme-evaluation>