



# Evaluation Strategy

2018-2021

Evaluation Office  
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## **PREFACE**

Evaluation is an essential aspect of good governance, improving learning and development effectiveness, transparency, accountability, and informed decision-making. Regular evaluation of our global efforts is critical to continuously strengthen UNFPA's performance and contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, and the three transformative results outlined in our new Strategic Plan 2018-2021. As we strive to achieve zero preventable maternal deaths, zero unmet need for family planning, and zero violence and harmful practices against women and girls, evaluation helps us zero in on and clearly understand what does and does not work, and why.

The UNFPA Evaluation Strategy 2018-2021 is closely aligned with the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2018-2021 and provides clear direction and a set of priorities to strengthen the organisation's evaluation function. This will enable us to focus energy and resources on ensuring that high-quality evaluative evidence is produced to inform the optimal implementation of the strategic plan, resulting in optimal results.

This strategy is a relevant and practical tool to further enhance the value addition of evaluation at all levels of the organisation, including in the field. I urge you to fully implement it in your offices to ensure that key strategic UNFPA decisions at global, regional and country level are taken based on evidence.

I would like to acknowledge the inclusive approach used in developing this strategy. Under the leadership of the Evaluation Office, consultations were held with senior management and professionals at headquarters, regional and country level, as well as with selected external stakeholders.

I count on your leadership to ensure that evaluation within UNFPA is more responsive, useful and strategic.

**Dr. Natalia Kanem**  
Executive Director, UNFPA

## **FOREWORD**

Building on the progress we have made since the introduction of UNFPA's Evaluation Policy in 2013, the evaluation function needs to take a leap forward to better respond to the objectives and overarching aspirations of the Sustainable Development Goals, the demands for increased UN system-wide harmonization, and the result areas of UNFPA's new Strategic Plan 2018-2021.

In this context, the role of evaluation must not be simply perceived as one of normative nature, but rather as one of essential and functional importance to the mandate of UNFPA and of the United Nations as a whole. Successfully changing this mindset requires striking a balance between accountability and learning as well as ensuring that evaluation exercises are more adaptive and innovative. It also requires that the findings, conclusions and lessons stemming from evaluative exercises are timely, so that they can add value to strategic decision-making, programme refinement, and results reporting.

This strategy intends to serve as a catalyst for this transition, gearing our efforts toward the strengthening of the UNFPA's accountability and performance and the improvement of the evaluation function at the corporate and decentralized levels. Similarly, it seeks to promote greater coherence across UN evaluation functions and strengthen the capacities of national partners in the realization of the 2030 Agenda, guided by country-led evaluative evidence. A differentiated and responsive approach to the needs of our stakeholders will ultimately amplify the impact of our work, influence new and more diverse audiences, improve organizational performance, and expand our knowledge base.

As I sincerely thank those colleagues who contributed to the development of this strategy, I invite you to drive its implementation with the aim of helping UNFPA make evaluation culture central to achieving zero preventable maternal deaths, zero unmet need for family planning, and zero violence and harmful practices against women and girls.

**Marco Segone**

Director, UNFPA Evaluation Office

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document presents UNFPA’s strategy for evaluation. The strategy is framed both by UNFPA’s new Strategic Plan for 2018-2021 and by the broader set of directions adopted by the UN system. It presents and explains UNFPA’s overall strategic priorities for evaluation over the period 2018-2021, as well as their corresponding intended outcomes. The strategic priorities and intended outcomes, together with the theory of change that is also presented in this document, contribute to the operationalisation of evaluation activities by key results areas, which are in turn reflected in a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework in the annex.

### OVERALL AIM

The **overall aim** of the Evaluation Strategy is to support UNFPA strengthen its performance and accountability, and its contribution to the achievements of the Sustainable Development Goals, by advocating and working to improve the evaluation function, including evaluation capacities and use.

### PURPOSE

Its **purpose** is to provide clear direction to the UNFPA evaluation function, to set priorities, to focus energy and resources, to strengthen evaluation operations, to support M&E staff and other stakeholders work toward common goals, to establish agreements on intended outcomes, and to provide a basis for assessing and adjusting the evaluation function's direction in response to a fast-changing environment.

It aims to better position the UNFPA evaluation function relative to other functions, both corporate and decentralised, to strengthen evaluation capacity development in UNFPA, to improve internal and external coherence of UNFPA evaluation-related activities, and to contribute to national evaluation capacity development.

### STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The strategic priorities set in this document are those areas and issues that UNFPA considers most important to address for the evaluation function to achieve its goals and intended results. Five **strategic priorities**, together with their corresponding intended outcomes, are identified for the period 2018-2021:

#### 1. Demand-driven evaluation function processes and products

The Evaluation Office steers the evaluation function towards being more responsive or demand-driven to the requirements of key stakeholders within UNFPA and external to it (Executive Board, UNFPA management, and rights holders). The evaluation function seeks to strike a strategic balance between supply-side evaluation approaches and more responsive, demand-driven ones, to better integrate accountability and learning.

*Intended outcomes:*

- Strategic processes to plan for evaluation—i.e., quadrennial evaluation plan at corporate level, and costed evaluation plans at country and regional level—are highly consultative
- Communication and facilitation of demand for, and use of, evaluative knowledge, which is useful to specific stakeholder requirements, is enhanced

## 2. Diversification and innovation of evaluation processes and products

From a demand-driven perspective and respecting the principle of “no one size fits all,” evaluation processes and products are diversified, innovative, responsive and relevant to stakeholder needs and requirements. In particular, humanitarian contexts are seen as an opportunity for diversification and innovation in UNFPA’s evaluation practices.

*Intended outcomes:*

- The evaluation function delivers increasingly responsive, flexible, diversified, and innovative evaluation processes and products
- Organisational support systems are strengthened to facilitate an increasing number of relevant, timely, responsive, flexible, diversified, and innovative high-quality evaluation processes and products

## 3. Quality of evaluation processes and products

Evaluation quality is defined both from a normative perspective—in this case, consistency and compliance with United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) norms and standards for evaluation—and from a functional perspective.

In other words, the Evaluation Office recognises that, although evaluation may meet norms and standards of quality, the integration of functional aspects such as user satisfaction, contribution to UNFPA organisational effectiveness, and improving the lives of women, adolescents and youth, constitutes an integral part of the quality of evaluation.

*Intended outcomes:*

- Evaluations increasingly meet UNEG norms and standards
- Stakeholders are increasingly satisfied with evaluations produced and use them for decision-making

## 4. Use and utility of the evaluation function

The intended use and utility of the evaluation function is made explicit within UNFPA relative to accountability, learning, management, and decision-making. It is also made explicit relative to specific stakeholders outside UNFPA such as the UN development system, countries, communities, and citizens served by UNFPA.

The distinct value proposition of the evaluation function takes into account the mandates, contributions and added-value of other related oversight functions in UNFPA such as, for example, monitoring, control and audit, and makes sure that it is both distinct from and synergistic with these dimensions.

*Intended outcomes:*

- Clear organisational positioning and corporate identity are streamlined to facilitate the use of evaluation results, products and processes.
- UNFPA invests appropriate resources in the evaluation function
- Evaluation is used to inform and make decisions at country, regional and corporate level, and to report on results achieved

## 5. Evaluation capacity development

Evaluation capacity development is mainstreamed throughout the current strategy with the aim of strengthening the relevance, quality and use of evaluations in three dimensions: individual, organisational, and the enabling environment.

Similarly, UNFPA works with other UN organisations and within multi-stakeholder partnerships to enhance national capacities to evaluate public policies and systems in such a way that no one is left behind.

*Intended outcomes:*

- UNFPA M&E staff at global, regional and country level has appropriate knowledge of diversified and innovative evaluation processes and products
- National evaluation capacity is strengthened through multi-stakeholder partnerships at global, regional and national level, including with other UN organisations

### THEORY OF CHANGE

The **theory of change** to make UNFPA's evaluation function more robust is based on a system-approach that seeks to (i) enhance institutional and individual capabilities and to (ii) strengthen an enabling environment for evaluations to perform better and generate their expected results. The theory of change aims to strengthen the capability of managers to demand and use evaluation through:

- a) Enhanced use and utility of UNFPA's evaluation function to enhance management attention
- b) Demand-driven evaluation processes and products
- c) Budgeting mechanisms that will enable the organisation to meet the target of investing 3 percent of available programme funds to evaluation

Furthermore, the theory of change aims to strengthen the capability of evaluation specialists to supply high-quality evaluative evidence through:

- a) Diversification and innovation of evaluation processes and products
- b) Quality assurance systems to ensure strategic planning of evaluations, high-quality evaluation reports, and use of evaluation findings and recommendations
- c) Internal capacity development systems, including knowledge management systems in support of the evaluation function as well as e-learning, to strengthen the capacities of M&E specialists and UNFPA staff
- d) Technical assistance mechanisms, mainly led by regional offices, to ensure timely and high-quality support is provided to country offices

## KEY RESULTS AREAS

The strategic priorities, together with the theory of change, provide a basis for clustering strategic interventions around four **key results areas**:

### **Area 1: Effective corporate evaluation systems implemented**

- Clear corporate identity of the Evaluation Office including evaluation processes and products tailored to stakeholder needs and requirements
- Clear organisational positioning
- Demand-driven evaluation processes and products
- Responsive, flexible, diversified and innovative evaluation processes and products—the supply of evaluative knowledge, evidence and information
- Evaluation quality is conceptualised normatively and functionally
- The value of evaluation is exploited fully throughout the evaluation process
- Appropriate knowledge of Evaluation Office staff on diversified and innovative evaluation processes and products
- Previous achievements with regard to evaluation planning, implementation and quality are consolidated

### **Area 2: Effective decentralised evaluation systems implemented with a focus on evaluation capacity development**

- The enabling environment, supporting management’s attention to demand for and use of evaluation, is strengthened
- At the organisational level, support systems for relevant, timely, responsive, flexible, diversified and innovative high-quality evaluations are improved
- At the individual level, the capacity of M&E staff on diversified and innovative evaluation processes and products is strengthened

### **Area 3: UN coherence in evaluation promoted**

- Effective participation in UN system-wide and joint evaluations
- Effective engagement in partnerships with other UN organisations, including through joint and system-wide evaluations

### **Area 4: National evaluation capacities for country-led evaluation systems strengthened**

- Support to multi-stakeholder partnerships with a particular focus on “no one left behind”
- Strengthening of evaluation capacities of line ministries responsible for sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, gender equality, youth and data

### **Budgeting, implementation, M&E and reporting**

To implement the Evaluation Strategy, the Evaluation Office develops costed annual work plans at the beginning of each year, specifying the financial and human resources needed to achieve annual expected results.

To monitor the implementation of the strategy against its M&E framework (annex 1), the Evaluation Office gathers information from field offices and headquarters business units on an annual basis. In addition, the Evaluation Office conducts meta-evaluations of the evaluations undertaken in the organisation to assess their quality on an annual basis. Based on that information, the Evaluation Office prepares an Annual Report on the Evaluation Function, which is presented to UNFPA's senior management and Executive Board.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Evaluation is an essential component of governance, accountability, transparency, learning, and management decision-making to achieve development results.

This document presents an organisation-wide UNFPA strategy to strengthen the evaluation function and it constitutes, for 2018-2021, the first of three iterations up to 2030.

The strategy reflects a view of the evaluation function as a system that is integrated into UNFPA at all levels and is complementary to other oversight mechanisms and functions in the organisation. As such, it is aligned with the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2018-2021 and supports its three transformational results to end preventable maternal death, gender-based violence and harmful practices, including child marriage, and the unmet needs for family planning.<sup>1</sup>

It provides a common understanding of the dimensions of evaluation in UNFPA, its priorities over the 2018-2021 period, and how these translate into intended outcomes in important areas of evaluation work.

UNFPA's Evaluation Strategy is framed by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,<sup>2</sup> which calls for inclusive and transparent national monitoring and evaluation systems to help countries progress in implementing this Agenda and in providing accountability to citizens. The strategy is also framed by the UN resolution "Building capacity for the evaluation of development activities at the country level"<sup>3</sup> and the 2016 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (QCPR), both of which call for a results culture in the UN system to support countries in their efforts to realise the 2030 Agenda.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, this document outlines the key elements from the report of the Secretary General for repositioning the UN development system regarding UN system-wide evaluation, in particular the use of evaluation for more transparency and accountability for common results and the convergence of working plans of evaluation functions across the UN milieu.

The strategy is flexible and will be adapted as it is implemented and as internal and external frameworks develop and change.

This document has nine sections. The following three sections address the strategy's purpose, its context, and the evaluation function in UNFPA. Sections five to eight constitute the strategy proper and address the strategy process, its priorities, a theory of change, and the areas of work with their intended outcomes.

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<sup>1</sup> Executive Board of the UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS DP/FPA/2017/9 "United Nations Population Fund UNFPA strategic plan, 2018-2021," July 2017.

<sup>2</sup> UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/70/1, "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," October 2015.

<sup>3</sup> UNGA Resolution A/RES/69/237. "Capacity building for the development activities at the country level," January 2015.

<sup>4</sup> Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (2016-2020), December 2016.

## 2. PURPOSE

In the five years since UNFPA's 2013 Evaluation Policy was approved, significant changes have taken place in the organisation and in its external environment, and more are anticipated over the period of the UNFPA Evaluation Strategy.

The overall aim of the Evaluation Strategy is to support UNFPA strengthen its performance and accountability, as well as its contribution to the achievements of the Sustainable Development Goals, by advocating and working to improve the evaluation function.

Its purpose is to provide clear direction to the UNFPA evaluation function, to set priorities, to focus energy and resources, to strengthen evaluation operations, to support M&E staff and other stakeholders work toward common goals, to establish agreements on intended outcomes, and to provide a basis for assessing and adjusting the evaluation function's direction in response to a fast changing environment.

It aims to better position the UNFPA evaluation function relative to other functions, both corporate and decentralised, to strengthen evaluation capacity development in UNFPA, to improve internal and external coherence of UNFPA evaluation-related activities, and to contribute to national evaluation capacity development.

## 3. CONTEXT

### 3.1 Evaluation Policy

UNFPA's revised Evaluation Policy, approved by the Executive Board in 2013, provides the normative framework for the evaluation function in UNFPA. It sets out the role of evaluation in the organisation as serving three main purposes: (i) demonstrating accountability to stakeholders on achieving development results; (ii) supporting evidence-based decision-making; and (iii) contributing key lessons learned to the existing knowledge base on how to accelerate the implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).

In pursuit of these aims, the Evaluation Policy provides guidelines on the roles and responsibilities of UNFPA's organisational units, on quality assurance and capacity development, and on dissemination of evaluation findings.

### 3.2 Conceptual frame of reference

The conceptual frame of reference of the evaluation function at UNFPA draws on UNEG<sup>5</sup> and OECD/DAC<sup>6</sup> guidance. In it, evaluation is considered an essential attribute of good governance to improve learning and development effectiveness, transparency, accountability, and to inform decision-making in support of the achievement of development results.

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<sup>5</sup> UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation, UNEG, June 2016.

<sup>6</sup> Working Consensus on Evaluation Capacity Development, DAC Network on Development Evaluation—Task Team on Capacity Development, [http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/dcdndep/ECD\\_%20concept%20note\\_final%20%282%29.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/dcdndep/ECD_%20concept%20note_final%20%282%29.pdf).

As UNEG states, the purposes of evaluation are to promote accountability and learning, and to understand why, and to what extent, intended and unintended results were achieved, both positive and negative.

Strengthening evaluation capacities is not a goal in itself, but a means to support more effective development activities;<sup>7</sup> e.g., to support evaluation capacity development both in UNFPA and in partner countries so that they may sustain effective public policies and achieve development results.

Evaluation capacity development involves three interdependent dimensions: individual and organisational capacity, and an enabling environment. These dimensions of the evaluation capacity interact to determine demand, supply and use of evaluation. They include the ability to manage evaluation processes and effectively demand and use evaluation results to influence policy and programme decisions.<sup>8</sup>

### **3.3 UN resolution on National Evaluation Capacity Development**

This resolution, adopted by the General Assembly in 2014 (A/RES/69/237), advocates for building capacity for evaluation of development activities at country level. It reaffirms that national capacity for evaluation may be further strengthened by the entities of the UN system upon request and in accordance with the principle of national ownership and the national policies and priorities defined by member states.

### **3.4 Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

The resolution adopted by the General Assembly in 2015 (A/RES/70/1) commits UN organisations to engage in systematic follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the attainment of its goals over the next 15 years in order to track progress and to ensure that no one is left behind.

The 2030 Agenda sets out principles to implement follow-up and review processes at all levels, that, among others, involve evaluation mechanisms such as country-led evaluations, and require improved capacity development support for developing countries, including strengthening national data systems and evaluation.

### **3.5 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR)**

This document, adopted by the General Assembly in 2016 (A/RES/71/243), affirms the need to strengthen support to national institutional capacities in planning, management and evaluation, to harmonize requirements for reporting, monitoring and evaluation, and to assign resources at all levels in accordance with national priorities.

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<sup>7</sup> DAC Network on Development Evaluation, “Towards a Strategic Approach for Evaluation Capacity Development—draft consultation paper”, DAC Network on Development Evaluation, November 2010.

<sup>8</sup> Ibidem

It stresses that the governance architecture of the United Nations development system must be more efficient, transparent, accountable, and responsive to member states. It must be able to enhance coordination, coherence, effectiveness and efficiency of the operational activities for development to enable system-wide strategic planning, implementation, reporting and evaluation, and better support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The document reaffirms the central role of active and full participation of national governments in the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of planning frameworks, to enhance national ownership and alignment of operational activities with national priorities.

It also underscores the importance of strengthening high-quality, independent and impartial system-wide evaluations to enhance coherence and interdependence within the overall evaluation architecture of the United Nations development system. It highlights the importance of using evaluation findings and recommendations to improve the functioning of the UN system.

### **3.6 UNFPA Strategic Plan 2018-2021**

Approved in 2017, the Strategic Plan 2018-2021 (DP/FPA/2017/9) describes the transformative results that will contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, and, in particular, to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, the advancement of gender equality, and the empowerment of women and adolescent girls, with a focus on eradicating poverty. It states that, in order to improve the quality of its programmes, UNFPA will (a) develop theories of change; (b) document and use good practices and lessons learned; and (c) plan and implement programme monitoring and evaluation.

The UNFPA Strategic Plan gives organisational directions for effectiveness and efficiency. It specifies that the organisation should use results-based management to manage the full cycle of programmes, from planning, monitoring and reporting, to evaluation, as well as use evaluative evidence to improve programme design and implementation. It further encourages the Evaluation Office to continue fostering evidence-based learning and programme development, and to conduct high-quality evaluations to inform management actions.

It calls on the organisation to address its challenges through innovative approaches and by reinforcing its risk management and control practices as well as strengthening its results-based management and monitoring and evaluation systems.

Moreover, the preface of the UNFPA Strategic Plan outlines the common approach between the organisation and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) to working better together.

### **3.7 Repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda: Ensuring a Better Future for All**

This report to the Secretary General (A/72/124–E/2018/3), published in June 2017, states that the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals requires a new and more integrated approach to capacity-building of national institutions, both private and public, including for planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The report also states that the UN development system still lacks a common methodology or standards for capacity development of these.

The report also proposes the redesign of UN operational activities, so that they focus on system-wide results in the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals, and use existing reporting requirements complemented by independent assessments and evaluations of system-wide results and performance. This, to strengthen system-wide governance and oversight of the United Nations development system's support to the 2030 Agenda.

### **3.8 Repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda: our promise for dignity, prosperity and peace on a healthy planet**

The report of the Secretary General (A/72), released in the last days of 2017 in its first version, follows-up on the previous report (A/72/124-E/2018/3) and responds to the mandate of General Assembly resolution 71/243 on the QCPR. It called for a system-wide strategic document for collective action to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and a comprehensive proposal on further improvements to the Resident Coordinator system.

The report proposes seven key areas of transformation. They include: (i) a system-wide strategic document, to ensure collective responsibility and accelerate the alignment of UN development system support with the 2030 Agenda; (ii) a new generation of United Nations Country Teams (UNCT) with enhanced skillsets, optimized physical presence, and consolidated and effective back-office support; (iii) an empowered and impartial Resident Coordinator (RC) system; (iv) a revamped regional approach, complemented by a strengthened Department of Economic and Social Affairs; (v) improved strategic guidance, transparency and accountability; (vi) a system-wide approach to partnerships; and (vii), underpinning all the other changes, a new funding compact between member states and the United Nations development system.

Evaluation is specifically stressed in the key area of transformation regarding strategic guidance, transparency, and accountability for system-wide results. This section of the report requires independent system-wide evaluation and annual reporting on the system's collective support to the Sustainable Development Goals and on progress in implementing the system-wide strategic document. It also proposes that an independent system-wide evaluation unit should be established, complementing the Joint Inspection Unit's functions and working actively with the UNEG's membership to seek the convergence of evaluation plans.

Additionally, evaluation is referenced in the following key areas of transformation:

Key area 2, on the new generation of UNCT, includes as a priority to revisit the content and way to develop the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) in partnership with national leadership, civil society, development partners, businesses, and other stakeholders, using evaluation.

Key area 3, on reinvigorating the RC system, specifies that the RC offices will need to be adequately staffed to ensure sufficient substantive capacities to lead UNCTs including experts in coordination and strategic planning, economics, tailored policy support, results monitoring and evaluation, and strategic partnerships.

## 4. SNAPSHOT OF UNFPA'S EVALUATION FUNCTION

### 4.1 Brief historical perspective

In June 2009, following approval by the Executive Board in decision 2009/18, UNFPA created its evaluation function as part of the Oversight Division and adopted its first evaluation policy (DP/FPA/2009/4).

In 2012, the Executive Director, UNFPA, requested the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) to undertake an independent review of the UNFPA evaluation policy. In its report on the review of the UNFPA evaluation policy (DP/FPA/2012/7), OIOS suggested a number of steps that could be taken to improve the existing policy. As result, the Executive Board of UNPFA approved in 2013 a revised Evaluation Policy for UNFPA<sup>9</sup>.

Significant progress has taken place within the organisation since UNFPA's 2013 Evaluation Policy was approved, among these:

#### EVALUATION EXPENDITURE

**Evaluation expenditure** has been increasing steadily, both in absolute terms and as percentage of programme budget. In 2016<sup>10</sup>, the estimated overall budget for the UNFPA evaluation function was USD 6,945,780,<sup>11</sup> comprising 0.91 percent of total UNFPA programme expenditure in 2016. This represents a significant increase in evaluation expenditure from 2014<sup>12</sup>, when the budget allocated to the evaluation function was USD 3,689,713, or 0.45 percent as a proportion of UNFPA expenditure. Despite these improvements, current evaluation expenditure remains below the budget norm established by the 2013 Evaluation Policy, which calls for up to 3 percent of the total programme budget to be dedicated to the evaluation function.

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<sup>9</sup> UNFPA's Evaluation Policy (2013), available at: <http://www.unfpa.org/admin-resource/executive-board-united-nations-development-programme-united-nations-population-fund-1>.

<sup>10</sup> UNFPA (2016), Annual Report on Evaluation, available at: [http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/admin-resource/Annual\\_Report\\_Evaluation\\_2016\\_EN.pdf](http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/admin-resource/Annual_Report_Evaluation_2016_EN.pdf).

<sup>11</sup> This budget includes funding of the Evaluation Office, budget for programme-level evaluations including country programme evaluations and expenditure on corporate evaluations.

<sup>12</sup> UNFPA (2014), Annual Report on Evaluation, available at: [http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/admin-resource/DP.FPA\\_2015.6\\_Evaluation\\_Report\\_EN.pdf](http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/admin-resource/DP.FPA_2015.6_Evaluation_Report_EN.pdf)

**EVALUATION  
HUMAN  
RESOURCE  
CAPACITY**

**Evaluation human resource capacity**, in terms of percentage of professional monitoring and evaluation staff relative to overall staff, has also increased, reaching 3 percent in 2016. Half of UNFPA country offices are staffed with a dedicated monitoring and evaluation officer, although this varies by region: the number of M&E officers is significantly lower in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA) and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). In 2016, 14 percent of monitoring and evaluation staff held international professional level positions, while the majority—65 percent—were national professional officers.<sup>13</sup> The central Evaluation Office currently has nine approved posts: one at general service level, seven at professional level, and one director.

**EVALUATION  
COVERAGE**

In terms of **evaluation coverage**, in the 2014-2016 period, 50 country programme evaluations have been completed, and the central Evaluation Office published four thematic evaluations at the corporate level. While the number of evaluations produced by the Evaluation Office has been increasing, country and regional offices have completed fewer programme-level evaluations during the period covered by the 2013 Evaluation Policy.

**EVALUATION  
QUALITY**

**Evaluation quality** has significantly improved in recent years. 90 percent of evaluations conducted in 2017 were considered good or excellent, as compared with 77 percent in 2014 and 50 percent in 2013.

Further changes are likely to happen over the period of UNFPA's Strategic Plan 2018-2021 and of this Evaluation Strategy. The Evaluation Strategy will take into account, and adapt as required, to the evolution and changes both internal and external to UNFPA.

## 4.2 Main areas of work

UNFPA evaluation function is organized around four main areas of work:

### 4.1.1 Corporate evaluations

Corporate evaluations are conducted or managed by the Evaluation Office and include institutional, programme, thematic and joint evaluations, as well as evaluability assessments and feasibility studies. External quality assurance is provided during the evaluation process and the final evaluation reports are subject to an external quality assessment. The Evaluation Office and regional M&E advisors play an important role in providing evaluation quality assurance and assessment through the Evaluation Quality Assurance and Assessment system (EQAA).

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<sup>13</sup> UNFPA (2017), Monitoring and Evaluation Capacity Development Survey Report

#### 4.2.2 Decentralised evaluations, with a focus on evaluation capacity development

Country programme evaluations are undertaken at both regional and country levels, are framed by the Evaluation Policy, and are considered a formal part of the evaluation function of UNFPA. The Evaluation Policy (2013) states that country programme evaluations should be conducted at least every other programme cycle. The Evaluation Office approves their terms of reference and pre-qualifies the selected evaluation teams. The regional M&E advisors provide quality assurance during the evaluation processes and final evaluation reports are subject to an external quality assessment managed by the Evaluation Office.

The Evaluation Office and regional M&E advisers have an important corporate role in coordinating and strengthening of evaluation capacity, knowledge, and skills across UNFPA. Evaluation capacity development is recognised as a key component of the evaluation function that should be mainstreamed throughout the organisation. The Evaluation Office and regional M&E advisers conduct and coordinate training initiatives, promote exchanges of knowledge, provide guidance and tools, promote the increased use of evaluation, and foster a greater understanding of evaluation in UNFPA.

#### 4.2.3 UN coherence in evaluation functions

UNFPA has been active in strengthening UN coherence in evaluation functions at global level, both through engagement with UN evaluation platforms such as UNEG and the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation Group, as well as through joint corporate evaluations with UNICEF and UN Women. At regional and country levels, UNFPA has been active in UNDAF evaluations, UNCT M&E groups, and joint evaluations.

#### 4.2.4 National evaluation capacity development

The evaluation function strives to strengthen the evaluation capacity among UNFPA's implementing partners and other partner country institutions such as ministries, municipalities or civil society organisations. It seeks to leverage multi-stakeholder partnerships—i.e., EvalPartners, Evalgender+ and EvalYouth—to support and strengthen national evaluation capacity of governments, civil society, and other national stakeholders.

## 5. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PROCESS

The overriding value of strategy lies in the process by which the organisation comes together in a regular, systematic and structured fashion to collectively make choices about goals, direction, means, and priorities. As such, a strategy is simply the result, at a given point in time, of the process of strategizing. There is little value in a strategy if it is not the result of a fulsome and inclusive strategic management process.

This document constitutes a first result of the strategic management process undertaken for UNFPA's evaluation function. It was developed through consultative processes with Evaluation Office staff; regional M&E advisors and country-level M&E specialists; senior management at headquarters, regional and country level; in addition to review of key documents, including the 2017 Monitoring and Evaluation Capacity Development Survey.

To maintain the alignment of this strategy with the strategic direction of UNFPA and with contextual evolutions within and outside the UN, UNFPA will review the strategy for evaluation at regular intervals and revise it as needed—i.e. the strategy is adaptive and a “living document.”

## 6. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Strategic priorities are those areas and issues that UNFPA considers most important to address for the evaluation function to achieve its overarching goals and intended results. These priorities provide a frame of reference for making choices about how UNFPA should best allocate its efforts and resources over the strategic cycle.

Although these priorities are intended as an overarching organisation-level frame of reference for evaluation in UNFPA, there is flexibility for adaptation and prioritisation based on local context, recognising two fundamental principles of adaptive and effective management:

- Subsidiarity—decisions are made as close as possible to where they will be implemented
- No one size fits all—decisions and interventions are tailored to specific and different contexts

Five overall strategic priorities are identified and developed in the following section:

- Demand-driven evaluation function processes and products
- Diversification and innovation of evaluation processes and products
- Quality of evaluation processes and products
- Use and utility of evaluations
- Evaluation capacity development

These overall priorities are in turn operationalised by key results areas of evaluation work: corporate, decentralised, UN coherence, and national evaluation capacity development.

### 6.1 Demand-driven evaluation processes and products

The Evaluation Office steers the evaluation function towards striking a strategic balance between being more responsive—or demand-driven—to requirements of key stakeholders within UNFPA and external to it (Executive Board, UNFPA management, and rights holders) and supply-side evaluation approaches with the aim to better integrate accountability and learning.

The evaluation function gives priority to engage with all UNFPA stakeholders so that evaluation use and utility are a shared responsibility and a core component of accountability, executive management, professional decision-making and learning, consistent with a demand-driven or “pull” approach to foster use and utility.

Evaluation starts with the question of how best it can support stakeholder requirements; provide strategic and policy information to senior management; offer programme-level evidence for decision-making and action; and make organisation-wide learning available to then tailor the responses to evaluation needs and requirements.

*Intended outcomes:*

- Strategic processes to plan for evaluation—i.e., quadrennial evaluation plan at corporate level, and costed evaluation plans at country and regional level—are highly consultative
- Communication and facilitation of demand for, and use of, evaluative knowledge, which is useful to specific stakeholder requirements, is enhanced

## **6.2 Diversification and innovation of evaluation processes and products**

It follows that, from a demand-driven perspective, and respecting the principle of “no one size fits all,” evaluation processes and products are diversified and innovative. Diversification and innovation of evaluation is central to its responsiveness and relevance to stakeholder needs and requirements. Humanitarian contexts are seen as an opportunity for diversification and innovation in UNFPA’s evaluation practices.

The value in evaluation resides as much, if not more in many cases, in the evaluation process as in the evaluation report. Therefore, UNFPA’s evaluation function taps into the full range of evaluation approaches and methodologies, including developing and testing innovative evaluative solutions to best meet stakeholder needs and requirements.

Involvement of stakeholders from the start of the evaluation cycle and throughout is central to UNFPA’s evaluation function. Similarly, the evaluation function in UNFPA distinguishes and differentiates between the nature and levels of knowledge, evidence and information that best meet stakeholder needs and requirements. It uses corresponding and appropriate evaluation approaches and methodologies.

Overall, the evaluation function in UNFPA moves from a primary focus of reporting on performance to one of generating and communicating value, using the most responsive and appropriate evaluative means at its disposal.

*Intended outcomes:*

- The evaluation function delivers increasingly responsive, flexible, diversified, and innovative evaluation processes and products
- Organisational support systems are strengthened to facilitate an increasing number of relevant, timely, responsive, flexible, diversified, and innovative high-quality evaluation processes and products

### 6.3 Quality of evaluation

The Evaluation Office continues to support the improvement of evaluation quality from a normative perspective—e.g., consistency and compliance with UNEG norms and standards for evaluation—while expanding its conception and definition of quality to embrace a functional perspective.

In other words, the Evaluation Office recognises that, although evaluation may meet norms and standards for quality, the integration of functional aspects such as user satisfaction, contribution to UNFPA organisational effectiveness and to improving the lives of women, adolescents and youth, constitute an integral part of the quality of evaluation.

*Intended outcomes:*

- Evaluations increasingly meet UNEG norms and standards
- Stakeholders are increasingly satisfied with evaluations produced and use them for decision-making

### 6.4 Enhanced use and utility of UNFPA’s evaluation to enhance management attention

The evaluation function makes explicit, specific, and meaningful the intended use of, and utility for, evaluation processes and products by the Board, senior management, professionals of UNFPA, and the rights-holders the organisation supports, of evaluation function processes and products. It is also made explicit relative to specific stakeholders outside UNFPA such as the UN development system, countries, communities and citizens served by UNFPA.

All of the above strengthen management attention to the evaluation function, with an increase in the demand and use for evaluations, as well as a gradual increase in resources invested in the evaluation function. The aim is to achieve the target of 3 percent of programme resources spent in evaluation, as stated by the Evaluation Policy.

The distinct value proposition of the evaluation function takes into account the mandates, contributions, and added-value of other related oversight functions in UNFPA such as monitoring, control and audit, and ensures that it is both distinct from, and synergistic with, these dimensions.

In particular, the Evaluation Office makes clear and supports organisation-wide activities to develop and strengthen evaluation capacity at all levels of UNFPA, including use by stakeholders.

*Intended outcomes:*

- Clear organisational positioning and corporate identity are streamlined to facilitate the use of evaluation results, products and processes.
- UNFPA invests appropriate resources in the evaluation function
- Evaluation is used to inform and make decisions at country, regional and corporate level, and to report on results achieved

## 6.5 Evaluation capacity development

Evaluation capacity development is mainstreamed throughout the current strategy with the aim of strengthening the relevance, quality and use of evaluations, at three dimensions: individual, organisational, and the enabling environment.

Evaluation capacity development activities are conceptualized to strengthen both individual and institutional capacities, while also enhancing a culture of, and an enabling environment for, evaluation. While there is a minimum of competencies required for the management of evaluation-related activities, a priority for the UNFPA evaluation function is to support the organisation move from single, to double and triple loop learning; that is, from addressing problems, to improving systems, to transforming the organisation through evaluative thinking, and developing a culture of evaluation.

UNFPA works with UN organisations and within multi-stakeholder partnerships to enhance national capacities to evaluate public policies and systems in such a way that no one is left behind.

*Intended outcomes:*

- M&E staff at global, regional and country level has appropriate knowledge of diversified and innovative evaluation processes and products
- National evaluation capacity is strengthened through multi-stakeholder partnerships at global, regional and national level, including with other UN organisations

## 7. THEORY OF CHANGE TO STRENGTHEN UNFPA EVALUATION FUNCTION

The **theory of change** to make UNFPA's evaluation function more robust is based on a system-approach that seeks to (i) enhance institutional and individual capabilities and to (ii) strengthen an enabling environment for evaluations to perform better and generate their expected results, as per the stipulations of the Evaluation Policy. The theory of change aims to strengthen the capability of managers to demand and use evaluation as well as the capability of evaluation specialists to supply high-quality evaluative evidence. It takes into account UNFPA's role in promoting and advocating for evaluation with a "no one left behind" (NOLB) lens to achieve more effective development for women and girls.

As described by the diagram below, the theory of change aims at developing and strengthening institutional systems (output level) that will enable individual capacities to change their knowledge, attitude and practices towards evaluation (outcome level). To enhance the capacities of UNFPA's managers to demand for and use evaluation (the so-called "demand side"), UNFPA strengthens the following systems and mechanisms:

- Strengthened use and utility of UNFPA's evaluation function to enhance management attention
- Demand-driven evaluation processes and products
- Budgeting mechanisms that will enable the organisation to meet the target of investing 3 percent of available programme funds to evaluation

To enhance the capacities of UNFPA's M&E specialists and focal points, as well as programme staff, to manage good quality evaluations (the so-called "supply side"), UNFPA strengthens the following systems and mechanisms:

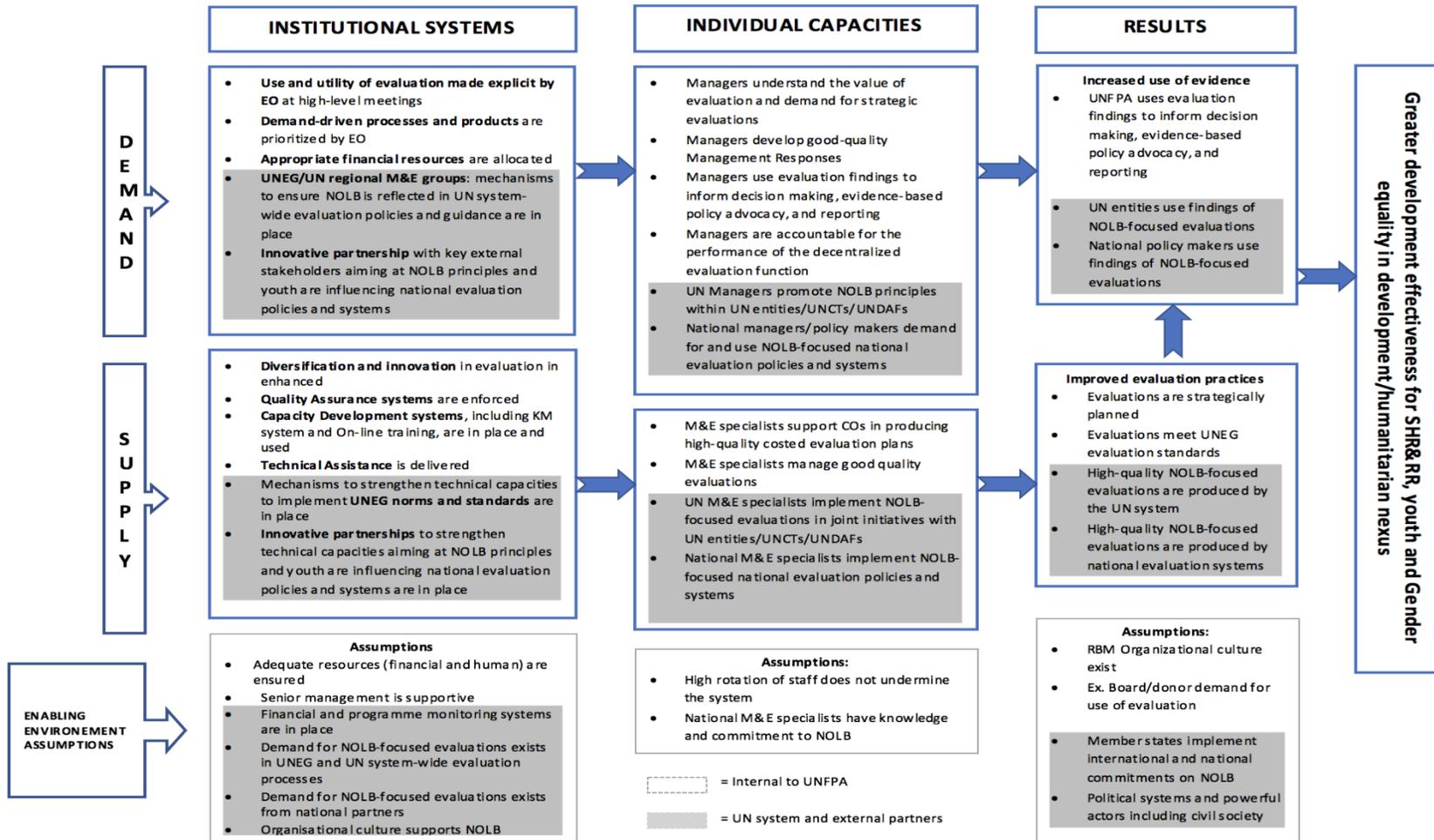
- Diversification and innovation of evaluation processes and products
- Quality assurance systems to ensure strategic planning of evaluations, high-quality evaluation reports, and use of evaluation findings and recommendations
- Internal capacity development systems, including those covering knowledge management in support of the evaluation function and e-learning, to strengthen the capacities of M&E specialists and UNFPA staff
- Technical assistance mechanisms, mainly led by regional offices, to ensure timely and high-quality support is provided to country offices

The above institutional systems and mechanisms are expected to change the knowledge, attitude, and practices towards evaluation of UNFPA managers (demand side) as well as UNFPA M&E specialists (supply side). UNFPA managers better understand the value of and demand for strategic evaluations; develop good-quality management responses; use evaluation findings to inform decision-making, evidence-based policy advocacy and reporting; and are accountable for the performance of the evaluation function in their own offices/regions. M&E specialists better support country offices in producing high-quality costed evaluation plans and managing high-quality evaluations.

The same theory of change applies for strengthening the capabilities of UN agencies as well as national governments and civil society organisations. To strengthen the demand for no one left behind (NOLB) focused evaluations within the UN system, UNFPA works with UNEG at global level, UN evaluation regional groups and UNCT at country level to put in place mechanisms to ensure NOLB principles are reflected in UN system-wide evaluation policies, guidance and practices. To strengthen the demand for NOLB-focused evaluations within national governments and civil society organisations, UNFPA engages with innovative multi-stakeholders partnerships aiming at strengthening NOLB-focused national evaluation policies and systems, including by engaging youth.

The above institutional systems and mechanisms are expected to change the knowledge, attitude and practices towards NOLB-focused evaluation of UN managers, country policy makers, and leaders of civil society organisations (demand side) as well as M&E specialists working in UN entities, governments and civil society (supply side).

## Theory of Change to strengthen UNFPA Evaluation Function



As a result, the supply of and use of high-quality NOLB-focused evaluations will improve within UNFPA, UN entities and national policy-making processes, conducing to greater development effectiveness for sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, youth, gender equality, and women’s empowerment.

The theory of change makes a number of assumptions about the required conditions to achieve the proposed results, which include support to and demand for NOLB-focused evaluations by UNFPA; UN system entities and national partners; and, capacities and knowledge to undertake NOLB-focused evaluations of UNFPA staff, UN entities and national partners. Given the complexity of social change and transformation of gender relations as well as varied national contexts, this theory of change should not be viewed as a linear model but as a complex system where change happens through feedback loops, reversals, and sometimes even backlashes.

## **8. EVALUATION FUNCTION’S KEY RESULTS AREAS<sup>14</sup>**

Applying the abovementioned theory of change to the UNFPA evaluation function, and being guided by the strategic priorities presented in chapter 6, the following four key results areas have been identified. The systemic approach described in the theory of change and identified three dimensions of interventions—institutional systems, individual behavior and enabling environment—contribute to the overall UNFPA Evaluation Strategy and to the result areas as described below.

The synergic approach of these four key results areas, complemented with the system-approach described in the abovementioned theory of change, supports UNFPA in meeting the requirements of the Evaluation Policy and the relevant 2018-2021 Strategic Plan’s outputs on organisational effectiveness and efficiency, particularly those directly linked to evaluation.

### **Area 1: Effective corporate evaluation systems implemented**

The Evaluation Policy sets the elements of a clear governance system of the evaluation function. The Executive Director is the main champion of evaluation within the organisation. S/he provides the political will and enabling environment for enhancing the evaluation culture. S/he is responsible for safeguarding the independence of the Evaluation Office by ensuring that this business unit is adequately staffed and resourced to fulfil its role. The Director of Evaluation reports directly to the Executive Board—and administratively to the Executive Director—to safeguard the independence of the Evaluation Office from management, thus enabling it to conduct its work with impartiality.

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<sup>14</sup> For additional details, please refer to the M&E framework presented in Annex 1.

The Evaluation Office drafts and implements the 2018-2021 Quadrennial Budgeted Evaluation Plan, whose purpose is to provide a framework within which useful evaluation evidence is systematically generated on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and, as far as possible, impact and sustainability, of work under the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2018-2021. A rolling approach is proposed, which allows scoping of proposed evaluations for a given year and preparation of an appropriate annual workplan within the broader framework of the overall Quadrennial Evaluation Plan. The Evaluation Office is responsible to implement the plan and reports on its implementation to the Executive Board annually.

To enhance use and utility of the evaluation function and increase senior management attention, the Evaluation Office develops and implements this strategy to facilitate the use of evaluation through communications, which delivers the following:

*Clear corporate identity of the Evaluation Office are streamlined to facilitate the use of evaluation results, products and processes.*

The corporate identity—i.e., the manner in which the evaluation function presents itself to the various stakeholders it aims to serve—is communicated clearly and explicitly, and in a manner that distinguishes it from other UNFPA functions, particularly those pertaining to oversight. UNFPA’s unique value proposition to its key stakeholders facilitates corporate teamwork and fosters shared responsibility for generating value from the evaluation function. The Evaluation Office informs stakeholders about the evaluation products and processes that are available and that can be developed in UNFPA to meet their needs and requirements in terms of accountability; executive and professional management decision-making; and learning and partnerships with external stakeholders, the UN system and national counterparts.

*Clear organisational positioning*

The organisational positioning—that is, the place that the evaluation function occupies relative to other functions in the organisation—is made clear. First and foremost, the evaluation function understands the needs and requirements of its stakeholders and responds to them appropriately, taking into account that other UNFPA functions produce data, information, knowledge, and recommendations to fully realise UNFPA’s mandate and its Strategic Plan. The added-value and complementarity of corporate evaluations are clarified vis-à-vis other knowledge and oversight services existing in UNFPA and the broader UN system.

*Demand-driven evaluation processes and products*

What evaluation supports at various levels is clarified and made explicit in partnership with concerned stakeholders.

The evaluation function increases the relevance, timeliness and use of evaluation processes and products, by systematically assessing the needs and requirements of stakeholders in terms of accountability, management, learning and evaluation capacity building, and adapting accordingly.

The UNFPA management function has its own approaches, methodologies and techniques to inform its decisions, to produce knowledge, and to provide accountability and learning, which the Evaluation Office maps out and understands in order to tailor its evaluative processes and products accordingly and in a complementary fashion.

*Responsive, flexible, diversified and innovative evaluation processes and products—the supply of evaluative knowledge, evidence and information*

Other types of evaluation processes and products that are relevant to the management and technical functions of UNFPA are developed. The idea is to strike the right balance between corporate evaluations that are timely, economical, efficient and tailored to users' needs and requirements, with sound and appropriate approaches and methodologies, and the highest possible quality to support evaluation use.

Approaches and methodologies allowing more focused, targeted, rapid and real-time evaluations are integrated into the range of evaluation processes and products offered by the Evaluation Office. The development of the full range of evaluation approaches and methodologies, as well as the development of innovations in evaluation in UNFPA, constitute an integral part of evaluation capacity development in the organisation, the UN system, and the broader external environment.

*Evaluation quality is conceptualised normatively and functionally*

Evaluation quality is determined normatively on the basis of UNEG norms and standards. Comparisons to what other similar organisations or functions are doing can also provide a normative reference for quality. Although compliance and consistency with norms and standards, or equivalency with established practices, can be useful for due diligence checks and for learning from other experiences, quality will also be determined functionally on the basis of the extent to which evaluation contributes effectively to UNFPA's mandate, policies and programmes. Evaluation quality should also be referenced to gender-responsive, equity, rights-based, and sustainability principles.

*The value of evaluation is exploited fully throughout the evaluation process*

The value of the evaluation process is not captured fully and generated solely through the evaluation report. The process of evaluation itself affects the reality with which it interacts and can produce value by the interconnections it creates, the knowledge gained by stakeholders, and the empowerment certain evaluation approaches and methodologies strive to create.

Depending on the type of evaluation processes and products required, evaluation exercises—including determining the need for evaluation, participating in the conduction of evaluations and using the evaluations to improve programming and decision making—create the space and opportunity to engage stakeholders and rights holders.

*Appropriate knowledge of Evaluation Office staff on diversified and innovative evaluation processes and products*

The priorities identified at corporate level correspond to an appropriate level of capabilities of the Evaluation Office staff—e.g., knowledge, skills and abilities on theory and practice of evaluation—and other aspects such as organisational analysis, communication, political economy, partnerships, etc. This continuous capacity development will be carried out through self-reflective practice, training, and participation in evaluation networks, etc.

*Previous achievements with regard to evaluation planning, implementation and quality are consolidated*

Continued efforts to consolidate and sustain progress in the area of enhanced evaluation planning, further strengthening of the quality assurance and assessment system, and enhancing the timeliness of evaluations, are maintained—e.g., the system of developing costed quadrennial evaluation plans approved by the Executive Board continues.

**Area 2: Effective decentralised evaluation systems implemented, with a focus on evaluation capacity development**

More than 75 per cent of UNFPA supported evaluations are managed by field offices, reflecting the decentralised nature of the organisation. This ensures that the evaluation function generates contextually relevant evidence, which is most likely to be used by decision makers to inform national policies for sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, gender equality and women’s empowerment, and youth. However, it also poses a managerial challenge to ensure evaluations meet internationally agreed evaluation standards, such as the ones endorsed by UNEG.

To face this challenge, UNFPA implements a systemic approach to enhance the evaluation function. The Evaluation Office, Programme Division and regional offices work jointly to strengthen the evaluation function in a number of areas: enhancing strategic planning of evaluations; promoting and supporting the quality of evaluations; improving the use of evaluations and management responses; and strengthening internal evaluation capacity.

The Evaluation Office continues to implement the Evaluation Quality Assurance and Assessment (EQAA) system with the aim of improving the quality and use of decentralised evaluations. The system uses UNEG evaluation report standards as a basis for review and assessment while observing specific standards relevant to UNFPA. The system provides an independent assessment of the quality and usefulness of evaluation reports, synthesizes evaluation findings, and provides individual feedback to commissioning offices. In doing so, the system: (i) provides senior managers with a clear, concise and independent assessment of the quality and usefulness of individual evaluation reports; (ii) strengthens internal evaluation capacity by providing offices commissioning evaluations with individualized feedback on how to improve future evaluations; (iii) contributes to corporate knowledge management and organisational learning by identifying evaluation reports of good quality to be used in meta-analyses, facilitating internal and external sharing of good evaluations reports; and (iv) facilitates reporting to the Executive Board on the quality of evaluation reports.

To support management accountability and transparency in evaluation, the Evaluation Office continues to maintain its publicly accessible online system of evaluations.

The Evaluation Office and regional M&E advisors provide support and technical assistance to field offices to strengthen evaluation culture and assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities as per the Evaluation Policy. This support, among others, covers areas such as preparation of costed evaluation plans, review of draft evaluation terms of reference and evaluation reports, dissemination, and use.

The Evaluation Office continues contributing to strengthening internal evaluation capacities through the development and implementation of a 2018-2021 inter-divisional action plan to strengthen evaluation capacity development organized around the following three areas:

*The enabling environment—supporting management’s attention to, demand for and use of evaluation*

At decentralised levels, the evaluation function increases the relevance, timeliness and use of evaluation processes and products by systematically assessing the needs and requirements of stakeholders in terms of accountability, management, and learning and capacity building.

The evaluation function adapts to management and other relevant stakeholders’ needs, and programming of evaluation is systematically updated and evaluations conducted accordingly. As required, innovative types of evaluation processes and products that are relevant to UNFPA staff are developed in collaboration with the Evaluation Office. The aim is to strike a balance between evaluations that are timely, economical, efficient and tailored to users’ needs and requirements, with sound and appropriate approaches and methodologies, and the highest possible quality to support evaluation use.

The Evaluation Offices engages in interdepartmental efforts to strengthen programme and operations staff’s knowledge and value of evaluation as a tool in results-based programming, and supports UNFPA management and M&E staff at country and regional levels.

M&E officers make the most out of the central value of evaluation, which lies in creating the space and opportunity to engage stakeholders.

*The organisational level—strengthening the organisational support systems for relevant, timely, responsive, flexible, diversified and innovative high-quality evaluations*

Sufficient and accessible support mechanisms—such as systems, guidance and tools—and an evaluation community of practice are in place to support commissioning and managing of high quality evaluations and to create opportunities for collective knowledge-sharing.

*The individual level—strengthening the capacity of M&E staff on diversified and innovative evaluation processes and products*

UNFPA M&E staff have sufficient skills and capabilities to plan, commission and manage high quality evaluations. The M&E staff is also equipped to advise on M&E matters and to support programme staff to plan, commission and manage high quality evaluations.

Adequate training and other types of support are provided and M&E staff are also proactively seeking to actualise their knowledge by participating in evaluation networks, conferences etc.

UNFPA M&E staff are cognisant of an appropriate suite of diverse approaches and methodologies. Staff strive, wherever relevant, to work in partnership with other UN organisations, through knowledge sharing and lessons learned exchanges among UN entities, and to find synergies that support effectively national evaluation capacity development.

### **Area 3: UN coherence of evaluation functions promoted**

In response to the call from member states in the QCPR and the Secretary-General in his paper on UN reform, UNFPA strengthens even further its commitment to work to enhance UN coherence of evaluation functions by:

#### *Effective participation in UN system-wide and joint evaluations*

In regards to cross-cutting issues and joint programmes, UNFPA participates, to the extent possible, in joint evaluations. The Evaluation Office also actively participates in UN system-wide evaluation initiatives with the aim to strengthen UN coherence in evaluation. Regional and country offices support joint and UNDAF evaluations.

#### *Appropriate capacity to work in partnerships with other UN organisations*

The Evaluation Office contributes to existing UN coherence fora such as UNEG and the UN Inter-Agency Working Group on Humanitarian Evaluation, etc. by sharing knowledge and practices, and strengthening cooperation and complementarity of planning and implementation of evaluation activities through practical arrangements.

The decentralised evaluation function participates and strives to further develop cooperation within currently existing organisational platforms and planning tools such as the UNCT, UNDAF, Delivering as One, and regional UN evaluation groups.

The UNFPA evaluation function supports flexible and responsive cooperation mechanisms at country level in partnership with relevant stakeholders. Mechanisms of cooperation include simple approaches such as establishing dialogue and engaging with other organisations and stakeholders, as well as more involved mechanisms of inter-agency collaboration.

#### **Area 4: National evaluation capacities for evaluation systems strengthened**

The UNFPA evaluation function supports multi-stakeholder partnerships whose aim is to strengthen whole-of-government national policies and systems to evaluate localized Sustainable Development Goals with a particular focus on “no one left behind” and policies relevant to UNFPA mandate.

The UNFPA evaluation function at country and regional levels also seeks to strengthen evaluation capacities of line ministries responsible for sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, gender equality, youth and data.

### **9. BUDGETING, IMPLEMENTATION, M&E AND REPORTING**

To implement the Evaluation Strategy, the Evaluation Office develops costed annual work plans at the beginning of each year, specifying the financial and human resources needed to achieve annual expected results that contribute to the achievements of the four-year results stated in this strategy.

To monitor the implementation of the strategic plan against the M&E framework (annex 1), the Evaluation Office gathers information from field offices and headquarters sections on an annual basis. In addition, the Evaluation Office conducts meta-evaluations of the evaluations undertaken in the organisation to assess their quality on an annual basis. Based on that information, the Evaluation Office prepares an annual report on the evaluation function, which is presented to UNFPA’s senior management and the Executive Board.

## Annex 1: Evaluation Strategy's M&E framework

OUTCOMES	OUTPUTS	INDICATORS/TARGETS
<b>Area 1: Effective Corporate Evaluation Systems are implemented</b>		
1.1. Management attention to the global evaluation function is heightened	UNFPA Evaluation Policy implemented, reviewed and updated (if needed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Evaluation Office budget fully covered annually</li> <li>▪ External strategic review of the Evaluation Policy conducted by end 2018</li> <li>▪ Evaluation Policy updated—if requested by the Board—by 2019</li> </ul>
1.2. Corporate evaluations of strategic relevance are used in support of accountability, decision-making and programme learning	2018-2021 costed Quadrennial Evaluation Plan drafted, approved and implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 100% of corporate evaluations completed as planned</li> <li>▪ 100% of corporate evaluation reports assessed at least “good”</li> <li>▪ 100% of corporate evaluations have management response</li> </ul>
1.3. Offer of corporate evaluations is diversified through innovation	Innovative approaches and methods in conducting Corporate evaluations implemented	Four (4) corporate evaluations planned in the Quadrennial Evaluation Plan 2018-2021 delivered with an innovative approach
1.4. Use and utility of evaluation function enhanced	2018-2021 strategy to enhance use of evaluation is drafted and implemented	100% of corporate evaluations implement strategy to enhance use of evaluation
<b>Area 2: Effective decentralised evaluation systems implemented</b>		
2.1. Management attention to decentralised evaluation function is heightened	Evaluation function is compliant with evaluation policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gradual increase of programme budget invested in evaluation function towards meeting the 3% target over time</li> <li>▪ 85% of decentralised programme-level evaluations completed as planned</li> <li>▪ 95% of decentralised programme-level evaluation reports assessed at least “good”</li> <li>▪ 100% of decentralised evaluations have management response</li> </ul>
2.2. Internal evaluation capacities enhanced to manage and use evaluations	Evaluation guidance enhanced and training delivered	80% of M&E specialists/focal points trained
2.3. Evaluation knowledge management strengthened	2.3.1. Knowledge management system in support of evaluation is created 2.3.2. Evaluation evidence inform organisational KM system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 80% of M&amp;E specialists are members of the internal M&amp;E community of practice</li> <li>▪ Number of unique visitors to public website increased by 50%</li> </ul>
<b>Area 3: UN coherence in evaluation promoted</b>		
3.1. Effective participation in UN system-wide and joint evaluations	3.1.1. UNFPA actively participate in UNEG and IAHE 3.1.2. UNFPA actively engages in joint and system-wide evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ At least three (3) UNEG/IAHE working groups supported</li> <li>▪ Three (3) joint and two (2) system-wide evaluations successfully managed</li> </ul>
<b>Area 4: National evaluation capacities for M&amp;E systems strengthened</b>		
3.1. Effective engagement in multi-stakeholders partnership	Strategic partnership with EvalYouth explored and implemented	At least three (3) initiatives/year supported



**United Nations Population Fund  
Evaluation Office**

605 Third Avenue  
New York, NY 10158  
United States

E-mail: [evaluation.office@unfpa.org](mailto:evaluation.office@unfpa.org)  
Website: <https://www.unfpa.org/evaluation>