Developmental evaluation of results-based management at UNFPA

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Developmental evaluation:

- Why?
- What is it?
Why conduct a developmental evaluation?

External independent strategic review of the UNFPA evaluation function (2017-2018) recommended Evaluation Office should guide the evaluation function towards a better balance between accountability, decision support and learning purposes, adapting continuously its evaluation approaches and processes to best inform and support the attainment of the UNFPA mission in rapidly changing and challenging contexts, including by better integrating relevant developments in the theory and practice of valuation.

- Evaluation Strategy (2018-2021) includes three priorities:
  (a) Demand-driven evaluation function
  (b) Diversification and innovation of evaluation processes and products
  (c) Enhance utility and use of evaluation
Why conduct a developmental evaluation?

Developmental Evaluation focuses on assisting the development of new initiatives/enhancement in complex contexts.

Key features of developmental evaluation:

- Identifies innovative options in complex and dynamic conditions
- A utilization-focused approach: high level of engagement, ownership and decision-making
- Incorporates systems thinking and analysis
- Continuous process of data collection and real-time feedback
Provide useful evaluative input and learning for the development of a new stage of results-based management at UNFPA

Find root causes to persistent bottlenecks/challenges

Bring evidence for solutions
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Developmental evaluation’s approach
Methodological approach

Evaluation purpose

Scoping phase

Evaluative inquiry framework

Creative tensions

Understanding

Data collected

Leverage points

Solutions

Organizational development

Transition-focused developmental evaluation
Methodological approach

- Broader Development Aid sector
- UN Agencies
- UNFPA at all levels
Methodological approach
Methodological approach

Total 290 people

- 55% UNFPA
  - 28% HQ
  - 61% Country Offices
  - 11% Regional Offices

- 13% Government partners
- 13% Implementing partners
- 4% Other international organizations
- 3% Private sector

757 Full responses

8 Countries

2 UNFPA RBM workshops + OECD Results Community Workshop
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UNFPA Evaluation Office
2019

RBM in UNFPA and beyond
**RBM** is a management strategy by which all actors, contributing directly or indirectly to achieving a set of development results, ensure that their processes, products and services contribute to the achievement of desired results (outputs, outcomes and goals).

WHERE IS UNFPA NOW?
IS UNFPA READY FOR THE NEXT STAGE OF RBM?

WHAT ARE THE RBM TRENDS IN THE AID DEVELOPMENT SECTOR?
WHAT’S NEXT?
TRENDS IN THE AID DEVELOPMENT SECTOR

TRADITIONAL RBM APPROACHES ARE NOT WORKING AS DESIRED

NEW APPROACHES ARE APPEARING (ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT)

RBM IN THE UN DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IS ALSO EVOLVING
THEREFORE, WHAT IS LIKELY TO COME?

✓ Higher focus on accountability through **organizational learning**, which means: spaces and skills to pause-and-reflect, critical inquiries, more flexibility, quicker adaptations to complex and fast-changing environments.

✓ Higher focus on **collective accountability**, which means: more collaboration within UNFPA across business units, with other UN agencies, higher focus on partnerships away from the implementing partner/delivery mode.

✓ Higher focus on measuring and **explaining contribution to higher collective goals**, which means: new measurement methodologies, new working methods and new communication approaches.
While **formal systems are in place and RBM performs well** in terms of reporting on results (JIU, MOPAN Assessment), RBM as currently implemented **needs to focus more on using results information for adaptation and driving organizational learning** (what works, what does not work, and why)
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How to move towards a new stage of RBM?
Overall direction

RBM as adaptive management & organizational learning

- Low speed of UN reform (Individual accountability)
  - Traditional approaches to RBM and focus on individual accountability

- High speed of UN reform (Collective accountability)
  - Traditional RBM approaches and focus on collective accountability

Adaptive management with focus on individual accountability (entity-level)

Adaptive management and a focus on collective accountability

Next RBM stage

Starting point

Traditional RBM approaches
A creative tension designates a gap between a desired goal or idea (the way it should be) and a current state of reality (the way it is).

Leverage points are areas where small changes can produce large improvements in a system.
Creative tensions

- Focus on performance
- Confusion with basic terminology
- Demand-side: Parliaments – Board - Headquarters
- Leadership & skills (use culture)
- Measurement of results (contribution, attribution)
- Access to data on results
- Most time invested on planning & reporting
- Limited room to results-based decision-making

New stage of RBM
Leverage Flow: identifying the change pathway

**Driver 1**: Development of a shared conceptual framework

**Driver 2**: RBM as adaptive management and organizational learning

**Leverage point 1**: Development of a shared conceptual framework

**Leverage point 2**: RBM system requirements, procedures and tools (agile, lean; pause-and-reflect; joint monitoring)

**Leverage point 3**: Evaluation (inquiry mindset, approaches, methodologies)

**Leverage point 4**: Human resources (competencies, recruitment, talent)

**Leverage point 5**: Behavioural transformation (leadership, technical and collaborative levels)

**Leverage point 6**: Dialogue (including communication) with the Executive Board

**Creative tension**: Collective versus individual accountability

**Creative tension**: RBM conceptual framework

**New stage of RBM**

**Creative tension**: Organizational culture and use of results

**Creative tension**: RBM capacity to manage for results

**Creative tension**: RBM information systems

**United Nations collective accountability**
Thank you