



**FORMATIVE EVALUATION OF UNFPA SUPPORT TO THE
INTEGRATION OF THE PRINCIPLES OF ‘LEAVE NO ONE
BEHIND’ AND ‘REACHING THE FURTHEST BEHIND’**

Draft Terms of Reference

UNFPA Evaluation Office

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1. Introduction

The Evaluation Office will conduct an independent formative evaluation of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) support to the integration of the principles of ‘Leave No One Behind’ and ‘Reaching the Furthest Behind’. The formative nature of the evaluation will allow for real-time feedback and learning where the preliminary findings as well as the evaluation process can be used to inform decision-making as well as improve the implementation of current UNFPA interventions.

This evaluation will be co-managed by the Evaluation Office and a steering committee of key stakeholders representing a diversity of UNFPA identified ‘Furthest Behind’ and characteristics often associated with discrimination and exclusion: Age; Culture/ Ethnicity/ Race/ Language/ Religion; Disability; HIV/AIDS status; Migration/ asylum/ displacement; Sexual orientation/ gender identity; Income/ wealth¹. This decision follows a positive experience of engaging young people in the formative evaluation of UNFPA support to adolescents and youth. In this exercise, young people were engaged in various roles throughout the evaluation, including as co-managers, and decision-makers, as members of a Youth Steering Committee. Building on the lessons learned from this experience of youth engagement in evaluation, the creation of a Steering Committee in this evaluation, comprised of stakeholders that represent those often left behind or furthest behind, will aim to rebalance the power dynamics often seen in development interventions, and ensure the genuine participation of and benefit to rights-holders of UNFPA programmes, in all their diversity.

An independent external, multidisciplinary team of evaluation and thematic experts, including young people, will conduct the evaluation. Ideally, the evaluation team will include evaluators who represent those often left behind (e.g. indigenous evaluators, refugees and migrant evaluators or evaluators with disabilities), or at the very least, evaluators with proven experience in evaluating interventions that support communities that are left behind.

These Terms of Reference (ToR) were prepared by the evaluation managers based on a document review and initial consultations with stakeholders. They will be finalized based on further comments and discussion with the Steering Committee (SC) and the Evaluation Reference Group (ERG). The evaluation team shall conduct the evaluation in conformity with the final terms of reference and under overall guidance from the UNFPA Independent Evaluation Office, Steering Committee, and the Evaluation Reference Group.

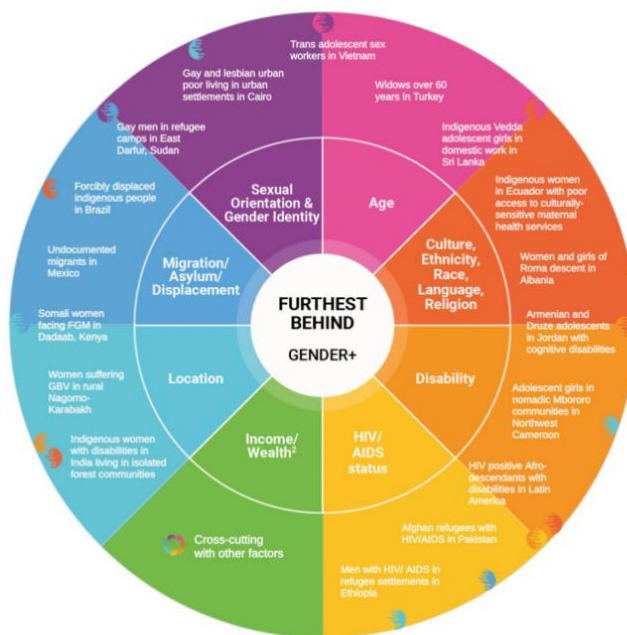
¹ Operational Plan for Leaving No One Behind and Reaching the Furthest Behind: UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-2025 (2021)

2. Definitions

The following are key definitions that will be used for this evaluation taken from the UNFPA Operational Plan for Leaving No One Behind and Reaching the Furthest Behind: UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-2025 (2021) and UNFPA Gender and Equality Strategy, 2018-2021 (2019), respectively.

- **‘Leave No One Behind’ (LNOB)** includes all groups excluded from progress, including those impacted due to their gender alone.
- **LNOB groups** are those ‘who get left behind when they lack choices and opportunities to participate in and benefit from development progress.’
- **Gender+** (plus) refers to the overlapping, intersecting factors in addition to gender that harm, exclude and disadvantage groups leaving them furthest behind.
- **Reaching the Furthest Behind (RFB)** is focused on situations where gender and other exclusionary factor(s) work together to create the disadvantage.
- **RFB factors** are characteristics that drive discrimination and inequality, and may intersect with various other drivers of exclusion in the same person or group. As outlined in UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-2025, the following are core FB factors and characteristics often associated with discrimination and exclusion: Age; Culture/ Ethnicity/ Race/ Language/ Religion; Disability; HIV/AIDS status; Migration/ asylum/ displacement; Sexual orientation/ gender identity; Income/ wealth (Figure1).

Figure 1: The eight global core furthest-behind factors and examples of furthest-behind groups



- **Gender equality** means that the different behaviours, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally and that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Equality between women and men is seen as both a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centered development.

- **Gender mainstreaming** is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, and a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally.
- **Women’s empowerment** implies women taking control of their lives and is both a process and an outcome. UNFPA defines women’s empowerment through five components: women’s sense of dignity; their right to have and determine choices; their right to have access to opportunities and resources; their right to have the power to control their own lives, both within and outside the home; and their ability to influence the direction of social change to create a more just social and economic order.

3. Rationale

This evaluation is the first UNFPA evaluation with a specific focus on UNFPA support to the integration of the principles of ‘Leave No One Behind’ and ‘Reaching the Furthest Behind’. In 2019, a mid-term review of the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2018-2021 was conducted and it was found that outputs focusing on furthest-behind populations were limited in terms of progress. These findings led UNFPA to conduct an assessment in 2020 to better understand how the principle of LNOB is being implemented and how it can be improved. The assessment noted there was a limited evidence base on LNOB implementation, and there were no systematized efforts for documenting, evaluating and sharing good practices on how to reach left-behind groups. Informed by this assessment, an Operational Plan for Leaving No One Behind and Reaching the Furthest Behind for the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-2025 was developed. The Operational Plan included key action points for the Organization, including a specific action point to conduct an evaluation on the implementation of LNOB at UNFPA.

This evaluation is of strategic importance to UNFPA given that the principles of leaving no one behind and reaching the furthest behind are central to the achievement of the transformative goals of UNFPA. In the current UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-2025, there is a clear commitment to “leave no one behind” and an emphasis on “reaching the furthest behind first” to advance progress. The Strategic Plan further identifies “leaving no one behind” and “reaching the furthest behind first” as one of its six accelerators to fast track progress towards the three transformative goals.

In this view, this evaluation comes at a key moment to surface learning as well as provide real-time course correction to the current implementation of the UNFPA 2022-2025 Strategic Plan. The learnings from the evaluation will also serve to inform the forthcoming UNFPA Strategic Plan 2026-2028.

4. Context

Background

In 2015, the principle of “leave no one behind” (LNOB) was adopted by all United Nations Member States as the “central transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)”.² In the framework of Agenda 2030, the principle of

² Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 2015. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N15/291/89/PDF/N1529189.pdf?OpenElement>

LNOB is enshrined as a political commitment as well as a call to action to ensure that the benefits of sustainable development are shared by all, regardless of their income, gender, age, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, or other status; endeavoring to reach the furthest behind first. To this end, the Sustainable Development Goals were designed to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live a prosperous and fulfilling life, while protecting the planet.

The UN approach to leaving no one behind is set out in the Shared Framework on Leaving No One Behind: Equality and Non-Discrimination at the Heart of Sustainable Development endorsed by the Chief Executives Board in November 2016. This includes a shared framework for action to ensure the UN System puts the imperative to combat inequalities and discrimination at the forefront of United Nations efforts to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

LNOB was elevated to one of the six Guiding Principles of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) in 2019.³ The Companion Piece on the Guiding Principles provides guidance to United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) on the application of the LNOB in the context of the Cooperation Framework. Further, a UNSDG Operational Guide for UNCTs on Leaving No One Behind⁴ was developed to provide comprehensive guidance and share good practices in the operationalization of LNOB at the country level.

The principle of LNOB has also been adopted and translated in numerous international development frameworks and global commitments relevant to the mandates of UNFPA. In 2019, the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All, of which UNFPA is a party, called on all to fulfill the 2030 Agenda pledge to leave no one behind and the aspiration to reach the furthest behind first.⁵ Moreover, the Nairobi Statement on the International Conference on Population and Development⁶ underscored the need to address barriers such as inequalities and discrimination in development and humanitarian setting in an effort to accelerate the Programme of Action.

UNFPA integration of LNOB

In commitment to the realization of the ICPD Programme of Action and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, UNFPA has adopted a human rights-based approach for all of its programmes and operations, to ensure that everyone has the right to access the resources and services they need to live a healthy and fulfilling life. This approach is essential for leaving no one behind.

This has translated to the integration of the principle of LNOB in several of UNFPA key strategic documents and guidance, including:

- **UNFPA Strategic Plan (2014-2017)** states that “women, adolescents and youth are the key beneficiaries of UNFPA work” and that the organization will prioritize the most vulnerable and marginalized, particularly adolescent girls and also indigenous people, ethnic minorities, migrants, sex workers, persons living with HIV, and persons with disabilities.”⁷

³ United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework: <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/united-nations-sustainable-development-cooperation-framework-guidance>

⁴ UNSDG Operational Guide for UNCTs on Leaving No One Behind: <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/leaving-no-one-behind-unsdg-operational-guide-un-country-teams>

⁵ WHO, Stronger Collaboration, Better Health Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All, 2019.

⁶ Nairobi Statement on ICPD25: Accelerating the Promise <https://www.nairobisummiticpd.org/content/icpd25-commitments>

⁷ The UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2014-2017.

- **UNFPA Strategic Plan (2018-2021)** takes a human rights-based approach by including both specific and mainstreamed activities on human rights. The principle of LNOB is embedded throughout its integrated results and resources framework and specifically addressed through targeted outcomes and indicators. Notably, the adoption of the three transformative results under the 2018-2021 Strategic Plan – ending preventable maternal deaths; ending the unmet need for family planning; and ending gender-based violence and all harmful practices, including female genital mutilation and child, early and forced marriage – lend even greater visibility to the sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights and gender equality rights of women and girls.
- **Guidance Note for Applying a Human Rights-Based Approach to Programming in UNFPA**⁸ integrates the principle of LNOB under the component of equality and non-discrimination.
- **UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-2025** places particular emphasis to reach the poorest, most vulnerable and those left furthest behind. It is articulated in the vision of the Strategic Plan, as a stand-alone accelerator, and is embedded and mainstreamed through the integrated results and resources framework, including indicators that are disaggregated by various factors.

UNFPA has also made efforts to assess its own integration and adaptation of the LNOB principle into its work to fulfill the commitments it has made.

The **Midterm Review of the Strategic Plan (2018-2021)**⁹ noted the outputs related to the furthest behind populations demonstrated limited performance. The review found that these challenges were primarily due to lack of data and information on the “furthest behind”; lack of financial resources and capacity to reach these populations; and reluctance in recognizing certain marginalized and/or excluded groups. Following this review, UNFPA initiated several efforts to accelerate and strengthen action on LNOB, including establishing a reference group of technical experts and programme personnel, engaging further with country-level staff, and undertaking an assessment of UNFPA Performance in Addressing the Principle of LNOB as part of the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2018-2021.

The **2020 UNFPA LNOB Assessment** identified a number of organizational factors that enabled and inhibited the full implementation of LNOB in UNFPA. The three main factors enable UNFPA to take forward the LNOB commitment: UNFPA leadership prioritizes left-behind groups, COs have acquired skills that enable them to effectively engage with and support marginalized groups, and availability of funding. There were several inhibiting factors including lack of funding or difficulty to raise funds for LNOB, lack of disaggregated and quality data, unfavorable political and legal context as well as unfavorable sociocultural context. It also noted challenges related to people and the organization such a need for a shift in mindset, insufficient staffing, a vertical way of working that creates bottlenecks in sharing of information, “guidance fatigue” and lack of clarity regarding which groups to focus on.

Accompanying the Strategic Plan 2022-2025, is **the UNFPA Operational Plan on Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) and Reaching the Furthest Behind (RFB)**. The Operational Plan provides UNFPA with a road map to translate into action the ambition to reach the furthest behind as a central tenet of the new Strategic Plan 2022-2025. It shifts the focus from leaving no one behind, to reaching the furthest behind, to better address the drivers of discrimination and inequality, which may intersect

⁸ <https://www.unfpa.org/featured-publication/guidance-note-applying-HRBA-programming-unfpa>

⁹ UNFPA. (2020). Integrated Midterm Review and Progress Report on Implementation of the UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2018-2021. Report of the Executive Director.

with other drivers of exclusion in the same person or group. While the Operational Plan does provide guidance on LNOB for staff at the country level, this guidance is under development.

Finally, UNFPA developed the Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Strategy: Leave No One Behind (LNOB) Accelerate the Promise in 2019. The regional strategy is focused on three fundamental pillars (Visibility, Inclusion and Participation) and aimed at ensuring that the work priorities of the region take into account the most excluded population groups, particularly afro descendants, indigenous communities, and people with disabilities. The regional strategy also acknowledges the multiple forms of discrimination that women and young people face and that require collective strategies in order to be more effective and transform the conditions of inequality in the region.

5. Purpose, Objectives, and Scope

The purpose of the evaluation is to provide evaluative evidence and learning that is intended to enhance UNFPA support to implement the principle of LNOB. It will provide its Executive Board, UNFPA senior management and other key stakeholders a broad assessment as well as recommendations for improvement on UNFPA support to the implementation of LNOB.

The exercise also aims to contribute, more broadly, on advancing the meaningful engagement, participation and advocacy of persons who represent UNFPA identified FB factors¹⁰, including in this evaluation process.

The objectives of the evaluation are to:

- Assess UNFPA conceptualization, integration, and implementation of the principle of LNOB across all areas and all levels of its work;
- Facilitate learning, capture good practices and generate knowledge from UNFPA experience on what is working and not working, why and under what circumstances, in UNFPA efforts to integrate and implement LNOB;
- Provide actionable inputs for the implementation of the current UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-2025, inform the upcoming Latin America and Caribbean Regional Programme, UNFPA Strategic Plan 2026-2028, as well as improve UNFPA contributions to the 2030 Agenda;
- Integrate practical and innovative ways to engage persons who represent UNFPA identified FB factors in various roles throughout the evaluation.

The evaluation will assess UNFPA approach and its institutional capacity to implement the principle of LNOB. It will cover its efforts at implementation in all areas of its work at the global, regional and country level. It will cover the period from 2018 to 2024, assessing UNFPA performance over the strategic plan periods of 2018-2021 and 2022-2025.

¹⁰ Operational Plan for Leaving No One Behind and Reaching the Furthest Behind: UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-2025 (2021)

6. Evaluation Approach

The exercise will be formative in nature and will serve to provide real time inputs to improve current implementation and inform future decision-making and programming.

Transformative Paradigm

Underpinning the evaluation will be a philosophical framework derived from Merten's Transformative Paradigm¹¹. It is a way to ensure the evaluation is used to empower marginalized communities and to challenge oppressive systems. In short, it is a framework that seeks to promote social justice and social change. The following table is adapted from this framework to the need of the evaluation.

Table 1: The Transformative Paradigm

Philosophy	Considerations	Application to evaluation
Axiology: about ethics	Ethical considerations include respect for cultural norms of interaction; beneficence involves the promotion of human rights and increased social justice.	The evaluation should challenge traditional definitions of ethical principles – e.g. respect, justice- on the basis that they fail to be responsive to ethical issues that arise in cultural contexts with differential power structures.
Ontology: about the nature of reality	Ontological considerations reject cultural nature of reality relativism and recognize the influence of privilege in sensing what is real and the consequences of accepting perceived versions of reality. They recognize multiple realities shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, gender, and disability values	The evaluation should change the focus from cultural relativism and acknowledges that perceptions of what is real are influenced by the societal power structure that privileges certain versions of reality over others.
Epistemology: about the nature of knowledge and the consequent relationship between the researcher and the participant who hold the knowledge	Epistemological considerations constitute the nature of knowledge and an interactive link between researcher and participants; knowledge is socially and the researcher and the participants, historically situated; power and privilege who hold the knowledge are explicitly addressed; development of a trusting relationship is critical.	The evaluation should question the relationship between the evaluator and the participants whose experiences the evaluator is studying. There should be close collaboration between evaluator and community members, whether the latter are participants or co-evaluators. The evaluation's purpose, design, implementation, and utilization are developed and implemented with appropriate cultural sensitivity and awareness.
Methodology: about the appropriate	Methodological considerations recognize appropriate methods of systematic that the inclusion of qualitative (dialogic)	The evaluation should ensure its methodology is made with a conscious awareness of contextual and historical

¹¹ Mertens, D. M. 2009. Transformative Research and Evaluation. New York: Guilford Press.

methods of systematic inquiry	inquiry validity is critical; quantitative and mixed methods can be used; contextual and historic factors are acknowledged, especially as they relate to oppression	factors, especially as they relate to discrimination and oppression.
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Utilization-focused approach

The exercise will also be utilization-focused with a strong focus on learning to enhance the usefulness of the findings to improve programming. To this end, the exercise will intend to capture practical lessons learned and good practices as well as spotlight opportunities and challenges to UNFPA efforts in the implementation of LNOB at global, regional and national level.

Mixed methods approach

Secondly, the evaluation will employ a mixed methods approach, drawing on quantitative and qualitative, and participatory methods for data collection and analysis. The formative evaluation will include case studies at global, regional and country levels. Methods for data collection may include a comprehensive documentary review, interviews with key informants, focus groups, online group consultations, surveys, as well as other methods that leverage social media to collect data. The evaluation approach and methodology will be further refined during the inception phase of the exercise.

Inclusive and participatory approach

The evaluation will be based on an inclusive and participatory approach, involving a broad range of partners and stakeholders at regional, national and sub-national levels. This approach will center on a strong commitment to principles of leaving no one behind, social inclusion, gender equality, voice and empowerment. The evaluation will seek to enhance the inclusion, representation, and participation of those furthest behind throughout the evaluation process to the maximum extent possible. In doing so, the evaluation aims to better capture the values and experience of these persons as right holders. One way the evaluation seeks to achieve this is through the creation of a Steering Committee which will be composed of a diverse group of members who embody various furthest behind factors. It is intended that the Steering Committee will be engaged throughout the evaluation process to promote the co-ownership, co-creation, and the meaningful participation of the rights-holders in all diversity, with the aim to ensure that those who are involved or impacted benefit from the exercise. Moreover, the evaluation will, to the extent possible, seek to ensure inclusive and accessible communication practices for all phases of the evaluation, including internal communication within the evaluation process and all related external outreach, particularly around the release of the evaluation results. This will serve to promote the inclusion and participation of all stakeholders of this evaluation, in all their diversity.

These complementary approaches described above will be used to ensure that the evaluation: (i) responds to the information needs of users and the intended use of the evaluation results; (ii) upholds human rights and principles throughout the evaluation process, including through participation and consultation of key stakeholders (rights holders and duty bearers); and (iii) provides credible information about the benefits for duty bearers and rights-holders (women, adolescents and youth) of UNFPA support through triangulation of collected data.

Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation will consider OECD DAC **evaluation criteria** to frame the evaluation.¹²



Source: The OECD DAC Network on Development Evaluation (Evalnet)

The evaluation team should reference the [Guidance on integrating the principles of leaving no one behind and reaching the furthest behind in UNFPA evaluations](#) for guidance and inspiration on the development of evaluation questions.

Areas of Investigation

The following are **indicative areas of investigation with preliminary evaluation questions** that will be further refined by the evaluation team who will finalize the specific evaluation questions that may address one or more of the criteria above.

Conceptualization of LNOB principle

- To what extent the conceptualization of the integration of LNOB principle is clearly articulated; is gender responsive, human-rights based; integrated/mainstreamed into all thematic areas?
- To what extent UNFPA strategies, approach, procedures and guidance relevant to implementation of LNOB are coherent across all levels of UNFPA work?
- To what extent UNFPA adopted a holistic approach across its priority thematic areas to adequately address the needs of vulnerable and marginalized populations, including those left furthest behind?

Operationalization/Implementation of LNOB principle

- To what extent the principle of LNOB (addressing factors of exclusion and discrimination, utilizing gender+ perspective/intersectional lens) is applied in the design and implementation of UNFPA interventions?

¹² <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

- To what extent UNFPA has been able to adapt and respond to the needs and priorities of those left furthest behind, in particular women and girls in all their diversity, at the regional and country levels?
- To what extent UNFPA programme monitoring and evaluation and reporting systems disaggregate data in order to be able to track progress across different groups at the country level?
- To what extent UNFPA leveraged strategic partnerships with regional, national, local and grassroots organizations (e.g., women's rights /feminist activists, or youth-led groups, faith-based groups, etc.), to reach those left furthest behind while ensuring synergies and avoiding duplications of efforts?
- To what extent UNFPA contributed to strategically position LNOB and RFB principles in United Nations Country Teams (UNCT) coordination mechanisms?
- To what extent regional and HQ offices supported COs in addressing political dimensions and sensitivities related to efforts to leave no one behind?
- To what extent UNFPA incentivizes and ensures accountability for efforts by COs to LNOB and reach the furthest behind?

LNOB as an accelerator

- To what extent UNFPA interventions contribute to positive changes in the lives of vulnerable and marginalized populations, particularly those left furthest behind?
- To what extent UNFPA humanitarian interventions reached the most vulnerable and marginalized populations, including those left furthest behind?
- To what extent UNFPA interventions support the elimination of barriers to access (e.g., social, economic, legal, location, language, cultural)?
- To what extent UNFPA interventions supported an enabling environment that promotes the principles of LNOB and RFB in national policies, strategies and legislative frameworks?
- To what extent the implementation of LNOB principle has contributed to changing discriminatory practices, biases and gender norms to allow for sustainable change to happen?
- To what extent UNFPA have supported the generation, analysis and use of disaggregated data for advocacy and decision making, evidence-based public policy, and programming?

Institutional capacity of UNFPA to implement LNOB principle

- To what extent UNFPA is leveraging its capacity to implement LNOB in all aspects of its work?
- To what extent UNFPA adequately allocates its financial resources with a view to addressing the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups?
- To what extent UNFPA has the capacity to monitor, collect and disaggregate its data/results to assess existing inequalities and ensure UNFPA reaches specific groups who are the furthest behind?

7. Evaluation methodology

Centering the principles of LNOB and gender equality and intersectionality at the core of its methodology, the evaluation will seek to include a diversity of insights and amplify the voices and perspectives of the person's furthest behind, in particular women and girls in all their diversity.

The CPE will be conducted in accordance with the UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation,¹³ Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation,¹⁴ Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System,¹⁵ and Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations.¹⁶

In the inception phase, the evaluation team will design and develop appropriate data collection and analysis methods and tools that will allow the evaluation team to respond to the evaluation questions. The methodological design will include: an analytical framework; a strategy for collecting and analyzing data; a series of specifically designed tools; and a detailed work plan. A fully developed methodology will be part of the inception report to be delivered in that phase.

Data collection

The evaluation should collect information on factors of exclusion and discrimination, as well as disaggregated data by priority FB factors (sexual orientation and gender identity; Age; Culture, ethnicity, race, language and religion; disability; HIV and AIDS status; migration, asylum and displacement; geographical location; income/wealth). To the extent possible, the exercise will also utilize inclusive and participatory methods of data collection such as outcome harvesting or most significant change to better understand what changed, for whom, when and where, and how LNOB integration contributed to the change.

Data collection methods to be used:

- **Document review** will include the examination of internal and external documentation.
 - Internal documentation will cover all available documents related to the implementation of the principles of LNOB/RFB at UNFPA i.e., planning documents, progress/ annual reports/ assessments at all levels of the organization.
 - External documentation relevant to the implementation of the principles of LNOB/RFB.
 - Existing UNFPA datasets may include Quantum data, Global Programming System (GPS) database, Evaluation Database, management response tracking system and data on portfolio review analysis.
- **Key informant interviews** will be a main tool for primary data collection. The interviews will be conducted either remotely or face-to face, if feasible. The results of interviews will be registered in interview logbooks. Semi-structured interviews will follow differentiated protocols tailored to the type of stakeholder.
- **Focus groups** are structured group interviews with 6 to 12 people. The focus groups will be used to collect data as well as to discuss emerging hypotheses and validate emerging findings during the data collection process. These will be conducted either remotely or face-to face, if feasible.
- **Online survey** will target UNFPA staff relevant to the implementation of the principles of LNOB/RFB.
- **In-depth case studies** will be conducted to gain deeper insight to the implementation of the principles of LNOB/RFB. The case studies serve to provide a more thorough understanding

¹³ <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1914>.

¹⁴ <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/102>.

¹⁵ <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100>.

¹⁶ <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/980>.

of UNFPA support in these areas at the country and regional levels. The case studies may be conducted:

- **In-person:** A member of the core evaluation team will undertake a field visit to conduct interviews and site visits supported by a national expert.
- **Remote:** A member of the core evaluation team will work remotely in close coordination with a national expert who will conduct interviews and perform site visits in-person.
- **Pilot case study:** The pilot case study will cover the Latin America and the Caribbean region given that there has been a LNOB Regional Strategy in place since 2019 and the Regional Office has worked extensively with people of African descent, indigenous people, and people with disabilities.^{17 18}
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- **Outcome harvesting or most significant change:** will be conducted to better understand what changed, for whom, when and where, and how LNOB integration contributed to the change.
- **Benchmarking exercise:** will be included to compare how well UNFPA integrates LNOB principles in relation to other relevant entities. This will expand upon an existing exercise conducted in the Formative Evaluation of the Integration by UNDP of the principles of Leaving No One Behind.¹⁹

Other means of data collection, including participatory methods leveraging new technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), and social media will be considered during the inception phase of the evaluation.

Data analysis

The evaluation team should ensure the validity and reliability of the data through triangulation, the use of standardized data collection tools as mentioned above, and comply with UNEG standards and norms and guidance.

The evaluation should apply an intersectional and power lens in the data analysis to identify and address multiple forms of discrimination based on priority FB factors as identified by UNFPA and how they overlap and interact with each other. It should also seek to ensure that discrimination or bias of any form is neither perpetuated nor exacerbated in the exercise. Moreover, the evaluation should capture the diverse values and perspectives of rights-holders and communities and avoid favoring or privileging one over the other.

Where possible, the evaluation will employ intersectional and sub-group analysis by priority FB factor (Sexual orientation and gender identity; Age; Culture, ethnicity, race, language and religion; Disability; HIV and AIDS status; Migration, asylum and displacement; Geographical location; Income/wealth).

¹⁷ A concept note and desk review have been prepared to support the evaluation team to conceptualize the regional case study from an inclusive perspective that takes into account the diversity of the LAC region.

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¹⁹ <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/evaluations/thematic/lnoob.shtml>

As many UNFPA supported programmed focus on women and girls, the evaluation should ensure a nuanced analysis with a Gender+ lens. That is, taking in consideration the other factors that harm, exclude and disadvantage women and girls, such as ethnicity, location, income or sexual orientation/gender identity (e.g., Indigenous women., women and girls with disabilities, women and girls living with HIV, refugee women, LGBTQI women and girls).

Data analysis methods to be used include, at least:

- **Qualitative data analysis:** This type of analysis is used to understand the meaning of the data. It can be used to identify themes, patterns, and relationships in the data. This may involve different processes including coding, thematic analysis, content analysis, and intersectional analysis.
- **Quantitative data analysis:** This type of analysis involves working with numerical data. This type of data can be collected through surveys, experiments, and other quantitative methods.
- **Comparative analysis:** This type of analysis involves the in-depth study of two or more regions/countries in order to identify similarities and differences between them. This method is often used to compare the effectiveness of different interventions, or to understand the impact of different contextual factors on development outcomes.
- **Intersectional analysis:** This type of analysis is a framework for understanding how different forms of discrimination, such as racism, sexism, ableism, and classism, intersect and overlap to create unique experiences and outcomes for individuals. It recognizes that no one is oppressed in a single way, and that our experiences are shaped by the multiple identities we hold.

8. Ethical considerations / do no harm and safeguarding

The highest ethical standards will be observed in all phases of the evaluation, following UN Guidance. The evaluation will be transparent, inclusive, participatory and gender and human rights responsive, impartial and independent.

The evaluation will align itself with a set of universal ethical principles that apply to health and to health research. These principles are: respect for autonomy (free will, individual choice, power to make decisions); beneficence (doing good); non-maleficence (doing no harm); justice and fairness. These universal principles serve to protect the participants.²⁰ Cultural safety will also be a high priority in the evaluation. In health research, cultural safety requires the recognition of and respect for differences in worldviews, values and knowledge between different groups – whether based on ethnicity, religion, age, disability, socioeconomic status, sexuality, gender or other differences.²¹

The evaluation will also be guided by a set of ethical standards. These standards will be applied to the evaluation to minimize the risk of doing any harm, while seeking to maximize the benefits of the

²⁰ National Ethics Advisory Committee – Kāhui Matatika o te Motu. 2012. Āhuetanga ū ki te tika me te pono mō te Rangahau Māori: Māori Research Ethics: An overview. Wellington: Ministry of Health.

²¹ National Ethics Advisory Committee – Kāhui Matatika o te Motu. 2012. Āhuetanga ū ki te tika me te pono mō te Rangahau Māori: Māori Research Ethics: An overview. Wellington: Ministry of Health.

exercise. The standards will ensure the safe and meaningful participation of a wide and diverse set of stakeholders.

- **Human Rights-based approach**, the principles of LNOB and a gender perspective are embedded into the process, approach and methodologies of the evaluation. The evaluation process will show sensitivity to gender, cultural beliefs and traditional practices, manners and customs of all stakeholders with full acknowledgement of their entitlements and obligations stated. Any requirements for ethical approval within the evaluation process will be confirmed with relevant Regional/Country Offices on a case-by-case basis and the evaluation team will work closely with the offices to ensure all relevant approvals and permissions are obtained.
- **Inclusion and participation of a diversity of rights-holders** will be critical to the evaluation. UNFPA prioritizes participation of rights' holders and aims to reach the most vulnerable and marginalized. The evaluation will actively seek the views of representatives of rights holders, in all their diversity, to evaluate the effectiveness, reach and quality of UNFPA programmes and interventions. The evaluation will seek to ensure the voluntary participation and informed consent of all that are engaged in the evaluation.
- **Independence and impartiality** apply to all members of the Evaluation Team, Evaluation Reference Group, Steering Committee, Evaluation Manager, programmed management, and rights holders. All are required to guard against bias and ensure the all-stakeholder views are presented honestly. The Evaluation Team must be able to express its findings without undue interference, while providing for quality assurance and promoting efficient, open discussion. The Evaluation Team must retain the discretion to accept or reject changes management proposes.
- **Transparency** is required, with respect to both the stakeholders of the programmes and the general public. Clear communications are necessary with stakeholders at all evaluation stages with respect to its purpose, the criteria applied, and intended use of the findings.
- **Confidentiality and privacy** will be maintained for all respondents who participate in the evaluation. No participant's name or other personal information, such as place of living that could be used to identify a person, will be recorded or used in the final report, without their express permission and consent to do so Moreover, the evaluation will seek to ensure the data security and protection of respondents by allowing access to data collected as part of this evaluation will be restricted to members of the evaluation team.

9. Evaluation Process

The evaluation will include **five** main phases, each with distinct milestones and deliverables.

Preparatory phase

The preparatory phase is a critical step for ensuring that the evaluation is successful. This phase involves defining the purpose of the evaluation, identifying the stakeholders, gathering background

information, and developing an evaluation plan. The evaluation manager will lead the preparatory work.

Specific milestones and deliverables include:

- Prepare of **Terms of Reference**
- Establish Steering Committee
- Establish Evaluation Reference Group
- Procure of external firm to conduct the evaluation
- Collect of relevant documentation and create of document repository
- Prepare of preliminary stakeholder map
- Prepare preliminary inclusive and accessible communication plan

Inception phase

The inception phase involves further developing the evaluation methodology and setting up the overall framework for the evaluation. This includes further elaborating on the evaluation question, developing the methods for data collection and analysis. The evaluation team will lead the design of the evaluation in consultation with the evaluation manager, the Steering Committee, and the Evaluation Reference Group.

Specific milestones and deliverables include:

- Conduct of desk review of relevant documentation and preliminary meetings with key stakeholders.
- Finalize mapping and analysis of stakeholders;
- Hold initial round of interviews with key informants;
- Prepare a draft inception report detailing the proposed design of the evaluation and methodological approach, including the development of evaluation questions, a data collection and analysis strategy, case study selection, a detailed work plan of timeframes for deliverables, and the data collection tools.
- Conduct a pilot case study to test the methodological approach and tools, recalibrate if necessary. Pilot case study: TBD
- Presentation of draft inception report to the SC/RG
- Finalize **inception report**.

Data Collection Phase

The data collection phase involves the collection of data through interviews, group discussions, in-depth case studies, and other methods. Guided by the methodological note and finalized work plan, the evaluation team will lead this phase.

Specific milestones and deliverables include:

- Prepare logistical arrangements for data collection
- Collect primary data (KIIs, FGDs, on-site observations, a survey, etc.)
- Continue document review and collection of secondary data
- Enter data in **evaluation matrix**

- Complete in-depth regional and country case studies, culminated by a **debriefing presentation** on the preliminary findings to relevant regional/country offices and/or **case study note/summary**. Given that the Latin American and the Caribbean will be an in-depth case study, there will be a stand-alone case study report produced. This is optional for the other case studies to be conducted.

Analysis and Reporting Phase

The analysis reporting phase involves analyzing and validating the data collected and drafting the evaluation report. The reporting phase will open with a **data analysis workshop** to bring together the evaluation team and the evaluation manager to discuss the results of the data collection. The purpose of this analysis workshop is to discuss and validate preliminary findings, and generate substantive and meaningful comparison between the different case studies.

The evaluation team will then proceed with the drafting of the findings of the report. The **first draft of the evaluation report** (no conclusions and recommendations yet) will be submitted to the evaluation manager for comments. If the quality of the draft report is satisfactory (form and substance), a **presentation of the preliminary findings** will be held for the steering committee and the reference group members. The draft report will also be circulated to them for review and comments. In the event that the quality is unsatisfactory, the evaluators will be required to produce a new version of the draft report.

Prior to the submission of the second draft final evaluation report, a **recommendations workshop** will be organized with the Steering Committee, Evaluation Reference Group and key UNFPA stakeholders to discuss elements and co-create the recommendations.

The evaluation team will then finalize the second draft of the evaluation report which will be shared with the evaluation reference group. Based on the inputs and comments from the meeting, the evaluation team should make appropriate amendments and prepare the final draft of the evaluation report. To ensure all comments from the reference group meeting have been fully addressed, the evaluation team will prepare an **audit trail** of their responses to the comments.

The **final report** should reflect a rigorous, methodical and thoughtful approach, whereby conclusions and recommendations build upon findings. The final report will follow the structure discussed and approved by the evaluation manager and steering committee.

The report is considered final once it is formally approved by the Evaluation Office's Director.

Specific milestones and deliverables include:

- Review data collected and evaluation matrix during **data analysis workshop**
- Prepare **draft evaluation report**
- Present of **preliminary findings** to SC/RG
- Prepare report for **Latin America and the Caribbean in-depth case study**
- Convene **recommendations workshop** with SC/RG
- Consultations and revision of draft evaluation report
- Finalize **evaluation report** and **audit trail**

Dissemination and Facilitation of Use Phase

The facilitation of use and dissemination phase involves ensuring that the evaluation results are effectively communicated to various audiences to facilitate its use to improve UNFPA programming and operations. The evaluation report and other evaluation products will be disseminated through different modalities and platforms. This includes publication on the UNFPA evaluation webpage, along with the management response.

This exercise will seek to ensure that the evaluation reports and other evaluation knowledge products developed are inclusive and accessible to the maximum extent possible through various formats and platforms.

To the extent possible, dissemination activities targeting LNOB/RFB communities that participated in the evaluation will be held. This can be done through the delivery of dissemination workshops or virtual webinars that are inclusive and accessible for diverse audiences, using local language and sign language interpreters as relevant. Moreover, the exercise will seek the participation of these communities in the dissemination of the results so that they can share their experiences and be their own advocates for change.

In collaboration with the EO communications team, the evaluation manager and SC will lead this process.

Specific milestones and deliverables include:

- Finalize **communications strategy and plan**, for the evaluation release including for facilitating its use
- Finalize publications of the evaluation report, evaluation brief and/or other evaluation knowledge products
- Finalize documentation for Executive Board (report, briefing paper, presentation)
- Hold dissemination events and activities

10. Management and governance of the evaluation

To ensure its independence, the UNFPA Evaluation Office and SC will oversee the management of the exercise.

The *UNFPA Evaluation Office* is expected to:

- Draft and finalize the Terms of Reference;
- Initiate procurement process for identification and selection of external firm to undertake the evaluation;
- Convene Steering Committee meetings;
- Convene Evaluation Reference Group meetings;
- Provide quality assurance throughout the exercise, including the approval of all deliverables;
- Ensure communication, dissemination and facilitation of use of the evaluation report and related deliverables.

- Ensure internal and external communication throughout the evaluation is inclusive and accessible to all stakeholders.

The exercise will also be accompanied by a Steering Committee which will be composed of a diverse group of members, including young people, who embody UNFPA furthest behind factors and characteristics often associated with discrimination and exclusion: Age; Culture/ Ethnicity/ Race/ Language/ Religion; Disability; HIV/AIDs status; Migration/ asylum/ displacement; Sexual orientation/ gender identity; Income/ wealth²². It is intended that the Steering Committee will be engaged throughout the evaluation process to promote the co-ownership, co-creation, and meaningful participation of the rights-holders in all diversity.

The *Steering Committee* will work together with the EO throughout the entire exercise to:

- Provide overall guidance and direction to the entire exercise, including decision-making processes;
- Contribute to the conceptualization of the evaluation, including the Terms of Reference for the evaluation;
- Provide comments and substantive feedback on the evaluation process as well as key deliverables, including the inception report, draft and final evaluation report;
- Play a key role in learning and knowledge sharing of the results of the exercise, contributing to the dissemination of the evaluation report and related deliverables.
- Participate in SC meetings as required;

The evaluation will also be followed closely by an Evaluation Reference Group consisting of key stakeholders, selected purposively, from within UNFPA, as well as external to it, in particular youth groups, civil society actors, UN entities and other relevant organizations.

The *Evaluation Reference Group* is expected to follow the exercise at key points to:

- Contribute to the conceptualization of the exercise; including the Terms of Reference for the evaluation;
- Provide comments and substantive feedback from the perspective of a technical expert on the key deliverables, including the inception report, draft and final evaluation report;
- Facilitate access to sources of information, documents and informants;
- Play a key role in learning and knowledge sharing of the results of the exercise, contributing to the dissemination of the evaluation report and related deliverables;
- Participate in ERG meetings as required.

11. Evaluation Team

The evaluation will be carried out by an external firm that will be identified and selected through a UNFPA procurement process.

The evaluation will be conducted by a highly qualified, multi-disciplinary, diverse, inter-generational evaluation team (i.e., at least one young evaluator is a team member) with extensive knowledge and

²² Operational Plan for Leaving No One Behind and Reaching the Furthest Behind: UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-2025 (2021)

experience in evaluation of international development programming related to the mandates of UNFPA.

The evaluation team must possess knowledge and/or experience of the principles of LNOB/RFB and GEWE to provide a more nuanced perspective that improves the relevance and utility of the evaluation. Preference will be made to external firms from the Global South or external firms with evaluators who are representative of marginalized and vulnerable groups and/or are affected by specific factors that drive discrimination and inequality.

The team must also demonstrate a clear understanding of the UN system/ways of working and ensure that the evaluation is conducted in line with the UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the UN System and abides by UNEG Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct as well as any other relevant ethical codes UNEG Guidelines. UNEG guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation should also be reflected throughout the evaluation.²³ As per UNEG code of conduct, the evaluation team members will not have been involved in the design, implementation or monitoring of UNFPA programming under review, nor will they have other conflict of interest or bias on the subject.²⁴

The composition of the team should include, at least, a senior lead evaluator, thematic experts on areas of UNFPA support, evaluators from LNOB groups (e.g. evaluators who are from indigenous communities, people with disabilities, refugees, youth, etc.) or specialist in applying a LNOB approach, a data analysis specialist and an evaluator from Latin America and the Caribbean region who will lead the LAC case study.

12. Indicative timeframe

This exercise will be launched in the third quarter of 2023 and is expected to conclude in the fourth quarter of 2024.

The following is an indicative timeframe:

<i>Phase</i>	<i>Task</i>	<i>Date</i>
<i>Preparatory</i>	Prepare of Terms of Reference	October 2023
	Create Document Repository	October 2023
	Prepare inclusive and accessible communications plan	October 2023
	Establish SC and ERG	November 2023
	Initiate Procurement for external firm to conduct the evaluation	October 2023
	Prepare of preliminary stakeholder map	November 2023
	Finalize ToR with SC, RG	November 2023

²³ See: <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/guidance-documents>

²⁴ <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100>

	Complete concept note and desk review of LAC case study	Nov-Dec 2023
	Complete procurement process and onboard external firm	Dec 2023/ January 2024
<i>Inception</i>	Conduct desk review	Feb 2024
	Finalize mapping and analysis of stakeholders	Feb 2024
	Hold initial round of interviews with key informants	March 2024
	Prepare of draft inception report	March 2024
	Presentation of draft inception report to the SC/ERG	April 2024
	Develop Communication Plan	April 2024
	<i>Data Collection</i>	Prepare logistical arrangements for data collection
Pilot field mission		April 2024
Refine data collection tools and finalize inception report		April 2024
Conduct key informant interviews		April- June 2024
Finalization of the survey		May 2024
Launch of the survey		May 2024
Conduct (in-person or remote) case studies		May- June 2024
Complete LAC case study report		TBD
<i>Analysis and Reporting</i>	Data analysis workshop	July 2024
	Presentation of preliminary findings to SC/ERG	July 2024
	Submission for first draft Evaluation Report	Sept 2024
	Consultations	Sept 2024
	Recommendation workshop with SC/ERG	Oct 2024
	Submission of second draft Final Evaluation Report and audit trail of responses to comments	Oct 2024
	Consultations	Nov 2024
	Submission of the final Evaluation Report, including all annexes, and audit trail of responses to comments	December 2024
<i>Dissemination</i>	Finalize communication plan	Jan 2025
	Professional copy editing, design of evaluation report	Jan 2025
	Development of other evaluation communication products	February 2025
	Finalization of other evaluation communication products	February 2025
	Hold dissemination events and activities	2025

Key Deliverables

- Inception Report
- Draft and Final Evaluation Report (English)
- PowerPoint presentation of the evaluation results (English)

- Draft and Final Report for the Latin America and the Caribbean case study (Spanish, English)

13. Quality assurance

Since the evaluation team is expected to be hired through a firm, the latter will conduct quality control of all outputs prior to submission to the evaluation managers. They will be expected to dedicate specific resources to quality assurance efforts, and must consider all time, resources, and costs related to this function in their technical and financial bid. The bidder must set out the quality assurance mechanisms which will be applied throughout the evaluation process as part of the technical offer.

The evaluation recommends that the evaluation quality assessment checklist (see below) is used as an element of the proposed quality assurance system for the draft and final versions of the thematic evaluation report. The main purpose of this checklist is to ensure that the evaluation report complies with evaluation professional standards.

Evaluation quality assessment checklist:

1. Structure and Clarity of the Report
To ensure the report is user-friendly, comprehensive, logically structured and drafted in accordance with international standards.
2. Executive Summary
To provide an overview of the evaluation, written as a stand-alone section including key elements of the evaluation, such as objectives, methodology and conclusions and recommendations.
3. Design and Methodology
To provide a clear explanation of the methods and tools used including the rationale for the methodological choice justified. To ensure constraints and limitations are made explicit (including limitations applying to interpretations and extrapolations; robustness of data sources, etc.)
4. Reliability of Data
To ensure sources of data are clearly stated for both primary and secondary data. To provide explanation on the credibility of primary (e.g., interviews and focus groups) and secondary (e.g., reports) data established and limitations made explicit.
5. Findings and Analysis

To ensure sound analysis and credible evidence-based findings. To ensure interpretations are based on carefully described assumptions; contextual factors are identified; cause and effect links between an intervention and its end results (including unintended results) are explained.

6. Validity of conclusions

To ensure conclusions are based on credible findings and convey evaluators' unbiased judgment of the intervention. Ensure conclusions are prioritized and clustered and include: summary; origin (which evaluation question(s) the conclusion is based on); detailed conclusion.

7. Usefulness and clarity of recommendations

To ensure recommendations flow logically from conclusions; are targeted, realistic and operationally-feasible; and are presented in priority order. Recommendations include: Summary; Priority level (very high/high/medium); Target (administrative unit(s) to which the recommendation is addressed); Origin (which conclusion(s) the recommendation is based on); Operational implications.

Levels of quality assurance:

- The first level of quality assurance of all evaluation deliverables will be conducted by the **evaluation team leader** prior to submitting the deliverables to the review of the evaluation managers.
- The second level of quality assurance of all evaluation deliverables will be conducted by the **evaluation reference group** who will review all deliverables prior to their finalization.
- The third level of quality assurance of the evaluation deliverables will be conducted by the **evaluation managers**.



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