



## **Terms of Reference**

**Steering Committee for the  
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’**

**UNFPA Evaluation Office**

**October 2023**

## **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.

Unique to this evaluation, a steering committee of key stakeholders representing a diversity of core 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<sup>1</sup> will be established to co-manage the exercise with the UNFPA Evaluation Office. This decision follows a positive experience of engaging young people in the formative evaluation of UNFPA support to adolescents and youth. In that evaluation, 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, 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.

## **2. Role and responsibilities of the steering committee**

The role of the steering committee is to co-manage the evaluation with the UNFPA Evaluation Office. It will play a critical role in overseeing and guiding the evaluation process and ensuring the evaluation’s relevance, rigour, and utilization.

Specifically, the steering committee will have the following key responsibilities:

- 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;
- Monitor progress of the evaluation, reviewing updates from the evaluation manager, and if needed, address any emerging issues and provide guidance;
- Review the draft inception report of the evaluation and provide written feedback and comments, with the view to ensure the quality of the report and that it adheres to ethical principles and professional standards;
- Review the evaluation draft report and provide written feedback and comments, with the view to ensure the quality of the report and that it adheres to ethical principles and professional standards
- Attention must be paid to the report language to ensure it is appropriate, respectful and inclusive to all persons, to the extent possible
- Contribute to the dissemination of the evaluation results and learning and knowledge sharing. SC members will also support the evaluation manager in the identification of advocacy opportunities with a view to facilitating the uptake of the evaluation results.
- Participate in SC meetings called by the evaluation manager.

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

### 3. Composition of the steering committee

The steering committee is composed of external experts and stakeholders, who (i) represent a diversity of UNFPA identified 'Furthest Behind' factors<sup>2</sup> (e.g., from indigenous communities, persons with disabilities, migrants or refugees, etc.) and are either (ii) expert in the thematic areas under evaluation; or (iii) bring expertise in evaluation design and methods. The steering committee members commit to actively participate in the steering committee activities throughout the entire evaluation process.

### 4. Modes of engagement

**Meetings.** The steering committee will meet at key points during the evaluation process. The evaluation manager may also call *ad hoc* meetings, if needed. The evaluation manager will notify the steering committee members of the meeting date, place and time, as well as the agenda at least one week in advance. The evaluation manager will share the relevant documents for each meeting. Should members of the steering committee not be able to attend a meeting, they must inform the evaluation manager via email.

**Documents review.** The steering committee members will also provide substantive technical inputs and ensure the high technical quality of the evaluation products, notably the draft inception report of the evaluation and the draft evaluation report. Their comments and feedback will be provided by the indicated deadline. Comments and feedback that will not be submitted within the period allocated for the steering committee review will not be considered by the evaluation team (to ensure timely progression of the evaluation process). The consultation process will be an iterative one to ensure that the concerns or issues raised by the Steering Committee members are discussed, reflected and agreed upon between the Steering Committee, Evaluation Office and the evaluation team.

**Feedback loop.** The steering committee will provide feedback on their engagement in the evaluation, *ex post*, to support the documentation of lessons learned of their engagement for internal learning and capacity building.

### 5. Independence

It should be noted that, in order to safeguard the independence of the exercise, the members of the Steering Committee must not be directly involved in policy setting, design, implementation or management of the subject of the evaluation before, during and for at least two years after the evaluation.

### 6. Timeline

The steering committee is established for the entire period of the evaluation implementation. The table below presents a tentative timeline for the work of the steering committee over the course of the evaluation.

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<sup>2</sup> Operational Plan for Leaving No One Behind and Reaching the Furthest Behind: UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-2025 (2021)

<b>Evaluation Phases and Activities</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>SC members tasks</b>
<b>PREPARATORY PHASE</b>			
Establishment of the Steering Committee	SC ToR	Nov 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read SC ToR and confirm membership</li> </ul>
Drafting and finalization of the evaluation terms of reference (ToR)	Draft ToR	Nov 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide comments on draft evaluation ToR</li> </ul>
Selection of consultants		Nov 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select SC members (with expertise in evaluation design and methods) may be invited to participate in the selection panel for the procurement</li> </ul>
<b>INCEPTION PHASE</b>			
Presentation of the inception report to the SC for comments and feedback	Draft inception report	April 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide comments and feedback in writing</li> <li>Evaluation manager consolidates feedback and shares with evaluation team</li> <li>Participate in SC meeting (with the evaluation team)</li> </ul>
Revision of the draft inception report and circulation of the final version to the evaluation manager for approval	Final inception report	April 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation manager shares the final inception report with the SC members</li> </ul>
<b>DATA COLLECTION</b>			
Individual meetings with select SC members		April - June 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select SC members/key informants are interviewed by the evaluation team</li> <li>Provide data/documentation to the evaluation team</li> </ul>
<b>ANALYSIS AND REPORTING PHASE</b>			
Presentation of the Preliminary Findings		June 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in SC meeting (with the evaluation team)</li> </ul>
Review of the draft evaluation report by the evaluation manager, the SC	Draft evaluation report	Sept 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide comments and feedback in writing.</li> <li>Participate in a SC meeting (with the evaluation team)</li> <li>Evaluation manager consolidates feedback and shares with evaluation team</li> </ul>
Recommendation workshop		Oct 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in the recommendations workshop</li> </ul>
Circulation of the final evaluation report	Final evaluation report	Oct 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation manager shares the final evaluation report with the SC members</li> </ul>
Evaluation Quality Assessment (EQA) of the final evaluation report by the UNFPA Evaluation Office		Dec 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation manager shares the EQA (Evaluation Quality Assessment) with the SC members</li> </ul>
<b>DISSEMINATION AND FACILITATION OF USE PHASE</b>			
Publication of the final evaluation report, the independent EQA and the management response in the UNFPA evaluation database		Jan 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation manager alerts SC members</li> </ul>



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