



Independent peer review of UNFPA evaluation function 2023

Assessing independence, credibility, utility,
relevance and adequacy of resources

From the Director's desk

Marco Segone | Director, UNFPA Evaluation Office

In line with the commitment in the [2019 Evaluation Policy](#), I'm pleased to share the recently concluded [independent peer review of the UNFPA evaluation function](#), and its [management response](#). The peer review report and its management response were presented to the Executive Board on 26 July 2023. The peer review will inform the **revision of the Evaluation Policy** that will be presented at the Executive Board first regular session 2024.

The peer review was conducted under the auspices of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and the OECD Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC) Network on Development Evaluation.

The six-member peer review panel demonstrated wide **intergenerational** and **geographical diversity**, including a young evaluator from Mexico, a parliamentarian from Sri Lanka, and evaluation experts from UNHCR, UNICEF, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and South Africa. Below are the main takeaways from the peer review.

Top-level conclusions

- Over the last five years, the **evaluation function has strengthened** and is **highly valued** in UNFPA and by the Executive Board for its contribution to corporate-level strategies and programmes and for informing country programme documents
- A **strong enabling environment** supports the evaluation function at UNFPA
- The Evaluation Office is respected across the organization for its **professionalism** and its **added value** in providing evaluative evidence to inform decision-making in UNFPA
- Although relatively small, the evaluation function has cultivated a **high profile** in the United Nations development system through its system-wide, inter-agency and joint evaluations
- The evaluation of **humanitarian action** needs more attention
- There is potential to strengthen the **relevance, quality** and **learning** from decentralized evaluations.

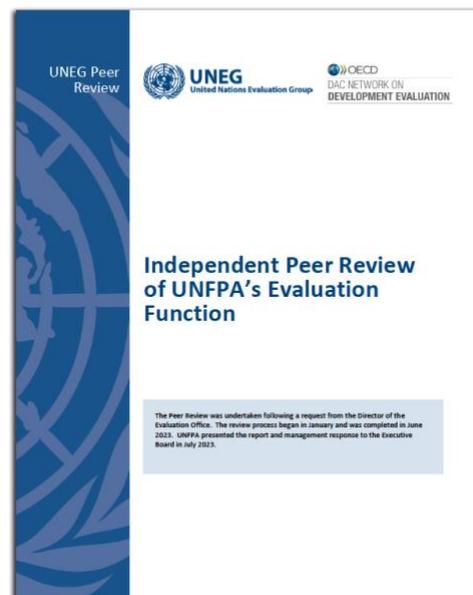
Good practices

1. Role of headquarters divisions in building a culture of evaluation and learning
2. Ring-fencing funds for country-level evaluations
3. High-quality products for evaluation communication and use
4. Youth engagement in evaluation.

Recommendations

The peer review recommends strengthening the **mapping and coverage** of evaluations, **enhancing the utility** of evaluations, particularly country and regional programme evaluations, and improving the **tracking of evaluation uptake**. To strengthen independence, the **job classification and job descriptions** of Evaluation Advisers in headquarters and regional offices, and country M&E staff, should be revisited. UNFPA should **strengthen the evaluation quality assurance and assessment system** and expand its coverage to all decentralized evaluations. A **higher budget threshold** should be established for greater quality of country and regional programme evaluations.

To strengthen the enabling environment, **clearer coverage targets** and **standard costs** for different types of evaluations, including humanitarian, should be established. Synergies among the evaluation and audit functions should increase. **Institutional and human resource capacities** for humanitarian evaluations should be strengthened. A **clear theory of change** should underpin UNFPA strategy for national evaluation capacity development.



I'm further pleased to share that **UNFPA accepted all 11 recommendations**. The peer review outcomes and its management response, as well as wide consultations with stakeholders, are now serving as key inputs in the ongoing revision of the Evaluation Policy.

My deep gratitude to the peer review panel for their tremendous efforts and time in helping us make UNFPA evaluation fit for purpose. The active support from the Executive Board, Executive Director and senior management was vital to the success of this exercise, including contributions from all divisions and M&E staff who participated in the consultations. I thank you for your valuable and rich engagement.

Independent peer review of UNFPA evaluation function 2023

[Report](#)

[Management response](#)

CONNECT WITH UNFPA EVALUATION OFFICE

