

**META EVALUATION REPORT OF RESEARCH STUDIES,
EVALUATIONS AND REVIEWS CONDUCTED
BY THE UNICEF PACIFIC OFFICE
DURING PROGRAMME CYCLE
2003-2007**

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Chapter 1: Preamble

1.1 Acknowledgements

I acknowledge the generosity of the staff of the Policy Analysis Planning and Evaluation Unit of UNICEF Pacific for their assistance in making available to me during my short attachment all the necessary materials and information needed in this study. I also wish to record my gratitude especially to Asenaca Vakacegu, the Monitoring & Evaluation Officer and Filo Ratumaibuca the Program Assistant of the Unit for their part in making my visit pleasant and professionally rewarding.

1.2 Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference for the Study were as follows:

Under the supervision of the Monitoring & Evaluation Officer, the Consultant will:

- a) Collect and review all evaluations conducted by UNICEF during the current programme cycle 2003-2007 and identify linkages between evaluations and the objectives of respective programme and relevance to the overall goal of the UNICEF Multi-Country Programme.*
- b) Document key findings from each evaluation, general lessons learned and application of these into UNICEF programming.*
- c) Determine to what extent these evaluations fulfill widely accepted standards as set by professional evaluation associations, UNICEF programme policy, and UNICEF/UN Headquarters evaluation quality assurance criteria (e.g. evaluation design, management, reporting and follow up, exploring issues of utility, feasibility, propriety and accuracy). These criteria will be supplied to the successful candidate.*
- d) Produce a first and final draft report of publishable quality within the agreed timeframe*

1.3 Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AUS Aid	Australian Aid
ADB	Asian Development Bank
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CCA	Current Country Assessment
CRC	Conventions on the Rights of the Child
ECPAT	End Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes
EFA	Education for All
ERD	Evaluation and Research Data Base, UNICEF
EO	Evaluation Office, UNICEF NYHQ
EPI	Expanded Programme of Immunization
FSPI	Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific International
HIV/AIDS	Human Immune deficiency syndrome
IUCN	World Conservation Union
NCD	Non Communicable Disease
OECD/DAC	
PES	Programme Evaluations Standards (Standards for Evaluation of Education Programs, Projects and Materials)
RRRT	Regional Rights Resource Team
RMI	Republic of the Marshall Islands
SCF	Save the Children Fiji
SPC	South pacific Community
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Fund for Women
UNPF	United Nations Population Fund
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
USP	University of the South Pacific

1.4 Executive Summary

This is a report of a meta-evaluation of the evaluations that were conducted by UNICEF Pacific Office during its current programming cycle, 2003-2007. UNICEF Pacific has responsibility for 14 countries in the Pacific region and implements many projects at any one time, in accordance with its Multi-country programme and goals. This is designed to achieve a better outcome for Pacific children, which will be reflected through more accurate data for planning and monitoring, improved policies and legislation, and greater access to quality services.

Now that it is coming towards the end of its present cycle, UNICEF Pacific is commissioning a meta-evaluation to evaluate all the evaluations of its projects including research studies and reviews for the purpose of getting information on which to base its decisions on its future programming.

The objectives of the evaluation as derived from the terms of reference as discussed in Section 1.2 and restated in operational terms for the study, were as follows:

- 1) To determine an overview of achievements against stated outputs for the programming cycle, 2003-2007
- 2) To document key findings including linkages between evaluations and objectives, their relevance to UNICEF Multi-country programme, and lessons learned for application into UNICEF programming
- 3) To ascertain strengths, weaknesses and professional standards attained, and whether these meet standards of professional associations, UNICEF programme policy, and UNICEF/UN headquarters quality assurance criteria.

The main audience for this evaluation would be UNICEF Pacific which commissioned the study, and presumably its partners in development in the Pacific and whoever it may wish to involve in its programming.

The evaluation methodology was primarily a desk study as is often the case in meta-evaluation with constraints of time and resources. The evaluator was not in a position to re-evaluate the original data but he was in a position to sight the necessary original documents including the results of all the relevant studies. The inability of the evaluator to interrogate the primary evaluators and re-analyze the original data is usually the main limitation of a meta-evaluation adopting a desk study approach. This in fact, would be the main limitation in the methodology of this study.

Among the results of the study were the following:

Major achievements were recorded in a total of 19 evaluations, research studies, and reviews which were reviewed. All these evaluations were rated to be very successful when judged against their stated objectives and many of them had built up a strong sense

of ownership in the local communities they had been implemented, and provided strong bases for sustainability.

When judged against a set of external standards recommended by UNICEF and UNEG Norms for Evaluation, most of the Projects received satisfactory to very good ratings which confirmed the earlier finding when projects were judged against their stated goals and objectives.

When the projects were rated against the four core standards set by UNICEF's Evaluation Office, which determine acceptance of evaluations for inclusion into the Education and Research Database(ERD) of UNICEF, the reports scored very well in two of the four sections. The two standards in which they did not score high, were requirements, which were relatively recent.

The study also identified some strengths and weaknesses in some projects as well identified a number of lessons learned with respect to improving the quality of projects, the need for a more focused framework for writers of situation analysis including the need for incorporation of research methodology in TOR for such work in future programmes.

Some requirements relating to fulfillment of professional standards of evaluation can be effectively addressed through in-house workshops and staff training as recommended in the study. In the long term, monitoring, evaluation and its corollary research, can provide added strength in an organization like UNICEF Pacific for effective programming work. Apart from its input into specialized projects, its greatest contribution might be its creative impact in dealing with the many challenges of an increasingly globalized Pacific world.

UNICEF Pacific, is to be commended for its recognition of the importance and significance of such a study at this juncture.

Chapter 2: Introduction

2.1 Purpose and Context of the Evaluation

The purpose of this meta-evaluation is linked to UNICEF's standard practice of requiring its offices world wide to undertake a meta analysis of their evaluations within each programme cycle in order to:

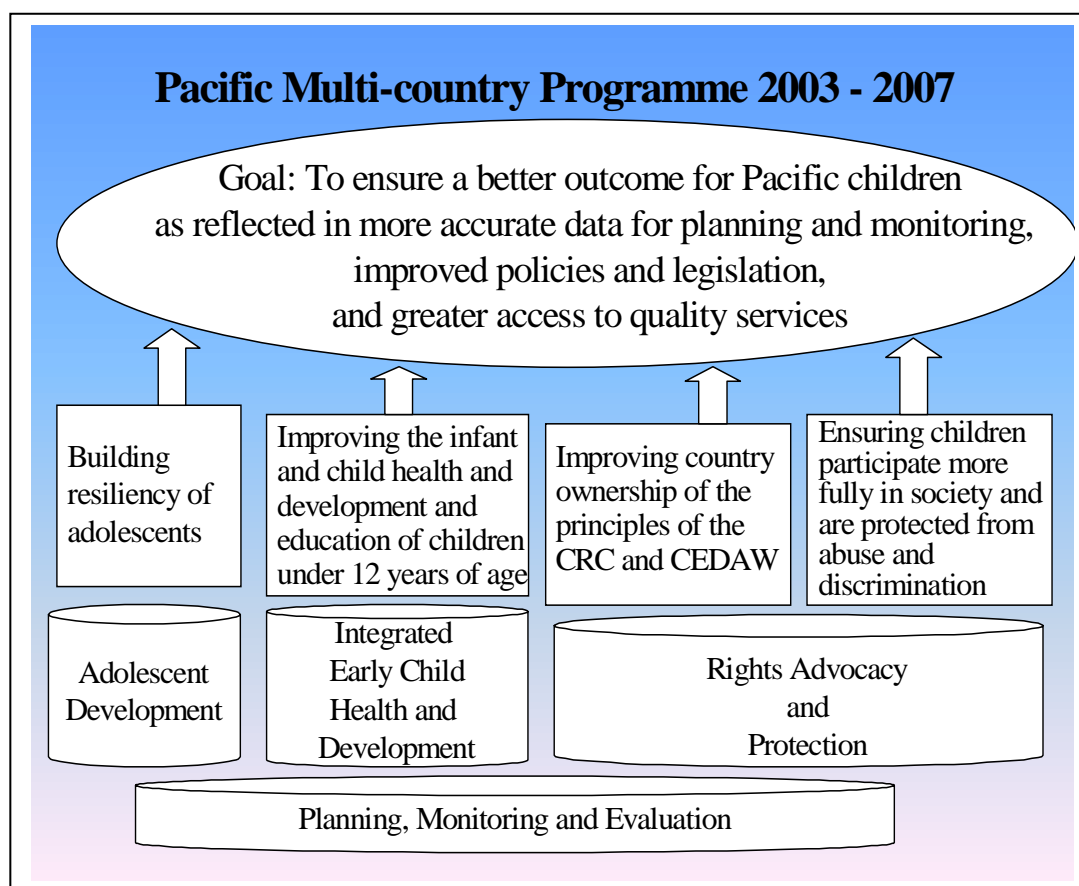
'determine an overview of stated outputs against achievements for the cycle as well as to document key findings and lessons learned...'

In addition, the study is also required to:

'examine the strengths and weaknesses of evaluation conducted during 2003-2007 to inform the planned Policy Advocacy Planning and Evaluation programme of the new country programme cycle covering the period 2008-2012'¹

An important factor in considering the context of this evaluation is the wide responsibility of UNICEF Pacific office in serving the 14 island countries in the Pacific region² through its overall Pacific Multi-country Programme during the period under review, 2003-2007. Within that overall framework are separate programmes as shown in Fig 1 below, illustrating the diversity of contexts which the programmes of UNICEF Pacific and its various evaluations have attempted to address. This, in itself, as will be demonstrated later in Chapter 4, will have implications for this evaluation findings.

Figure 1 UNICEF Pacific Multi-country Programme 2003 - 2007



Source UNICEF Pacific, Suva (2007)

2.2 Objectives and Scope of the Evaluation

The objectives of any evaluation normally flows out of its stated purpose(s). In this particular case, three objectives are clearly discernable as follows:

1. To determine an overview of achievements against stated outputs for the programming cycle, 2003-2007
2. To document key findings including linkages between evaluation and objectives, relevance to UNICEF Multi-country programme, and lessons learned for application into UNICEF programming
3. To ascertain strengths, weaknesses, and professional standards attained, and whether these meet standards of professional associations, UNICEF programme policy, and UNICEF/UN headquarters quality assurance criteria.

The above objectives clearly embrace the two traditional areas that meta-evaluation normally covers; that which relate to the technical quality of evaluations, and that which

relate to the conclusions drawn from them. These aspects of meta evaluation had been highlighted by scholars like Straw and Cook (1990), Cook and Gruder(1978), and Stufflebeam (1975,1999)

The above objectives as in any meta-evaluation are derived from examination of primary evaluations or from ‘evaluation of evaluations’. Similarly, the scope of the evaluation is pre determined by the primary evaluations that had been conducted in a given period; in this case, during the programming cycle, 2003-2007.

During the above the above programming period, 19 evaluations were conducted and they were made available to me for analysis and although I have referred to all of them generally as evaluations, they should in fact be classified differently, depending on their technical nature. In terms of their classification based on the *Norms for Evaluation in the UN System* (UNEG, 2005:5), 13 of the reports are in fact research studies, 4 are evaluations, and the remaining 2, are technically, reviews-refer to Table 1 for this classification.

According to the *Norms for Evaluation in the UN System* (UNEG, 2005:4) which is considered relevant and important as it would apply to any evaluation in the UN system:

‘... an evaluation is an assessment, as systematic and impartial as possible, of an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector, operational area, institutional performance, etc. It focuses on expected and achieved accomplishments examining the results chain, processes, contextual factors and causality, in order to understand achievements or the lack thereof. It aims at determining the relevance, impact, effectiveness, sufficiency, and sustainability of the interventions and contributions of the Organizations of the UN system.

An evaluation should provide evidenced based information that is credible, reliable, and useful, enabling the timely incorporation of findings, recommendations and lessons into the decision-making processes of the Organizations of the UN System and its members..’

The four evaluations as shown in Table 1 focus on the evaluation of two Child Friendly Schools in Vanuatu, an Evaluation of a Primary Health Care Project in the State of

Chuuk, FSM, and an Evaluation of the UNICEF Pacific Stars Life Skills Project in Eight Pacific Countries.

Research on the other hand is defined by UNEG, (2005:4) as

‘a systematic examination designed to develop or contribute to knowledge’

Of the 13 research (also referred to here as research studies), 10 were in fact situation analysis or CCA, and three dealt with topics relating to youth, child abuse and another with child registration

Two of the reports were in fact reviews. According to UNEG, (2005:4), a review is defined as a:

‘Periodic or ad hoc often rapid assessment of the performance of an undertaking, that do not apply the due process of evaluation. Reviews tend to emphasize operational issues’

The two reviews were both reports on aspects of health in Kiribati, which fall within the UNICEF Pacific’s Multi-country Programme. One was a review of the Vitamin B programme there, and another on the EPI Program.

Table I: List of Evaluations Conducted During the 2002-2007 Programming Cycle

Evaluation Studies

Evaluation of the Primary Health Care Project in the State of Chuuk, FSM, 2003
Child Friendly School Project Review, Tafea Province, Vanuatu, 2003
Child Friendly Schools Project Review, Tafea Province, Vanuatu, 2006
An Evaluation of the UNICEF Pacific Stars Life Skills Project, 2004

Research Studies

A Situation Analysis of Children Youth & Women in the Republic of the Marshall Islands, 2003
A Situation Analysis of Children, Youth & Women in the Cook Islands, 2004
A Situation Analysis of Children, Youth & Women in the Solomon Islands, 2005
The State of Pacific Youth, 2005
Birth Registration in the Pacific, 2005

A Situation Analysis of Children, Youth & Women in Vanuatu, 2005
A Situation Analysis of Children, Youth & Women in Niue, 2006
A Situation Analysis of Children, Youth & Women in Tokelau, 2006
A Situation Analysis of Children, Youth & Women in Tonga, 2006 (Draft)
A Situation Analysis of Children, Youth & women in Nauru, 2006
A situation Analysis of Children, Youth & Women in Samoa, 2006(Draft)
Child Sexual Abuse and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in the Pacific: A Regional Report, 2006
A Situation Analysis of Children, Youth & Women in Fiji, 2007 (Draft)

Reviews

Review of EPI Program: Kiribati Experience and Findings, 2004
Review of Vitamin A Program and System for Calculating Vitamin Supplementation Coverage in Kiribati, 2006 (Draft)

2.3 Evaluation Questions and Criteria

Evaluation questions are used in research studies and evaluations to help focus the research or evaluation work. They are particularly useful in targeting the collection of relevant information and in guiding the analysis and the writing up of results especially when one is dealing with subjects involving both qualitative and quantitative data and methodology.

These research questions are also particularly useful for interviews but in a desk review work like this one, as will be discussed fully in the next chapter, it is useful in focusing meta- analysis and critical reflection.

Three research and evaluation questions were constructed for the above purposes and these were derived from the objectives of evaluation as identified in Section 2.2 and checked against the TOR for the study. The se questions reflected closely the three stated objectives.

The three research and evaluation questions are:

1. What are some general achievements for the 2003-2007 programming cycle compared to stated outputs?
2. What are some key findings from these studies and general lessons learnt that could inform UNICEF programming

3. What are the strengths and weaknesses of these studies, and how well do they measure up to standards of professional associations, UNICEF programme policy, and UNICEF/UN headquarters quality assurance criteria

Before discussing the standards or criteria used in this exercise, it is important to clarify that in terms of providing answers to the above evaluation questions, different standards or criteria would apply. The first two evaluation questions relate specifically to the results of the primary or original evaluations including any generalizations that could be made from those results.

In another words, these studies have to be judged in terms of their own objectives as operationalised or translated into outcomes of those specific studies, whatever they are. It also means that any generalizations from these studies will have to be seen against the nature of the data and methodology employed in the same studies. They are therefore to be judged by their own goals and their own yardsticks so to say, including and any generalizations thereof. This will safeguard the validity and robustness of these results.

In terms of the third research question relating to strengths and weaknesses, and particularly whether the studies have fulfilled standards of professional evaluation associations or those from UNICEF and UN related groups, these will have to be addressed through the application of external standards or criteria from those groups. Similarly, assessments and judgments that are to be made using external standards or criteria like those set by UNICEF or UNEG³ for that matter, will require the application of criteria drawn from these same professional bodies.

The following discussions will focus on the standards and criteria that will apply in making judgments on the strengths, weaknesses, and particularly on whether the studies measure up to standards of professional associations, UNICEF policy, and UN headquarters.

As for external evaluation standards or criteria to be used for making assessment or judgment, the study would draw from five core standards or criteria that have been

³ United Nations Evaluation Group

adopted by UNICEF from OECD/DAC (UNICEF, 2004:10) namely: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability. These are similar to criteria that other professional groups have adopted in their studies or established standards such as the World Conservation Union (IUCN) (2000), and in Education Evaluation (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (1994) and the American Evaluation Association (see UNICEF, 2004)

This approach still leaves room for other additional criteria to be used in particular situations, when and if justified. A common set of criteria is an advantage when one compares different evaluations across the board but herein lies one of the limitation of this approach that is, the fear that the special situations of some studies would be lost by external comparison and they will not be given special consideration. One therefore has to bear this in mind and be ready to add additional criteria where special considerations would warrant.

Some comments need to be made on these five core standards or criteria. In fact some professional evaluation groups refer to these as standards rather than criteria. The professional standards for education evaluation established in 1982 did just that. (Stufflebeam, 1990 a)

With respect to relevance the first standard, any intervention was considered relevant if it was in line with the needs, local and national priorities including the priorities and goals of international partners, humanitarian and human rights organizations, including those that are related to UNICEF and other UN organizations in this case at least.

Efficiency was important in ensuring that programmes used the resources in the most economical manner to achieve their objectives.

Effectiveness on the other hand, referred to the potential and ability of a programme to produce stated outcomes.

Impact the next standard refers to the total results of a programme, weighing both its negative and positive contributions, including its social economic and environmental effects, on individuals, communities, and institutions.

Sustainability is the ability of a programme to use and rely on local resources and people after external assistance and support was no longer available.

As humanitarian action was not involved in any of the 19 evaluations, the four standards recommended for use in any such situation by UNICEF with its acceptance of the OECD-DAC criteria such as coverage, co-ordination, coherence, and protection, were therefore not applicable in this situation.

2.4 Evaluations Under Review: An Overview

As discussed in Section 2.1 above, there were 19 evaluations conducted in the 2003-2007 cycle and made available to me for this study. For ease of analysis, I have classified these into three categories as follows: evaluations for which there are 4; research studies for which there are 13, and 2 reviews. However, in this Report when generalizations about these studies are necessary and appropriate, they are referred to collectively as evaluations. These 19 evaluations need to be well understood and for that they need to be briefly described. This is necessary in any evaluation, especially in a meta-evaluation. This enables one for example, to see at a glance, all the evaluations, research studies, and reviews to be subjected to meta-analysis.

Evaluation Studies

1. An Evaluation of the Primary Health Care in the State of Chuuk, FSM (2003)

UNICEF Pacific initiated the Primary Health Care Project in the State of Chuuk in 2002 in consultation with Truk State, FSM. This was in response to the need for improved basic primary health care services in line with one of the Multi-country programmes of UNICEF Pacific, with a focus on improving infant and child health development.

The goal of the Project was to provide much needed health care services to 60% of Chuuk population who live in its vast and spread out territories through a network of 79 dispensaries and staffed by trained and qualified health assistants.

UNICEF funds the Project with internal funding support from the Truk State Health Services through its Compact Funding arrangements.

The Project, according to its evaluation, which was undertaken in 2004, has much to recommend in terms of its future sustainability in the manner it has been taken on by the host government as part of its joint responsibility. This has to do with the development of ownership of a project, which is central to its future sustainability. This important point will be highlighted further in the Chapter 4.

2. *Child-Friendly School Project Review, Tafea Province, Vanuatu (2003), and*
3. *Child – Friendly School Project Review, Tafea Province, Vanuatu (2006)*

There were two evaluations of the Child-Friendly School Project in Vanuatu. The first one was done in 2003 two years after the initiation of the Project in 2001, and the second was conducted in 2006, three years after the first evaluation, and one year before the scheduled completion of the Project. They are put together here because they are evaluations of the same school project.

The Child Friendly School Project was quite massive one in terms of coverage and involved all the 16 primary schools in the island of Tanna a remote island in Tafea province in the southern Vanuatu. It involved the teachers in these schools, the parents, local curriculum advisors (ZCA) and the administrative support of the local Education Office.

The goal of the Project was to improve access and quality of Basic Education in line with Vanuatu Education Master Plan (EMP, 1999) covering a 10-15 year period, and also in line with the EFA Action Plan which was inspired by the vision of Jomtien and later, the World Education Forum in Dakar (2000). It was also in line with the one of the Multi-country programmes of UNICEF Pacific, which focused on child health, development, and education of children under 12 years-refer to Fig 1.

AUSAid and UNICEF Australia provided funding; the management of the Project was left to the UNICEF Pacific office in Suva.

There was wide participation of the stakeholders in the two evaluation of the Project and this was in fact an innovative feature of the two evaluations conducted on the Project, the implications for this which will be discussed later in Chapter 4 of this Report.

4. *An Evaluation of the UNICEF Pacific Stars Life Skills Project (2004)*

The fourth evaluation study was in 2004 on the UNICEF Pacific Stars Project which was implemented in 8 Pacific Island countries, namely: Fiji, Tonga, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, and Tuvalu. The evaluation itself focused only on three of these countries: Fiji, Tonga and Vanuatu.

The four stated goals of the Project were concerned with: the improvement of adolescent health and development; the production and distribution of UNICEF Pacific Stars Life Skills Project; the building of capacity of Pacific Islands Youth through their participation in the life skills curriculum, and the improved availability of reliable adolescent health information through culturally and linguistically appropriate means.

These goals are in line with one of the Multi-country programme of UNICEF Pacific concerned with 'building resiliency of adolescence'

The Project was funded by New Zealand Aid and implemented by UNICEF Pacific. Because the Project is itself a regional one, it has some special features, which have implications for both the implementation and the evaluation of the project. This will be dealt with in Chapter 4.

Research Studies

5. *A Situation Analysis of Children, Youth & Women in the Republic of the Marshall Islands, 2003.*

This was a joint project of the Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands and UNICEF. The research was done with funding assistance from UNICEF Pacific. The study highlights some special problems arising out of RMI special relationship with the United States arising out long standing effects of nuclear fallout on the health of the people which is also encountered in some neighboring countries like FSM especially in Truk State, which face similar health problems.

There is also the other problem of dealing with the overcrowding of adolescents and young people in towns and cities who face a clash of cultures and the breakdown of their

traditional way of life, coupled with increasing unemployment, health problems, teenage pregnancies etc which pose increasing challenges to UNICEF Pacific Multi-country programme. Some implications of some of the recommendations and issues raised here would find resonance in other similar studies which will be raised also in the Chapter 4.

6. *A Situation Analysis of Children, Youth & Women in the Cook Islands (2004, Draft)*

This was a joint project of the Government of the Cook Islands with assistance from UNICEF. The Report shows very good progress on all relevant indicators with respect to children, youth and women in the Cook Islands. Some of the urban issues facing young people are there, such as high rate of teenage pregnancies for young women but fortunately these are not compounded by other related problems, which could exacerbate them.

7. *A Situation Analysis of Children, Youth & Women in the Solomon Islands, (2005)*

This is a joint report of the Government of the Solomon Islands and UNICEF. The Report provides a comprehensive account of the status of children, youth and women and identified some critical challenges that the Government faces which are of interest to UNICEF Pacific in progressing development among these groups. The strong support for improving the status of women by dealing with low prevalence of contraceptives, high fertility rate and the high incidence of domestic violence, has strong resonance in other reports in the Pacific.

The strong support for an integrated approach in dealing with early childhood development would be of interest to UNICEF. The connection to all these issues with the Millennium Development Goals is significant, which means that the attainment of the MDG's in a country would be closely related to the improvement of conditions of children, youth and women.

8. *The State of Pacific Youth (2005)*

This Report was produced by UNICEF Pacific, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, and the United Nations Population Fund (Office for the Pacific), three organizations that are heavily involved with young people and their organizations in the Pacific region.

At first glance when looking at those who were consulted in the compilation of the Report, one gets the feeling that it is driven by the views of outsiders and consultants using only the local Pacific peoples voices to express some strong views which contradict the views of Pacific leaders who represent their governments and their peoples. But at close observation, as the report opens and begins to unravel the underlying reasons for youth discontent and its analysis, 'the penny drops', so to say. This continues in the body of the Report as the voices of Pacific youth substantiate the many issues through their own accounts of their experiences and visions.

The Report suggests some strategic approaches involving co-ordination and planning, forming partnerships with other agencies but with the youth 'at the center' so that they become not necessarily 'the problem but as part of the solution'. The way ahead the Report suggests, requires our investing in our Pacific youth and this also requires the support of not only of Governments, but also all relevant organizations like UNICEF, SPC and UNPF among others.

9. *Birth Registration in the Pacific, 2005*

This Report by UNICEF Pacific covers a topic that belies its importance, that of birth registration. Registration according to the Report is an inalienable right that confers an official identity on a person and gives that person recognition as a citizen.

The Report discusses practices in some Pacific countries like Vanuatu where registration coverage is only 30% and in the Solomon's where it is between 80-90%.

In a workshop that followed presentations by Fiji on computerized registration and another by UNICEF New York. Representatives of Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomons, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, and one from Timor Leste attended the workshop. All the

presentations are included in the Report as a useful reference to those countries that attended.

10. A Situation Analysis of Children, Youth & Women in Vanuatu, 2005

This Report by the Government of Vanuatu with Assistance of UNICEF highlights four critical areas of progressing the development of children, youth and women. It bemoans the low level of health expenditure by the Government in view of the low quality of health services which directly affects maternal health of mothers and children, the lack of attention given to the high fertility rate of women and inadequate facilities given to mothers giving birth and their children. In addition, it suggests that more attention be given to supporting vulnerable children and mothers who face violence at home.

The report commends UNICEF's programme in Education as being well targeted and shows good partnership with other donors. The Report raises the problem of the very high discontinuity rate (of 50%) of students moving from Primary to secondary level education.

11. A Situation Analysis of Children, Youth & Women in Niue (2006)

The Report comments that the health and education statistics on children, youth and women are good but suggests that greater benefits could be derived if better delivery of services in regard to reproductive health education, vocational training, and the protection and enforcement of children's rights. This would progress the development among children, youth and women. This suggestion would find resonance in similar reports from other Pacific Islands.

12. A Situation Analysis for Children, Youth & Women in Tokelau (2006, Draft)

The Report identifies three factors that stand in the way of progressing the development of children, youth and women in Tokelau and the three factors are: limitation in the quality and scope of the available services; the high prevalence of NCD's resulting from diet and lifestyle, and friction between traditional social hierarchy and modern values. A strong community education on healthy lifestyles backed up by practical instructions on

good food and food preparation would help. Awareness of women's rights and good parenting should also be stressed at those community education meetings.

13. A Situation Analysis of Children, Youth & Women in Tonga (2006, Draft)

The Report acknowledges the high proportion of young people in the population (50% below 20 years) and this puts a lot of pressure on health and education services. The demand for education services is high but the system is not adapted to the demands of the modern labour market. Women's employment is stereotyped and continues to be undervalued, the Report says.

The conflict between tradition and modernization is very evident in that while there is demand for modern food and education for people, traditional attitudes for example discourages the taking of exercise to burn off body fat. The same attitude discourages acceptance of contraceptives for young people and for unmarried women, thus exposing them to STI's.

Tonga has not ratified the CEDAW and have its principles incorporated in its legislations to protect women, children, and young people. This would include the need to establish a Family Court, and a Juvenile Court among others. Some of these issues are of relevance to other countries in the region and to sustainability of these small communities.

14. A Situational Analysis of Children, Youth & Women in Nauru (2006)

The Report is prepared for UNICEF by Dr Christine McMurray and highlights some observations about the impact on the lives of vulnerable groups in Nauru of the decline in revenues received from phosphate mining. The decline in economy may also impact on life expectancy, family health, and infant mortality and safety issues. The Study suggests the need to study the relationship between these issues and the decline in economy as useful bases for planning the future developments of children, youth and women there.

Other issues affecting children, youth and women are the unreliability of basic services, environmental health and safety, inadequate resources in education and health sectors, and scarcity of job opportunities for youth. There is also according to the Report, a great need for specialized health services for women and for the youth. Some of these services

are being met from donor assistance but much more assistance is needed and a more stable source at that!

The Report underscores the importance of a healthy and viable economy as basis for improving the lives of vulnerable groups in a small community.

15. A Situational Analysis of Children, Youth & Women in Samoa (2006, Draft)

The Report was prepared by the Government of Samoa with assistance from UNICEF and showed favorable statistics with respect to the progressing of the interests of children, youth and women in Samoa and the commitment of the Government in ratifying relevant conventions like CRC and CEDAW for the protection of these three groups.

The Report documented changes, which are putting pressures on the traditional system including the Government as well as other institutions to address the needs and concerns of these groups.

Given its youthful population (50% below 20 years), a lot of young people in Samoa especially in urban centres are under pressure, as borne out in the national statistics, with high teenage pregnancies, rising crime rates amongst youth, high rate of unemployment, and a steady suicide numbers; these must register concern all around including the Government and UNICEF for that matter.

The report suggested that the way ahead is for donors to work with the government in projects relating to these three groups, and in particular to continue to focus their interests on the MDG as this directly leads the reduction of poverty, youth unemployment, gender inequality, and maternal health.

The Report resonates with some of the main concerns that have been highlighted by other reports from other Pacific countries.

16. Child Sexual Abuses and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in the Pacific: A Regional Report, 2006

This report was prepared for UNICEF, UNESCAP and ECPAT International by the Pacific Regional Rights Team on a topic that many people in the Pacific did not know existed. Sexual abuse and sexual exploitation is a form of violation of human rights and the worst form of child abuse and exploitation.

The Report traced the first conference on this issue in 2003 in Nadi, Fiji, when The Inter-Agency Group, UNICEF Pacific, UNESCAP, and End Prostitution Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes, hosted the first regional workshop on Combating Poverty and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children & Young people. The papers in the Report represent the country studies that were conducted in the five countries following the first workshop between 2004-2005. The papers open up a new area which many did not know existed and is meant to open up constructive community debate and hopefully prompt new policies to end the sufferings of victims.

17. A Situational Analysis of Children, Youth & Women in Fiji (2007, Draft)

This Report is prepared with the assistance of UNICEF Pacific. The report highlights the increasing pressures on education, health and social welfare in recent years with increasing demands placed on them but without corresponding increase in capital investment.

In education, all indicators on enrolment, adult literacy had been high over the recent years of this programme cycle and Fiji has made little improvement on this front compared to other Pacific countries, which were behind in this development. Enrolment in vocational education for women according to the Report has been and continues to be low compared to other groups.

The outflows of the population from rural areas to urban centres have created squatter settlements with poor facilities and associated poverty, crime and related problems. There is already pressure on welfare and those with disability are increasingly disadvantaged. Those with disability in these settlements are doubly disadvantaged.

In health, the pressures on access and quality service remain. Health care issues with HIV/AIDS risk are real and is no longer imagined. Health staff like nurse's work under

increasing pressure and there would be little improvements without significant investment in facilities and better conditions.

The Report talks about physical abuse of children at school and mentions the work by the police and the relevant committees on the CRC in monitoring these activities and advocacy work.

The Report suggests that with all the pressure on education, health and welfare under strain, the vulnerable sections of the community like the children, youth and women would become increasingly vulnerable unless special effort is made to ensure their conditions do not deteriorate. The Report needs to be clear about its thrust and priorities with respect to these groups, if it is to influence and eventually impact policy development.

Reviews

18. Review of EPI Programme: Kiribati Experience and Findings (2004)

This is a short report on the visit of a Consultant who reviewed arrangements for the EPI Programme in Kiribati. This programme is concerned with immunization for all children in the recommended sequence and timing. Children for example according to this Report are vaccinated for HB vaccine in the first 24 hours of birth. Then there is the vaccination dose for BCG and OPV and later for Hepatitis, the Report adds. All these require cold storage of materials under varying degrees of temperature.

This type of work, according to the Report, requires training on the part of nurses, and trained medical assistants for which there is no room for error as it involves human life. The report deals with an operational issue with little attention to formal technical requirements of a scientific report or paper for it to qualify as research, nor does it pay attention to due process of evaluation to qualify as an evaluation study, hence its classification as a review.

19. Review of Vitamin A Program and System for Calculating Vitamin A Supplementation Coverage in Kiribati (2006)

This Report was concerned with the review of the Vitamin A Supplementation Programme in Kiribati. Specifically the three objectives of the review were to: document how the coverage data are produced; identify the strengths and weaknesses associated with coverage reporting, and provide recommendations for improving coverage estimates.

The Report recorded the consultations that took place with the relevant officials and the steps taken to strengthen the procedures and protocols that had been established to ensure effective coverage of Vitamin A supplementation. An important part of this was health education through workshops for staff involved and awareness campaigns for members of the public, routine screening during pregnancy in vulnerable areas and families, and the use of current census data in estimating coverage.

Although the Report was technically a review focusing on an operational matter, it was done with some attention to due process of evaluation.



Chapter 3:Methodology

3.1 Evaluation Design

In evaluation designs there are usually a number of factors that are born in mind in ensuring the evaluation is sound and robust This usually depends on the methodology used for data collection and for data analysis and this decision can be left to the professional evaluator but increasingly because of arguments about transparency and accountability and in the context of the use of external aid for development assistance work in which agencies like the World Bank and other multilateral and bilateral organizations (including UN related ones) are involved ,the question about developing local ownership to promote sustainability is of critical importance. This is why the need to involve stakeholders in the decisions on evaluation designs is increasingly becoming important. There are many ways of doing this, the details of this need not concern us in our current exercise, but the principle is as a good guide to sound practice.

The second general concern is the fact that this exercise is a meta-evaluation and is therefore an ‘evaluation of evaluations’, and as such, we are not in a position to manipulate or deal directly with primary data of ‘primary evaluations’. It is of course theoretically possible to do that but most of the studies being evaluated had been completed sometime ago and they were also conducted in various parts and countries of the region. It would not be easy nor cost effective, at least for this evaluation, to design an evaluation, which would require interacting with the primary evaluators of the original studies, have access to their raw data, or interview their data sources or informants.

All we have or are accessible to are their reports and this is why many meta-evaluations perhaps for pragmatic reasons are limited to so called ‘desk studies’.

This means that we have access to the reports and data, which they have already analyzed and presented in their reports. This is to be recognized as one of the limitations of this approach. However, there are sufficient studies there, 19 of them in this case, and many of them are similar in both subject matter and methodology particularly with situation analysis dealing with the status of children, youth and women, which would allow for

comparisons, and reticulation of information and findings. A number of similar findings in fact have emerged from those studies, which will be discussed, in the next chapter.

The involvement of stakeholders would of course be limited and it was clear from the objectives of the evaluation as stated in the Terms of Reference and from discussions with the UNICEF Monitoring & Evaluation Officer, that the results of this exercise would inform UNICEF Pacific in their next programming cycle.

3.2 Review Process

There are a few important principles that need to be borne in mind in the review process such as confidentiality and privacy of information involved. Much of this information is gathered during the primary evaluations and they have been reported in their studies, which are accessible through their reports. That had to be respected in the context of their relationship with UNICEF Pacific as specified in individual contracts.

The other important principle that played a part in the reviewing process is the context in which this evaluation is being carried out.

UNICEF Pacific is part of the UN system and as such it is bound by certain UN principles, which had to be considered. Of relevance here are the commitments to gender and other human rights issues including the rights of minorities and vulnerable groups including confidentiality and other provisions for protection of those involved. Most of these anyway have become part of professional codes of practice of professional groups including professional evaluators³ in any democratic society (House, E R (1990))

3.3 Analyses and Presentation of Results

I think that given the nature of this study, some discussion of the rationale of the presentation of findings in the next chapter would be in order. The presentation of findings follow or respond directly the evaluation questions that have been discussed in Section 2.3. The first two sections of the findings will draw almost wholly from the results

³ refer to Stufflebeam(1990)

of the primary studies themselves and this is to be expected from such a meta evaluation study. It is to be borne in mind though that such results have had the added benefit of all the studies in the programme cycle of UNICEF Pacific and they are presented with added insights of the 19 studies.

This is the benefit that arises from the perspectives of a meta-evaluation study. No single study on its own would be able to provide some of generalizations or observations of a general nature that will be offered in the next chapter as required in the TOR.

When it comes to the third evaluation question on strengths and weaknesses as well as the satisfaction of established standards of professional evaluation bodies, and those of UNICEF programme policy and UNICEF/UN Headquarters, the answers are derived from considerations of external standards or criteria as discussed in Section 2.3 above.

But that itself is also possible from an added perspectives of hindsight through meta-evaluation.

In short, the findings all hang together and are coherent and consistent even though they are pulled together from different perspectives and that is the nature and contributions of a meta-evaluation exercise.



Chapter 4: Findings

4.1 Outcomes

a) Evaluation Studies

i) In discussing the quality or otherwise of various findings I would resort to a five point descriptors or ratings drawn from a four point scale like that used by the Joint Committee (1994) on Programme Evaluation Standards ⁴ and the one used by UNICEF Evaluation Office which is drawn from OECD/DAC (UNICEF, 2004) with some minor modifications. I have opted for a four rather a five point scale used in the Programme for Evaluation Standards referred to above. These four point ratings are: 'poor', 'satisfactory', 'very good,' and 'excellent'. What these points represent are fully described in the UNICEF (2004) document. This will guide my comments and descriptions throughout, in discussing results and findings.

ii) In the first evaluation study on Primary Health care in the State of Chuuk all the major items examined like visits, immunization coverage, Vitamin Capsules availability, breast feeding, home care management, antenatal care, growth monitoring, and recording /reporting, were attended in a very satisfactory way. The one problematic issue was the unavailability of essential drugs in remote dispensaries and this has to do with budgets, transportation and a host of other issues, which are beyond the control of those in charge of that project.

iii) The second and third studies on the evaluation of the Child Friendly School were both very good and there were improvements as time went on. Even in the first study in 2003, the feeling of ownership by the local community and the local provincial administration was already setting in including the change in the attitude of teachers, effective classroom management, and a stimulating classroom environment. The next study of the same project two years later, 2006, confirmed the trends in 2003 and recommended more targeted improvements. The project was more focused and major strides were made with the benefit of the lessons from the first evaluation. Given the

⁴ Based on the work of Prof Stufflebeam (1990)

very positive signs in the two studies, the Child Friendly Project will no doubt be in great demand even beyond Vanuatu.

iv) The findings of the Pacific Stars Life Skills Project evaluation is satisfactory overall . This was more evident in Tonga and Vanuatu where it has been received very well. Because the Project is a regional one, it has some structural difficulties, which should have been anticipated in the initial Project Design Document given it was to be a regional project. Because it is targeting most countries in the region, it has to have much greater flexibility in its targets, its conception of 'youth' in the Pacific setting, its specified verifiable outcomes at various points, and its management. This needs to be addressed because its general idea is sound, and it appears to be meeting some real needs and demands of youth, but its implementation as a regional project will require more careful thought.

b) **Research Studies**

i) Ten reports on the status of children, youth and women have all given good accounts of the progress in the protection and advancement of the interests of these three groups. Some reports are excellent and focused like the one on RMI, Vanuatu, Solomons, Nauru, and even that of Niue, but some are long and lack the necessary focus especially some written by those in Governments. Some element of unnecessary advocacy is evident in some of latter reports. Some reports highlight the lack of ratification by the governments of CEDAW and other protective legislations in countries like Nauru and Tonga, and little attention is given to this point. One or two reports like the one on Fiji and Tonga, even though in draft forms, are below standards.

UNICEF Pacific might need to take greater control of the writing of these reports either by ensuring the independence of writers from government control or by providing stricter framework for writers.

ii) Three Reports, one on the state of Pacific Youth, one on Birth Registration in the Pacific and another on the Commercial Sex Exploitation of Children in the Pacific are part of research studies included. These reports highlight very critical problems in the region currently faced by young and vulnerable people. They stand out not only by the

nature of the problems they highlight but also they represent successful efforts of working in partnership with relevant agencies. It is hoped that local agencies are more involved to create greater sense of local ownership to ensure sustainability. It is also hoped that the work they have highlighted are followed up, and recommendations implemented, otherwise they would only be like ‘a flash in the pans’

c) **Reviews**

i)The two reviews received attend to very critical issues in the far flung islands and territories in the region and while they deal with issues at operational level, their reports has relevance for many of the islands even within bigger island groups like Solomon Islands, Fiji, Vanuatu and others. They addressed the specific issues they were tasked to do and they did that well.

With more attention, their reports could be very useful and even educational for UNICEF Pacific workshops on similar health topic even in places like the Fiji School of Medicine but this was not done. Surely, a lot of cost has gone into the hiring of those consultants and better reports should be expected even if it is only at the level of a review. Could there be local doctors from neighboring islands be hired who could retain their experience in the region?

4.2 **Relevance & Linkages**

a) **Relevance**

Relevance is vital as a consideration in a situation with limited financial resources but it is easy it seems to justify something as being relevant. In looking at the various projects whose reports have been examined it is not easy to identify one that is not relevant. I guess the degree of relevance attached to a project or programme that is at issue, and this is where differences of interpretations occur.

It appears that many things could be justified by arguing about whether it is a local problem or whether it is part of our international commitment. Regional problems are only regional because it also exists and is regarded as a problem locally. The Pacific Youth Report is a fine example of such an issue. But a problem must first be perceived as

a local problem first and foremost, and then it is addressed as a regional issue because more than one or two countries have asked for regional or international assistance in dealing with such issue.

How did birth registration become a regional issue? How did sexual commercial exploitation become a regional or even an international one? The amount of funds committed to a project may give us an indication of the relevance of a project and because I do not have this information, I am only able to look at the issue at a superficial level from the reports that were available to me.

Because of the many demands on UNICEF Pacific, this might need further discussion and monitoring so that the most relevant programmes and projects are supported and to the extent required.

In short, there are good justifications for most of the 19 projects involved in this evaluation and they are linked through the Multi-country Programme of UNICEF Pacific but the extent of that linkage is not very obvious.

b) Linkages

On the issue of linkages, I was not able to see many references in the 19 projects to networking or people working together and exchanging information or sharing resources say when they were working in the same country in the region even though in different projects. Did those people who worked on the Life Skills Project in Vanuatu benefit from the experience of those who were involved in the Child Friendly School Project? I was not able to see evidence of networking with those working in the various health projects in Kiribati and FSM especially in Truk? They are I presume, all working in the same Multi-country Integrated Early Child Health and Development Programme.

There seem to be some concentration of activities in the 19 projects in the Vanuatu/Solomon Islands sub-region and as well as in the Kiribati/FSM sub-region, and this should allow for greater collaboration and concentration of efforts and resources, which would be very beneficial. This way, the linkages should become more evident and transparent.

Table 2: Evaluation of Projects against UNICEF (OECD/DAC) Evaluation Criteria or Standards

		Relevance	Efficiency	Effectiveness	Impact	Sustainability
1	Primary Health Care Project, 2003	VG	VG	VG	VG	VG
2	Child Friendly School Project, 2003	VG	VG	VG	VG	E
3	Pacific Stars Life Skills Project, 2004	VG	VG	VG	S	S
4	Child-Friendly School Project, 2006	VG	VG	VG	VG	E
5	Situation Analysis – Republic of Marshall Islands	VG	VG	VG	VG	S
6	Situation Analysis - Cooks	S	S	S	VG	S
7	Situation Analysis - Solomons, 2005	VG	VG	VG	VG	VG
8	State of Pacific Youth, 2003	E	VG	VG	VG	VG
9	Birth Registration in the Pacific, 2005	VG	VG	VG	VG	E
10	Situation Analysis, Vanuatu, 2005	VG	VG	VG	VG	VG
11	Situation Analysis-Niue, 2006	VG	VG	S	S	S
12	Situation Analysis-Tokelau, 2006	VG	VG	S	S	S
13	Situation Analysis-Tonga, 2006	VG	S	S	P	S
14	Situation Analysis - Nauru, 2005	VG	VG	VG	VG	VG
15	Situation Analysis - Samoa, 2006	VG	VG	VG	VG	S
16	Sexual Exploitation Report, 2006	VG	VG	VG	VG	S
17	Situation Analysis - Fiji, 2007	VG	S	P	P	S
18	EPI Program - Kiribati, 2004	VG	P	S	S	P
19	Vitamin A Program - Kiribati, 2006	VG	S	S	VG	S

(Key: P=Poor; S= Satisfactory; VG=Very Good; E=Excellent)

Table 3: Evaluation of Reports against UNICEF Evaluation Office Core Criteria for ERD Inclusion (UNICEF Evaluation Office, 2004: 4-5)

		Transparent Description of Methodology	Evaluation Methods Appropriate and Adequate – Limitations Described	Evaluation Design Ethical and Provide Appropriate Safeguards for Confidentiality and Rights	Conclusions Substantiated by Findings
1	Primary Health Care Project, 2003	VG			VG
2	Child Friendly School Project, 2003	S			VG
3	Pacific Stars Life Skills Project, 2004	VG			VG
4	Child-Friendly School Project, 2006	VG			VG
5	Situation Analysis – Republic of Marshall Islands	S			VG
6	Situation Analysis – Cook Islands	S			VG
7	Situation Analysis - Solomons, 2005	S			VG
8	State of the Pacific Youth, 2003	S			VG
9	Birth Registration in the Pacific, 2005	S			VG
10	Situation Analysis - Vanuatu, 2005	S			VG
11	Situation Analysis - Niue, 2006	S			VG
12	Situation Analysis-Tokelau, 2006	S			VG
13	Situation Analysis - Tonga, 2006	S			S
14	Situation Analysis - Nauru, 2005	S			VG
15	Situation Analysis - Samoa, 2006	S			VG
16	Sexual Exploitation Report, 2006	S			VG
17	Situation Analysis - Fiji, 2007	S			S

Key: (P=Poor; S= Satisfactory; VG=Very Good; E=Excellent) Note: The average score needed to merit inclusion in the ERD is ‘satisfactory’, ‘very good ‘ or ‘excellent’.

4.3 **Quality Assurance and Professional Standards**

a) Professional Standards of Projects

In assessing for quality and attainment of professional standards I have relied on the approaches used in Education and Social Sciences in the ‘Programme Evaluation Standards’ (Joint Committee on Programme Evaluation Standards (1994) which was based on the work of Professor Stufflebeam (1990) an eminent evaluation scholar. I have also relied on the standards adopted by UNICEF (2004) and accepted also by the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG, 2005)

First, I will assess the 19 projects against the four core standards as discussed in Section 2.3 above that is, ‘relevance’, ‘efficiency’, ‘effectiveness,’ ‘impact’, and ‘sustainability’. This is an assessment of the total projects as such as shown in Table 2 above..

In the second part, I will assess the quality of the reports per se against four key standards or criteria used by UNICEF’s Evaluation Office (NY HQ). This is the same standards used for determining which report are acceptable for inclusion into UNICEF’s Evaluation and Research Database (ERD). This represents the highest or the top benchmark for work of this nature and no doubt it is a standard most if not all researchers and evaluators would like to attain, at least for those who are professionally associated with UNICEF.

As a evaluator myself, I would like to think that the assessment given here will be reasonably close to the assessment that would have been given by the ERD. Of course, in the real world, these types of assessment can be contested and subject to appeal and full disclosure of results. I am fully conscious of this but I thought it would be good to use such benchmark as basis for comparison as implied in the TOR.

The first set of results on the rating of projects given in Table 2 above. By and large, most projects are rated as more than satisfactory and there are some exceptional ratings in the ‘excellent’ categories and very few in the ‘poor’ categories. These ratings are only a guide in assessing quality and professional standards attained or met by the projects studied

These set of ratings show the projects have been on the whole satisfactory or very good. The sustainability column, on the extreme right, is important in ensuring that the project is continued after the initial period .For many organizations including UNICEF and other UN groups, this is regarded as a critical criteria in development assistance work.

b) Professional Standards of Reports

The second rating exercise is an interesting one as it deals directly with reports per se- refer to Table 3 above .I found that two categories, the discussion of methodology and methods of collecting data and information for the study, and also the category for the reporting and substantiation of results were done very well in most studies. Some attention need to be paid to the other two sections: one that deals with discussing the appropriateness of the selected methods of data collection, and the discussion of provisions for protecting privacy, confidentiality and other appropriate human rights provisions. The latter would also include cultural and indigenous values and knowledge particularly in a setting when we are dealing with large indigenous communities, and minorities.

In terms of the current ratings, it would be difficult to have most of the reports included in the ERD at the Evaluation Office at UNICEF NYHQ. But with the inclusion and satisfaction of the two remaining sections, most reports could be acceptable. That is another method of measuring that professional standards or benchmarks have been fulfilled, as best as it can be determined. The four core standards I have used have only been introduced recently and those two provisions on disclosure on all aspects of methodology and the protection provisions are part of a move for greater accountability, transparency and greater protection of human rights.

UNICEF Pacific might be able to clarify the two remaining provisions with its Evaluation Office and ERD for further actions on this front. Seminars and short training workshops are good avenues where these issues could be discussed for which there available resource people locally.

Table 4: Evaluation of Report using Standard Criteria

		Completeness of Title Page	Full Executive Summary	Full Description of Project, Logic of Design and Expected result	Full Description of UNICEF and other Stakeholders Role	Purposes, and CONTEXT&Justification of Project for Evaluation	Evaluation Criteria used and Full Descriptions	Evaluation Objectives Realistic and Achievable	Evaluation Design and Commitment to Human Rights in Programming
1	Primary Health Care Project, 2003	VG	VG	VG	VG	VG	VG	S	VG
2	Child Friendly School Project, 2003	VG	VG	VG	VG	VG	S	VG	VG
3	Pacific Stars Life Skills Project, 2004	VG	VG	S	VG	VG	S	S	VG
4	Child-Friendly School Project, 2006	VG	VG	VG	VG	VG	S	VG	VG
5	Situation Analysis – Republic of Marshall Islands	VG	VG	VG	VG	S	S	VG	VG
6	Situation Analysis – Cook Islands	VG	M	S	VG	S	S	VG	VG
7	Situation Analysis - Solomon's, 2005	VG	VG	S	VG	S	S	VG	VG
8	State of the Pacific Youth, 2003	VG	VG	VG	E	VG	S	VG	E
9	Birth Registration in the Pacific, 2005	VG	VG	VG	E	VG	S	VG	E
10	Situation Analysis - Vanuatu, 2005	VG	VG	VG	VG	S	S	VG	VG
11	Situation Analysis - Niue, 2006	VG	VG	VG	VG	S	S	VG	VG
12	Situation Analysis-Tokelau, 2006	VG	VG	VG	VG	S	S	VG	S
13	Situation Analysis - Tonga, 2006	VG	VG	S	VG	S	S	VG	VG
14	Situation Analysis - Nauru, 2005	VG	VG	VG	VG	S	S	VG	VG
15	Situation Analysis - Samoa, 2006	VG	M	S	VG	VG	S	S	VG

16	Sexual Exploitation Report, 2006	VG	E	VG	E	VG	S	VG	E
17	Situation Analysis - Fiji, 2007	VG	VG	S	VG	VG	S	S	VG

Key = M= Missing; P= Poor; S= Satisfactory; VG= Very Good; E= Excellent

In the light of the result in Table 3 ,I decided to do another assessment of the evaluation reports by using the 8 non core standards of UNESCO EO (2004) .These 8standards did not have the two standards for which all the 17 projects in Table 3 were not unable to meet.. Those two sections relate to the appropriateness of the methodology used and its limitations, as well as the ethical safeguards to protect the dignity and human rights of people.

The results as shown in Table 4 above shows that most of the remaining 17 projects included had satisfactory to very good ratings. The four evaluation reports plus the three regional projects dealing with the state of Pacific youth, birth registrations and the report on the sexual abuse of children were more favorably rated than situation analysis reports of children, youth and women. This could be explained by the fact that those reports that placed a stronger expectation on research and a research approach with its expectations to to concern itself with methodological and ethical issues received better ratings than that did not .The situational analysis reports on the whole were not rated well compared to evaluation reports and regional reports.

There seem to be an increasing expectation that all these reports should be more research oriented and with that comes the need to disclose and describe ones methodology including its underlying values and criteria. This is a positive direction and one that need to be supported through clearer guidelines for studies and supported through staff training and staff development.

4.4 Lessons Learned

In this evaluation exercise, we have been able to determined using the methodology identified, not only how good UNICEF’s projects are, we are also able to identify their major strengths and weaknesses .In doing this, we are also able to identify some linkages running through the projects as well as assess their relevance to the overall goal of UNICEF Pacific ‘s Multi-country programme.

In addition, we have attempted to assess how the evaluations have fulfilled accepted professional standards including UNICEF programming policy and UNICEF/UN headquarters evaluation quality assurance as required by the terms of reference of the study.

We have also noted some general observations and lessons that have implications on future programming, discussed in the final section below.

4.5 Concluding Observations and Implications

1) By and large, most evaluation projects of UNICEF Pacific in this cycle (2003-2007) have been of high standard as demonstrated in this meta-evaluation. The areas of weaknesses, which have been identified, are few and far between and could easily be corrected with the suggestions already made in the body of this chapter.

2) The evaluations in most aspects fulfill acceptable professional standards as judged against international benchmarks including the norms acceptable to UNICEF and UNEG.

3) Some recent key standards established by the ERD need to be understood for reports to be accepted for inclusion in their professional database. This would represent for the moment, the highest professional standard of UNICEF Evaluation Office for all research studies and evaluations, and need to be promoted and encouraged.

4) When judged in terms of their own objectives, the 19 evaluations of this programming cycle, have been very successful but there is still tendency for some reports to be sloppy as in some medical projects. This is not common and steps need to be taken to ensure all reporting is in accordance with the best practice across the board.

5) Local participation and partnership in all aspects of a project is recognized as an important ingredient for sustainability and as such it is recognized as a critical criteria in evaluation of a project, and therefore needs to be encouraged.

6) Regional projects or projects that are meant for implementation in at least two or more countries in the region need to pay particular attention to project design and appropriate

management plans to ensure greater flexibility which should enhance its successful implementation in diverse Pacific settings

7) Greater attention needs to be given to ensure that writers of situation analyses of various countries adopt a more consistent approach and style. This could be achieved through a more focused framework, which should include description of research methodologies apart from matters of content, and style of reporting. This recognizes that these are technically research studies which share similar methodology with evaluation. This will guard against the excesses of some writers from Governments who act as advocates for their Governments, which works against UNICEF's interests.

8) Some requirements relating to the fulfillment of professional standards of evaluation can be effectively addressed through in-house workshops and training which is recommended in the light of this evaluation even as a short term policy. In the long term monitoring, evaluation and its corollary research, need to be strengthened in an organization like UNICEF Pacific. Apart from its input in some specialized project, its greatest impact will be in its creative input in dealing with the many challenges of an increasingly globalize Pacific world .

9) UNICEF Pacific is to be commended for recognizing the significance of meta-evaluation and for that matter, the need for research and evaluation that inform its programming.

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