Executive Feedback

Title of the evaluation | District Health Performance Improvement Evaluation report
Sequence No | 2016-003
Region | ESAR
Office | Malawi
Evaluation Type | Strategy
Year of Report | 2016

OVERALL RATING

Fair

Meet UNICEF/UNEG standards for evaluation reports in some regards, but not all. Decision makers may continue to use the evaluation with caution, but substantive improvements are possible.

Implications:

Including more Evaluative questions (implying judgement about the value, merit or worth of the DHIP approach) - instead of more Explanatory questions (asking for "What or how things happened", instead of "How good" they were) in the Terms of reference would have been a good start. The evaluation team should have improved the questions, rephrasing them into more critical-thinking ones that would ask the evaluation to systematically collect and analyse data in order to answer them. The questions lead the evaluation, which is why the commissioners and/or the evaluators should have checked that they were real Evaluation questions before starting.

Lessons for future evaluations:

SECTION A: BACKGROUND (weight 5%)

Satisfactory

The report does a very good job setting up the situation in the National and District level Health System in Malawi, and rooting it with the need for the DHIP Approach. The intended results are specially clearly displayed in the report and in Annex A. Particular importance of this project for UNICEF or their actual role could be better elaborated in the report.

SECTION B: EVALUATION PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE (weight 5%)

Unsatisfactory

The report seems to fail to cover properly these elements. Starting by the fact that the ToR are redacted in terms of a Mid-term Review (focused on implementation) than a typical evaluation (focused in judgements about how “good” -relevant, effective, sustainable the DHPI approach is). The ToR very briefly mention (last line in Purpose, in page 79) how the evaluation results will be used: to draw Lessons Learned useful for future scale-up and the ongoing implementation in Malawi and other countries. The report does not cover these very clearly, stating instead many different objectives that are not "Evaluative" (implying a judgement) but only Exploratory (containing unjudged facts), such as to document the implementation of the DHPI (District Health Performance Improvement) approach in Malawi, describe the changes that resulted from the programme, document the enablers and barriers of implementation and describe resources needed to sustain/improve DHPI implementation.

SECTION C: EVALUATION METHODOLOGY (weight 15%)

Fair
The report reproduces very clearly reproduces the questions detailed in the ToR, the review found the questions were more the Exploratory kind, asking for data (Ex. What was the context? How were the activities implemented?), more typical of Mid-term reviews than Evaluative questions, questioning about judgments on the value, merit and worth of the object. The methodology section is quite complete and covers the requirements included in UNICEF and UNEG Standards for evaluation reports. However, the evaluation questions totally condition the evaluation exercise and they do not set the basis for getting good, evaluative responses as they do not ask the evaluation team to systematically collect and analyse information that will lead to judgements.

SECTION D: EVALUATION FINDINGS (weight 20%)

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As said before, most of the questions the report answers are not Evaluative questions therefore the Findings do not contain as much evidence about the merit, value or worth of the approach as expected. The Findings section is fragmented in many sub questions whose origin does not seem to be explained.

A very good thing this section contains is explicit questions and answers testing whether the initial assumptions implied in the theory of change were truth or achieved or not.

SECTION E: EVALUATION CONCLUSIONS & LESSONS LEARNED (weight 15%)

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Since most of the evaluation questions do not correspond to real evaluative, judgement questions but exploratory questions, the conclusions are slightly confusing since they try to draw final observations at evaluative levels, but not having discussed them properly in the Findings section.

For example, conclusions about Relevance include observations about the penetration level or buy-in situation (that are more related to preconditions or assumptions) or about Value added by the approach, which is very useful but it would fall more into the effects/results/effectiveness criteria/questions.

To highlight as a good note is the implications for Theory of Change explained in section 5.

SECTION F: RECOMMENDATIONS (weight 15%)

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Recommendations clearly identify their targets and are not excessive in number, however little information is given about how relatively important they are over the rest. The process for elaboration is not described and their link to the findings is very implicit.

SECTION G: EVALUATION STRUCTURE/PRESENTATION (weight 5%)

• • • • Satisfactory

The report is overall well structured. However, it does fragment the findings in too many short questions. Annexes do not include an evaluation matrix or tools guides.

SECTION H: EVALUATION PRINCIPLES (weight 15%)

• • • - - Unsatisfactory

The report's content and language does not address a Gender and Human Rights-based analysis explicitly. Only section 4.2.2.2. (4.2.2.2. Were solutions included and executed, including those addressing equity issues? ) very briefly discusses equity issues and in terms of coverage of unreached areas. The word "Gender" is not mentioned in the report, the evaluation questions are not phrased taking these issues into account, there is no specific Criteria concerning Equity or Gender and there are not Gender analysis or other tools that reflect that UNICEF's principles and bottom-line approach on GEEW was considered.

SECTION I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (weight 5%)
Satisfactory
The executive summary condenses well all the most relevant elements of the report and it is developed in a very reasonable length.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does the evaluation meet UN SWAP evaluation performance indicators?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Missing requirements</td>
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**Recommendations for improvement**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Section A</th>
<th>The report could describe the stakeholders' responsibilities in a more explicit way.</th>
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</table>
| Section B | It will be necessary to very clear answer the Purpose question (how the report/results will be used and by who) and then what are the clear outputs of the evaluation (meaning what it is trying to achieve, such as "have an independent assessment on how relevant, effective and sustainable (how "good") the approach is being so far."
| Section C | The evaluation team could have further worked on the evaluation questions proposed in the ToR and rephrase them so they include more evaluative, critical-thinking questions. |
| Section D | Having a better set of more evaluative questions would have made the Findings section further filled with evaluative evidence, instead of (or besides) much monitoring data about implementation. |
| Section E | Better formulated evaluation questions such as "How relevant the approach is? = To which extent it adapts to the context needs, to the policy environment?) would have led to more precise conclusions. |
| Section F | A clearer reference to the data justifying them and more information about their relative relevance would have been useful. |
| Section G | Including the evaluation matrix is always an important annex. |
| Section H | The report should have clearly made explicit how the evaluation was conducted with an Equity and Human Rights approach, that would have influenced the evaluation design and tools and the presentation of findings and the analysis that originated the conclusions and recommendations should also have demonstrated sensitivity to these issues that are core to UNICEF’s mandate. |
| Section I | Nothing to add. |