Executive Feedback

Title of the evaluation: Evaluation of Infant and Young Child Feeding Programme

Sequence No: 2016/007
Region: MENA
Office: Jordan
Coverage: Jordan
Evaluation Type: Programme
Year of Report: 2016

OVERALL RATING

Satisfactory

Implications:
Meets UNICEF/UNEG standards for evaluation reports and decision makers may use the evaluation with confidence

The report could be strengthened by considering the following improvements: ensuring that appendices are retrievable (this is easily done by embedding the annexes to the end of the draft report); clearly identifying unexpected findings or results within their own sub-section of the report; constructing lessons learned in a way that makes them generalizable and useful to other programmes in similar contexts; more explicitly identifying UNICEF’s contributions to the programme (both in-kind and financial); explicitly stating that recommendations are prioritized and clearly identifying the target group for action for each recommendation; providing a justification around the chosen level of participation of the evaluation reference group and stakeholders; clearly identifying the evaluation timeframe; and explicitly identifying the international conventions that outlined the right that children have to adequate healthcare.

SECTION A: BACKGROUND (weight 5%)

Satisfactory

The report provides a detailed description of the evolution of the programme and its implementation modalities. It also includes an excellent description of the context in which the programme operates including national and international policies and priorities, the status of breastfeeding in Jordanian and Syrian societies, and the importance of providing heath services to infants and lactating mothers. The evaluation team did a good job at reconstructing a Theory of Change Model that clearly outlines the results chain (with assumptions and risks) that was not initially present in the programme design. The report indicates that financial information around the contributions of programme partners can be found in Appendix B.

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

Highly Satisfactory

The evaluation purpose, including why the evaluation is needed, what information is needed, who needs the information, and how the information will be used is all clearly outlined. The evaluation objectives are clearly stated and the evaluation scope includes the entire programme in terms of interventions, timeframe, and geographic scope with the exception of a couple of camps (the reasons for excluding these areas are provided in the section on methodology).

SECTION C: EVALUATION METHODOLOGY (weight 15%)

Satisfactory
The methodology used an appropriate mixed methods approach to assess the programme through a case study analysis. A variety of data collection methods was employed and justification for the selection of these methods is provided. The analysis process used is very well explained and references the use of triangulation. The report also provides a list of evaluation limitations and challenges and outlines how ethical issues were considered. The evaluation report references evaluation questions and an evaluation matrix is supposed to be included as an appendix. However, the appendix is not retrievable (evaluation questions are, however, re-iterated in the findings section).

SECTION D: EVALUATION FINDINGS (weight 20%)

Satisfactory
Evaluation findings are drawn from sufficient levels and multiple lines of evidence and address the evaluation criteria and questions. The case study findings are examined against the programme's theory of change and an adequate assessment of the programme's M&E system is provided. Causal factors for the achievement and non-achievement of results are discussed throughout the findings. Unexpected findings are at times discussed but are not clearly identified.

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

Satisfactory
The conclusions are well written and provide insights and analysis that go beyond the findings. They present both the programme's strengths and areas for improvement and present some discussion around the foreseeable implications of the findings for the future of the programme. Lessons learned are useful and are presented under their own sub-section. However, they are phrased in a way that is overly specific to the programme under evaluation to be useful to other programs in similar contexts and should be re-written to indicate their wider significance.

SECTION F: RECOMMENDATIONS (weight 15%)

Satisfactory
The recommendations are logically derived from the findings and conclusions and will likely be quite useful to decision makers. The draft report explains that stakeholders were consulted when developing the recommendations. However, although recommendations are numbered, it is not entirely clear that they are prioritized. In addition, the target group for action for each recommendation is sometimes but not consistently identified.

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

Fair
The opening pages contain most of the necessary elements but do not specify the timeframe of the evaluation. The list of annexes is particularly robust and includes the ToRs, an evaluation matrix, lists of data sources, and copies of the evaluation tools. However, the annexes themselves are irretrievable and are not attached to the end of the report. The report is well structured and easy to navigate with one section logically leading to the next.

SECTION H: EVALUATION PRINCIPLES (weight 15%)

Satisfactory
The draft report mainstreams issues around human rights and equity, by regularly referencing duty bearers and rights holders and by including an equity analysis throughout the findings. The report does not, however, explicitly reference international frameworks that reiterate children's rights to health and well-being. The evaluation was guided by an evaluation reference group but their level of participation is not clearly described or justified. Gender equality considerations are thoroughly mainstreamed throughout the report and particular attention is paid to the involvement of men in the initiative.

SECTION I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (weight 5%)
Satisfactory

The Executive Summary is very well written and is strong at highlighting the most important findings and conclusions. It is an excellent length to be used by decision-makers (6 pages) and can easily stand on its own. It would have been even stronger if it had included a summary of the lessons learned.

Does the evaluation meet UN SWAP evaluation performance indicators?

| 11 | Exceeds requirements |

Recommendations for improvement

| Section A | The report could be strengthened by highlighting the importance of the programme to UNICEF both in terms of its strategic priorities as well as its financial contribution. |
| Section B | This section observes good practices. No further improvement is required. |
| Section C | Evaluation questions are identified in an evaluation matrix, which forms part of the appendices, but which is unfortunately irretrievable. It is important to always ensure that all of the appendices are retrievable. This is most easily done by directly attaching them to the end of the draft report. |
| Section D | It would help the reader to identify unexpected findings or results if they were presented within their own sub-section. |
| Section E | Lessons learned should be generalizable so that they can be easily applied to other programmes in similar contexts. They should not specifically reference the programme under review and should be general statements that can contribute to general knowledge. |
| Section F | To ensure that the reader understands that the recommendations are prioritized, it is a good idea to include a sentence that explicitly states this. Additionally, it is important for each recommendation to explicitly articulate the target group for action, even if it may be obvious to the evaluators. |
| Section G | It is important to include the evaluation timeframe within the opening pages and to include accessible annexes (it is best to attach them to the end of the draft report). |
| Section H | It is good practice to explicitly reference the international conventions that articulate the rights of the rights holders (i.e. the right for children to have access to good health). Also, the level of participation of the evaluation reference group could be explained in greater detail and it would be good to include a justification for why this level of participation was used. |
| Section I | A summary of the lessons learned can be a useful addition to an Executive Summary. |