Executive Feedback

Title of the evaluation: Evaluation of PMTCT programme in EQG (2015-2018)
Sequence No: 2018/001
Region: WCAR
Office: Equatorial Guinea
Coverage: Equatorial Guinea
Evaluation Type: Project
Year of Report: 2018

OVERALL RATING
- Satisfactory

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

SECTION A: BACKGROUND (weight 5%)
- Satisfactory

The report presents a good description of the context of HIV in Equatorial Guinea (EQG) and provides background information on the way both HIV at large and HIV vertical transmission has been tackled by the national government. Also, the report clearly explains the initiative, its location and timeframe, its implementation history and current status, as well as the types of beneficiaries served by the initiative and their needs. On the other hand, the report does not discuss the way this particular initiative should be understood within the overall UNICEF response to HIV in the country, region or at the global level. Similarly, the report does not clearly identify all of the main implementing partners and their roles and contributions in financial terms or otherwise.

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

The report describes the purpose of the evaluation as twofold, i.e. learning and accountability purposes (vertical accountability to donors, and horizontal accountability to beneficiaries). Similarly, the report explains the specific objectives of the evaluation, which include determining UNICEF’s contributions to the national government’s work and its strategic positioning regarding UNICEF’s partnerships with other partners. Also, changes made to the ToRs are well explained, i.e. some evaluation questions were eliminated in order to better focus on the field work. Furthermore, the report presents a table with the intended use and intended primary and secondary end users of this evaluation. Finally, the report does a good job at describing the scope of the evaluation in terms of its timeframe, geographic, institutional and geographic coverage, and a brief description of that which was not covered by the evaluation is presented as well.
SECTION C: EVALUATION METHODOLOGY (weight 15%)

Satisfactory

The report clearly indicates the scope of analysis and provides a description of the evaluation criteria used, which are aligned with the standard OECD/DAC criteria with the exception of impact for which the report provides a justification. In addition, the report includes two extra criteria on cross-cutting issues, i.e. UNICEF strategic positioning and leadership, and Equity, Gender and Human Rights. Also, the evaluation questions are presented in the methodology section of the report and a full evaluation matrix is included in Annex 5, which clearly lists the data sources and respective data collection methods. This is good practice. Furthermore, the report provides a clear explanation of the sample techniques used and a rationale is presented for the decisions made in this regard. The report is strong at describing in detail the data collection tools, data analysis methods as well as triangulation used between different levels of evidence. Likewise, the report presents a table with methodological limitations that are coupled with proposed mitigation strategies in each case. On the other hand, even if in Annex 8 the report discusses the ethical obligations of the evaluator, the report does not sufficiently define the ethical safeguards to protect participants used during the conduct of the evaluation.

SECTION D: EVALUATION FINDINGS (weight 20%)

Satisfactory

The report presents findings that are organized around the different evaluation criteria and that adequately respond to the evaluation questions. Also, the report provides caveats about the way the findings are organized, with a colour code referring to key and secondary evaluation questions as well as the existence of combined questions due to their interconnectedness. Furthermore, the report makes reference to both strengths and shortcomings of the initiative and they are supported by a good deal of evidence that is drawn from different levels. In addition, each finding clearly states which methods and sources were triangulated, which is very useful to the reader. Both positive and negative unexpected findings are properly accounted for in finding 6.2.5. On the other hand, even though the report provides some information on the initiative's M&E system, this is not described in sufficient detail in the specific finding dedicated to this (6.4.1) and the way this system informed decision-making during the implementation of the initiative could have been more comprehensive.

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

Highly Satisfactory
The report presents conclusions that are correctly drawn from the information presented in the findings section. Moreover, the conclusions are presented in a table format which features the explicit relationship between findings and conclusions, including a summary of the findings and the consequences and implications of them. Furthermore, for clarity purposes, the section where the respective findings were presented is specified in each case. Finally, the report presents lessons learned that are correctly identified and that capture the general relevance they could have in other programmes and contexts.

SECTION F: RECOMMENDATIONS (weight 15%)

Highly Satisfactory
The report presents recommendations that are correctly drawn from the information in the findings and conclusions and appear to be realistic. The report clearly lists the recommendations in a table format indicating their priority level and stating that they are addressed to the MoHWB and UNICEF as stakeholder groups for action. Furthermore, the process followed in developing the recommendations is clearly outlined as well as the level of stakeholder involvement through workshops, which is also detailed.

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

Highly Satisfactory
The evaluation report follows a logical structure with sections and subsections that are clearly indicated and that observe the standard order for this type of report, which makes it easy to navigate. Also, the opening pages contain all of the elements that are necessary to allow for a quick understanding of the object of the evaluation and the evaluation itself, e.g. the name of the initiative, its location and timeframe, name of the evaluator, submission date of the report, as well as a table of content, list of figures and acronyms. The annexes are also complete and add credibility to the report.

SECTION H: EVALUATION PRINCIPLES (weight 15%)

Satisfactory
The report clearly states that the design of the evaluation used a Gender and Equity-focused approach, which devoted special attention to Human and Child Rights issues. This is reflected in the language used throughout the report. Similarly, the report provides a description of the way a gender and equity perspective was integrated in the design and implementation of the evaluation. Furthermore, the report does a good job at describing the way stakeholders contributed to the evaluation beyond their role as informants, and the existence of an Evaluation Reference Group is explicitly referred to. The scope of analysis, as well as the subject matter of the initiative itself, ensures that GEEW was fully integrated in the evaluation. Furthermore, a full gender analysis is provided, which includes a comparison of the ways the initiative affected women and men differently, and this analysis is consistent throughout the sections of the report. On the other hand, the methodology does not explicitly discuss the ways in which a gender perspective was integrated in the data collection methods or analysis.
SECTION I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (weight 5%)

Highly Satisfactory

The executive summary provides a concise overview of the initiative and the main elements of the evaluation in order to effectively inform end users. Among other elements, the executive summary provides a brief overview of the national context in EQG regarding the HIV, the PMTCT initiative, as well as the methodology of the evaluation, and key findings, conclusions and recommendations. The executive summary only makes reference to information that is further developed in the body of the report.

Does the evaluation meet UN SWAP evaluation performance indicators?

8 Meets requirements

Recommendations for improvement

This is a good quality evaluation report that can be used with confidence by decision-makers. The report observes good practices in its structure and presentation and its reading is facilitated because of this. Also, the report does a good job at discussing the specific ways in which stakeholders participated in the design and key moments of the evaluation through their guidance and feedback, which makes for a particularly useful evaluation report. For future evaluations, the evaluation manager may wish to consider providing more guidance to the evaluation team around the need to clearly identify UNICEF's contributions to the object of evaluation and to explicitly identify the importance of the object of evaluation to the organisation. Additionally, the evaluation manager could have encouraged the evaluators to provide a more in-depth assessment of the programme's M&E system and how it was used to inform decision-making.

Lessons for managing future evaluations:

GEROS standards require evaluation reports to explicitly discuss the relative importance of the object of the evaluation in relation to UNICEF. In this case, it would be the relative importance to the UNICEF country programme, or the organisation's national, regional or global programming regarding HIV. Also, the report should list all of the key implementing stakeholders and provide a clear description of their respective roles and contributions (including those of UNICEF) in financial terms or otherwise. This could be done using a table format.

Section A

This section observes good practices. No further improvement is required.

Section B

GEROS standards require that the ethical safeguards used to protect participants during the conduct of the evaluation be explicitly discussed. These include, but are not limited to, the way an ethical approach was mainstreamed in every data collection activity (KII, FGD, etc.), as well as in any other activity where beneficiaries or other stakeholders were engaged during the conduct of the evaluation. To learn more about the UNEG Ethical Guidelines, please see: http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/102

Section C

Findings regarding the initiative's M&E system should be as comprehensive as possible, i.e. include its strengths and weaknesses through concrete examples, and the way that monitoring data informed decision-making - or the reasons why this was not possible - should be discussed in detail.

Section D

This section observes good practices. No further improvement is required.
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<th>Section</th>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Recommendations observe good practices. No further improvement is required.</td>
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<td>G</td>
<td>The report observes good practices. No further improvements are required.</td>
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<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Good practices suggest that the methodology section explicitly discuss the ways in which a gender-sensitive approach was applied in the data collection activities as well as in the data analysis.</td>
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<td>I</td>
<td>The executive summary observes good practices. No further improvement is required.</td>
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