

Executive Feedback

Title of the evaluation	EVALUATION OF UNICEF'S Coverage and Quality in Complex Humanitarian Emergencies
Sequence No	2018/018
Region	HQ
Office	Evaluation Office
Coverage	Global

Evaluation Type Thematic area

Year of Report 2018

OVERALL RATING



Satisfactory

Meets UNICEF/UNEG standards for evaluation reports and decision makers may

Implications: use the evaluation with confidence

SECTION A: BACKGROUND (weight 5%)



Satisfactory

The object of the evaluation is well described. The report includes a description of the object of the evaluation, i.e. coverage and quality of humanitarian responses, along with the contexts in which some of the humanitarian responses take place around the world. The report provides a complete description of the coverage of many humanitarian responses including the budgets involved, although other implementing actors (other agencies and INGOs) and their roles and contributions could be discussed in further detail. Also, the report describes the numbers of beneficiaries of the humanitarian responses over the last years and the most important challenges of operating in contexts of humanitarian crises. This helps the reader's understanding of the particularities of measuring quality and coverage of the initiatives undertaken under these circumstances. Finally, the analytical framework of the evaluation is clearly outlined.

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



Highly Satisfactory

The purpose of the evaluation is clearly stated and the intended use and primary users are explicitly listed. The purpose of this evaluation is described as generating practical solutions that can inform how UNICEF improves the coverage and quality of its humanitarian response. Furthermore, the intended use and intended primary users of the evaluation are duly described and the scope of the evaluation is explained in terms of its temporal coverage (the period 2015-2018). Additionally, the analytical framework used is described in order to circumscribe what the evaluation was set out to explore. Similarly, the geographic scope of the evaluation, the country-case studies and a rationale for the decisions made in this regard are provided.

SECTION C: EVALUATION METHODOLOGY (weight 15%)

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Satisfactory

The report provides a discussion regarding the rationale for conducting the present evaluation, i.e. the need to better understand, analyse and address the challenges of achieving coverage and quality in crises. Since the object of the evaluation is UNICEF's humanitarian responses, the report does not use the standard OECD/DAC criteria, i.e. relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact. Instead, the report explains that an analysis framework and key evaluation questions are used to guide the assessment and a full evaluation matrix is included in Annex 2, which includes all of the evaluation questions and sub-questions as well as the indicators and data collection sources and methods used. The report explains that the evaluation used mixed methods including a document review, Key Informant Interviews, Focus Group Discussions, as well as desk and field-based case studies. Similarly, the data analysis methods and synthesis used are explained as well as the quality assurance process through triangulation of evidence from different sources and levels. Sampling methods are also explained and a very complete explanation of the criteria used in this regard is provided in Annex 9. On the other hand, while methodological and operational limitations are correctly identified and explained, mitigation strategies for these are not consistently provided. Finally, the report discusses the ethical considerations applied during the conduct of the evaluation and a link is provided that outlines the ethical obligations of the evaluators and research ethics involving children.

SECTION D: EVALUATION FINDINGS (weight 20%)

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Satisfactory

The report does a good job at presenting particularly robust findings that are supported by a great deal of evidence that is organized in a clear fashion and drawn from different sources, referring to both strengths and areas for improvement. The findings are organized so as to respond to key evaluation questions, and the initiative's performance is consistently supported by relevant concrete examples of country case studies and with reference to the results framework. On the other hand, the report does not present a description and analysis of unintended positive or negative effects. Finally, one of the strongest points of this evaluation report is the description and deep analysis it provides of the humanitarian responses' M&E system. The report provides a number of concrete examples of its performance in different contexts including an analysis of the way this system informed decision-making and, especially ways in which monitoring and evaluation processes and mechanisms could be strengthened.

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

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Satisfactory

The report presents conclusions that are correctly drawn from the evidence presented in the findings section. Furthermore, conclusions provide a much-needed overview of the strengths and areas for improvement in the coverage and quality of UNICEF's humanitarian responses. The conclusions have a clear forward-looking perspective and discuss foreseeable implications on future programming in this area. Finally, the report presents lessons learned that are formulated so as to signify what wider relevance they could have in other initiatives and different contexts, although they are scattered through the findings section as opposed to being clearly presented within their own section.

SECTION F: RECOMMENDATIONS (weight 15%)



Satisfactory

Recommendations are logically derived from the information provided in the findings and conclusions and are robust in the detail they provide about the way UNICEF should go about their implementation. Also, the report is strong at presenting recommendations that are clustered into five different strategic areas and provide clear identification of the target organisational level for action in each case. Conversely, the process followed in developing the recommendations as well as the level of stakeholder participation in their validation are not discussed in the report.

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



Satisfactory

The report observes for the most part the standard order of sections. However, the report is excessively long (over 120 pages). The opening pages of the report include most of the necessary elements to readily inform the reader including the name of the evaluation object, name of the commissioning organization, date of submission of the report, as well as a table of contents, and acronyms. On the other hand, the name of the evaluator(s) or the evaluation firm and the timeframe to be evaluated are not included. Finally, the report provides nine (9) annexes in a separate document which provide valuable information such as the evaluation matrix, the ToR, bibliography, list of people interviewed, etc., which greatly contribute to increase the credibility of the evaluation.

SECTION H: EVALUATION PRINCIPLES (weight 15%)



Satisfactory

The report explicitly states the use of a rights-based approach and the use of a language that reflects this throughout the report is consistent. For instance, the report includes a detailed description of the legal basis for humanitarian action and International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law are explicitly referred to and described. On the other hand, while the report states that an evaluation reference group was in place, the impossibility of having their feedback in a timely manner is stated among with the limitations of this report. The report correctly assesses the extent to which equity and gender considerations were integrated in the design and implementation of the initiative. Furthermore, even though a gender perspective is not evident from the scope of analysis through the inclusion of gender-related questions, the findings, conclusions and recommendations include a meaningful gender analysis which cascades down through conclusions and recommendations.

SECTION I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (weight 5%)

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Fair

The report presents an executive summary that provides a brief overview of the purpose of the evaluation, its methodology, key findings, conclusions and recommendations. Furthermore, the executive summary only includes information that is developed in further depth in the body of the report. On the other hand, the executive summary does not include a description of UNICEF's humanitarian response at global scale and does not provide a sample of the types of humanitarian work carried out around the globe. Furthermore, the executive summary is too lengthy (15 pages) which by far exceeds the recommended length and challenges the purpose of such a summary.

Does the evaluation meet UN SWAP evaluation performance indicators?

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Approaches requirements

Recommendations for improvement

<p>Lessons for managing future evaluations:</p>	<p>This is overall a good quality report and can be used with confidence by decision-makers. It is admirable that UNICEF has undertaken the task of evaluating such a complex and non-traditional object such as the coverage and quality of humanitarian responses. The information contained in this report is supported by a robust and sustained analysis of UNICEF's humanitarian monitoring system that provides important information to contribute towards future strengthening. In the future, the evaluation manager may wish to include a question within the ToRs to identify unexpected effects and the manager may wish to ask the evaluation team to present lessons learned within their own separate section. It is also essential that the Executive Summary remain of a reasonable length. In the future, the evaluation manager should insist that the Executive Summary be kept at no longer than 6 pages.</p>
<p>Section A</p>	<p>It would be useful to include further discussion of other implementing agencies and their mandates as well as INGOs, national governments, etc., and how UNICEF has collaborated with them.</p>
<p>Section B</p>	<p>This section observes good practices. No further improvement is required.</p>
<p>Section C</p>	<p>It is good practice to provide mitigation strategies for any limitations faced by the evaluation in order to overcome data gaps and avoid bias.</p>

Section D	Even if the object of the evaluation may not lend itself to a deep analysis of unintended effects, it is good practice to include an assessment of any occurrence of such unexpected results as they may inform of any issues that were not captured by the design of the responses or in the scope of the evaluation.
Section E	For the sake of clarity, it is recommended that lessons learned from the evaluation be presented within their own section.
Section F	Good practices recommend to include a description of the way recommendations were developed and formulated in order to provide more credibility. Also, the level of stakeholder involvement in the validation of these normally affects the level of ownership by stakeholders and helps to ensure that recommendations are realistic and actionable.
Section G	The opening pages should include all of the necessary elements to ensure that readers can readily grasp the timeframe to be evaluated, the fact that this is a global evaluation, and the names of the evaluators or evaluation firm. Also, the evaluation report should ideally not exceed 60 pages in order to observe good practices, with any extra information being annexed to the report.
Section H	It is important to include a more explicit description of the ERG, i.e. its composition and its contributions to the evaluation purpose. Additionally, the gender sensitive elements of the evaluation scope and methodology could be strengthened. To learn more about gender sensitive evaluations, please see: http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/resources/guide/gender-responsive_evaluation_handbook
Section I	The idea of an executive summary is to provide high-level users with a succinct yet concise overview of the nature of the object of the evaluation as well as the main elements included in the body of the report. Therefore, the executive summary should be short (6 pages max.) and ensure that all of the elements are provided in order to effectively inform high-level users. In this case, the executive summary should include a relevant description of some (or at least one) of the humanitarian responses that UNICEF carries out in order to exemplify the ways in which their coverage and quality are measured or the challenges in doing so.