Executive Feedback

Title of the evaluation
End line Evaluation of the Project for Improving Access to Quality Health and Education Services in the Northern and Upper East Regions of Ghana

Sequence No
2017/018

Region
WCAR

Office
Ghana

Coverage
Ghana (Northern and Upper East Regions)

Evaluation Type
Programme

Year of Report
2017

OVERALL RATING

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Fair

Implications:
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.

Lessons for future evaluations:
Overall it is a report that could be used to discuss changes in provision during the lifetime of the programme (but not against targets), and with some qualitative anecdotal insights into the programme. However it does not meet the ToR as it does not address the evaluation sub-questions systematically and therefore falls short on the requirements, and does not have the methodological rigour (e.g. lack of comparison with targets for educational component) to be used with great confidence. It raises questions as to whether the inception report was sufficiently convincing for the evaluation to go ahead.

SECTION A: BACKGROUND (weight 5%)

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Unsatisfactory

The description of the context provides a useful overview of health and education facilities in Ghana, with some regional information regarding the relevant districts. These could have been disaggregated more clearly by gender and socio-economic levels. There is limited and only broad description of the programme which is lacking sufficient information about the scope, geography, type of support and target beneficiaries of the programme. The results chain and logic is not described which is a significant omission.

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

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Fair
The purpose of the evaluation is set out as per the ToRs (and the lines of enquiry are included in a later section). The scope also follows the ToR (geographic areas, timeframe) but does not state the reasons. In terms of the intended uses although some of the description from the ToRs has been used, it is surprising that the new Country Programme is not specified and that the evaluation will be used to shape it (as is clearly articulated within the ToRs). In addition the organisations that the evaluation will be shared with are not mentioned.

SECTION C: EVALUATION METHODOLOGY (weight 15%)

Unsatisfactory

It is surprising that there is no reference within the methodology to the critical evaluation matrix sub-questions that are within the ToRs and that should guide the entire evaluation. Only the four overarching questions are included. There is also no assessment of the baseline survey and how valuable and relevant it is for health (but there is a clear explanation of mitigating the lack of baseline in the area of education). It would be helpful to have had the baseline indicators included within the annexe (a few are mentioned within the text). The technical aspects of the sampling process are useful, but the overall population for the sampling frame are not always included (not helped by a lack of description of the overall geographic scope of the programme). There are some surprising gaps in terms of reaching different perspectives, in particular that no doctors were interviewed, and so few pregnant women relative to post-natal groups.

SECTION D: EVALUATION FINDINGS (weight 20%)

Unsatisfactory

The review does not address the overall evaluation matrix systematically or sufficiently. The OECD criterion are used to structure the findings, but the sub-headings or content do not align with the evaluation sub-questions questions for example there is limited discussion about efficiency. The baseline data (only available for health components) and endline data are the key elements of the analysis, as well as qualitative discussion. It is also clear that a broad mix of perspectives was heard. For education, the findings presented (e.g. for education - the number of schools, enrolment rates, teacher - pupil ratio) are presented but are not linked to any programme (or district) targets. In addition the contribution of the programme/funding to these changes is not analysed in depth. There is little discussion of other monitoring or the value of the monitoring system/s. The analysis of the quality (beyond provision) of the intervention (towards health and educational outcomes) which is derived from focus group discussions is broad and anecdotal, and could be strengthened with further analysis of specific topics that arose, and the extent and degree of perspectives that emerged. A positive aspect of the report is the disaggregation of the statistics by gender and some linked analysis.

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

Fair
The conclusions are largely output focused on particular services (which is quite useful) and then discuss the evaluation criteria quite broadly. There is more focus on health than educational outcomes. The lessons learnt are not necessarily new, and it is not discussed as to how they could be applied in different contexts. There is no mention of gender or equity considerations within the conclusions.

SECTION F: RECOMMENDATIONS (weight 15%)

Fair

The recommendations are largely about the continuation of the services and appear sensible and not surprising. They do not discuss the resource implications for the various Government agencies. They are not prioritised.

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

Satisfactory

The report is logically structured and easy to navigate. The initial pages contain all of the aspects expected including a contents page with all required information, a (very long) list of contents and list of acronyms. The report would benefit from numbering of paragraphs. Some sentences require further clarification. There are a few minor issues that would benefit from being reviewed including: some of the acronyms are not written in full the first time that they are used, particularly in the executive summary (e.g. CHPS, CHN, CHO, MHNS in the findings of the executive summary); some statistics that are presented require further explanation e.g. pp18 baseline and endline evaluations figures (it is not clear what the figures are out of e.g. 5.8 of what?); numbers should be written out or digits but not both (side by side).

SECTION H: EVALUATION PRINCIPLES (weight 15%)

Unsatisfactory
1. GEEW is not integrated in the evaluation scope of analysis or indicators. It does not analyze how GEEW objectives and GEEW mainstreaming principles were included in the intervention design and how GEEW results have been achieved.

2. The evaluation matrix within the ToR does not include gender-related specific questions but they are implicitly included given the nature of the health component of the programme (includes antenatal and post-natal health). However it should also be noted that the evaluation sub-questions were not systematically addressed within the evaluation.

3. The evaluation methodology does not explicitly adopt a gender approach, although there are some aspects of the methodology which mean that there is scope for gender considerations to emerge. The nature of the health programme in particular (antenatal/postnatal aspects) means that there was a focus on mother-only groups (but it does not go beyond this to considered gendered perspectives). Mixed methods are used (FGD, KII, surveys) which means that there is increased likelihood of capturing diverse perspectives.

4. Within the findings, there is use of secondary data round gender and educational access and attainment within the education component. The nature of the health aspects (antenatal, post-natal) again also means that gender was considered. However there is no overall 'gender lens' to elicit the views of women and men and consider women's differential access to resources and decision-making; and the conclusions and recommendations do not include a gender analysis.

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SECTION I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (weight 5%)

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<td></td>
<td>The executive summary covers all necessary elements and the salient points in the report but it is quite long and could be more concise in places, and focus on the key 'headlines'. It does not include sufficient information to understand the intervention, which is a general reflection of the report as a whole.</td>
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Does the evaluation meet UN SWAP evaluation performance indicators?

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
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Recommendations for improvement

**Section A**

Please address the following priorities: Add a description of the programme's objectives, type and nature of support and intended beneficiaries. In addition include intended results and theory of change/logframe so that readers get more of a sense of the programme and what it aims to achieve. It would also be helpful to disaggregate the contextual information about gender and socio-economic levels (by quintile) for each region and how this matches with the support that is being provided.

**Section B**

Please address the following priorities: 1) mention that the evaluation will be used to inform the development of the Country Programme; 2) also include the organisations that the report will be shared with as per the ToRs.
Section C
There are a number of priorities to address: 1) please include discussion of the use of the evaluation matrix that is included within the ToRs (annexe 1); 2) Please include a description of the baseline survey for health and how useful/credible it is; 3) Please include a map to show where the programme is operating, and the sub-districts which were the sample used for the evaluation. 4) Please justify decisions where there is a low contribution to the evaluation e.g. that no doctors were interviewed. There is guidance from UNICEF about evaluation criteria and questions in the following document:

Section D
It is highly recommended that in the future there results framework is presented and that all findings are assessed against any results.

Section E
The conclusions could be improved at this stage by: including more regarding the education components of the programme; trying to address sub-questions (annexe 1 of the ToR) of the evaluation when discussing each criteria.

Section F
At this stage of the report, helpful improvements to the recommendations would involve: discussing the resource implications of the recommendations in specific terms; prioritisation of the recommendations.

Section G
Please review the document for a few areas that need to be addressed: 1) check that all acronyms are used in full the first time that they are used; 2) ensure that all statistics are clearly explained so that they are meaningful; 3) include numbers written out or as digits (but not both).

Section H
Please review the resources on the ‘betterevaluation’ site regarding gender. http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/themes/gender_analysis. It is important to ensure that any evaluation matrix in the future specifically includes subquestions focused upon gender. Although the subquestions were not used in this evaluation report systematically, including gender within the evaluation matrix should mean that the methodology also includes an approach and methods to elicit gendered perceptions; and that the findings, conclusions and recommendations will also apply a gendered approach.

Section I
It would be helpful to reduce the executive summary length in places (e.g. tighten the background section, reduce some of the detail within the findings section). However 1-2 paragraphs need to be added which describe the purpose and activities of the programme.