Executive Feedback

Title of the evaluation: Impact Evaluation of the UNICEF Supported Birth Registration Programme in Nigeria 2012-2016
Sequence No: 2018/001
Region: WCAR
Office: Nigeria
Coverage: Nigeria
Evaluation Type: Programme
Year of Report: 2018

OVERALL RATING

Highly Satisfactory
Exceeds UNICEF/UNEG standards for evaluation reports and decision makers may use the evaluation with a high degree of confidence

Implications:

SECTION A: BACKGROUND (weight 5%)

Highly Satisfactory

The report presents a particularly robust description of the object of the evaluation, including its geographic coverage, timeframe, budget and programming milestones, as well as an overview of the country profile in terms of demographics and social-economic indicators, geopolitical zones, with specific focus on the birth registration global context and a retrospective description of the national registration system. Similarly, the relative importance and significance of the BRP for UNICEF is addressed. Furthermore, the report presents a full description of the different components of the programme and presents a very complete Theory of Change (ToC), which was reconstructed by the Evaluation Team in collaboration with the Evaluation Steering Committee. Similarly, the report provides complete lists of both primary and secondary beneficiaries and how they benefited from the programme. Finally, implementing stakeholders associated to UNICEF, as well as their corresponding roles and contributions, are listed in a clear table format.

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

Highly Satisfactory

The report clearly states the twofold purpose of the evaluation, i.e. accountability and learning. Furthermore, the report includes a complete discussion of the rationale for the conduct of this evaluation, including its significance for UNICEF and key stakeholders. Additionally, a description is provided of its intended use as well as intended primary and secondary users. Finally, the report describes the thematic, chronological and geographic scope of the evaluation, and some explanations are provided to explain the decisions made in this sense.
SECTION C: EVALUATION METHODOLOGY (weight 15%)

Highly Satisfactory

The evaluation used guiding criteria aligned with standard OECD/DAC evaluation criteria along with Equity and HRBA, whose inclusion is explicitly discussed and justified. Key evaluation questions are included to signify what fell under each criterion in the context of this evaluation. Furthermore, a full Evaluation Matrix is included in Annex 5, which specifies evaluation questions, subquestions, indicators used, data sources, and data collection methods. The report explains the use of mixed methods, and a justification around the selection of these particular data collection tools and methods is provided in detail. The use of the sampling strategies used and a rationale for the decisions made in this regard are also addressed; and the data analysis methods used, data quality assurance along with the triangulation of evidence from different sources and levels are explained and discussed. Likewise, the report duly lists a number of methodological and operational limitations paired with mitigation strategies in each case. Finally, the report presents a thorough discussion around the ethical considerations applied during the conduct of the evaluation as well as the ethical obligations of the evaluators. In addition to this, the Appendices 13 & 16 present UNEG prescribed ethical norms and standards for conducting evaluation and quality of reporting, among other elements.

SECTION D: EVALUATION FINDINGS (weight 20%)

Satisfactory

The report presents robust findings that are correctly supported by collected evidence that is drawn from different sources. They also present a sound analysis that makes reference to causality for each result. The findings highlight both strengths and areas for improvement, and the unintended positive impact of the initiative is addressed and analyzed. However, no negative unintended effects are discussed or referred to. The findings are organized according to the evaluation criteria and respond to key evaluation questions in each case. They consistently assess the initiative's performance in relation to its results framework. Finally, the report provides a complete assessment of the initiative’s M&E system, which is described in the analysis of the use of ICT for Data Management and Progress Tracking (Output 7), and is singled out as the most successful and effective output of the initiative.

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

Highly Satisfactory

Conclusions are logically derived from the evidence presented in the findings section and they provide an added value level of analysis around the initiative's overall strengths and areas for improvement under each evaluation criterion. Also, the conclusions include a forward-looking perspective and discuss some foreseeable implications of the observed evidence on future programming. Finally, in addition to good practices, the report presents lessons learned that are correctly identified and formulated so as to signify their general relevance to other initiatives in different contexts.
SECTION F: RECOMMENDATIONS (weight 15%)

Highly Satisfactory

Recommendations are based on the information provided in the findings and conclusions and provide sufficient detail regarding their implementation. Furthermore, recommendations are clearly presented in a table format that provides clear identification of the primary and secondary target stakeholders for action in each case, along with their level of priority. Finally, the process followed in developing the recommendations is described in detail and the stakeholder involvement in this process is referred to in the section dedicated to stakeholder roles and contributions.

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

Satisfactory

The report follows, in general, a logical structure and the standard order of sections is observed. The opening pages of the report include all of the necessary elements to provide the reader with a swift understanding of the content of the document. They include the title of the evaluation object, name of the commissioning organization, name of the firm in charge of the evaluation, timeframe to be evaluated, date of submission of the report, as well as a table of contents, and acronyms. On the other hand, the body of the report has over 100 pages which exceeds the recommended length for this type of reports. Finally, the annexes are particularly complete and include numerous elements that contribute to increase the overall quality of the report.

SECTION H: EVALUATION PRINCIPLES (weight 15%)

Highly Satisfactory

The report observes good practices in its inclusion of a rights-based approach and references to rights frameworks such as Article 7 of the ‘United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)’ which is about ‘birth registration’ being a ‘fundamental’ right of every child. Furthermore, the report is particularly strong at describing the involvement of stakeholders throughout the conduct of the evaluation through a Steering Committee and their specific contributions at key moments during the process is discussed in detail. The report correctly assesses the way a gender and equity perspective was integrated in the design and implementation of the initiative. Finally, the scope of analysis fully integrates a gender perspective through a cross-cutting evaluation criterion and evaluation questions on this issue. Likewise, the methodology observes good practices as to the way gender considerations were mainstreamed through the methodological instruments and analysis. Finally, the findings, conclusions and recommendations present a consistent and meaningful gender analysis.

SECTION I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (weight 5%)

Satisfactory
The report presents an executive summary that is complete and includes a brief overview of the national context, the initiative, as well as the evaluation 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 report is too lengthy (9 pages) which my hinder its usability by high-level users.

Does the evaluation meet UN SWAP evaluation performance indicators?

| 9 | Meets requirements |

Recommendations for improvement

This is a high-quality evaluation report that can not only be used with confidence by decision-makers but that also constitutes good practices in evaluation in many respects. The background section and description of the evaluation are particularly thorough. The evaluation methodology is strong and the report provides a very good rationale for the methodological decisions made. Findings are based on solid evidence and present a good quality analysis. Conclusions and lessons learned are correctly presented and provide added-value, and recommendations are appropriate and actionable. The report is particularly strong at integrating the cross-cutting issues of human rights, equity, and gender equality. The decision to engage stakeholders throughout the evaluation process to provide guidance and feedback to the evaluation team likely contributed to the high quality evaluation product. Additionally, it is evident that the evaluators and evaluation manager are familiar with GEROS standards.

Lessons for managing future evaluations:

| Section A | This section observes good practices. No further improvement is required. |
| Section B | This section observes good practices. No further improvement is required. |
| Section C | This section observes good practices. No further improvement is required. |
| Section D | The findings section observe good practices. However, when discussing the unintended effects of the initiative, it is important that the report include the occurrence of any negative unexpected results or impact in addition to positive ones. In case such unintended effects were not observed, this should explicitly stated. |
| Section E | This section observes good practices. No further improvement is required. |
| Section F | Recommendations observe good practices. No further improvement is required. |
| Section G | The report should ideally not exceed 60 pages in order to maximize its usability by decision-makers. It is therefore recommended that some information be further synthetized or added to the annexes. For instance, some of the analysis in the findings section related to efficiency could be moved to annex. |
| Section H | This section observes good practices. No further improvement is required. |
| Section I | The purpose of the executive summary is to readily inform high-level users about the most important information contained in the report. Therefore, it is important that the executive summary be further synthetized so that it does not exceed 5-6 pages. |