Executive Feedback

Title of the evaluation: End of project Evaluation Enhanced Resilience Karamoja Program (ERKP)
Sequence No: 2017/020
Region: ESAR
Office: Uganda
Coverage: Uganda
Evaluation Type: Programme
Year of Report: 2017

OVERALL RATING
• • • - Fair

Implications:
Meets 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.

The evaluation is based on a mixed methods methodology and the report presents interesting findings and useful recommendations. There are, however, areas where the report could be significantly improved. The methodology section lacks detail around why the chosen evaluation methods were selected and why they were appropriate for addressing the evaluation purpose and objectives. Additionally, the report should discuss how the evaluators met the UNEG Ethical Standards.

The findings could be significantly strengthened by placing greater emphasis on exploring the reasons for the programme’s accomplishment and non-accomplishment of results. This analysis is crucial for understanding where programme improvements can be made. The conclusions and lessons learned need to be re-formulated in order to be in line with standard practices. The conclusions should highlight the programme’s main strengths and areas for improvement and should be able to discuss the future implications of the report’s key findings. Lessons learned should be contributions to general knowledge that can be useful to similar programmes in different contexts. The evaluation’s equity focus could have been strengthened by further disaggregating rights holders into sub-groups in order to identify their unique needs and perspectives.

Additionally, the report would better reflect human rights principles if the right to nutrition had been explicitly mentioned and a human rights framework used to guide the evaluation.

SECTION A: BACKGROUND (weight 5%)

• • • - Satisfactory
The programme is explained (including its rationale, implementation status, and implementation modalities) and is situated within the national context. The needs of beneficiaries are identified but the report could be strengthened by further disaggregating sub-groups of rights holders to identify any differing needs of women and children in the Karamoja region. The report does not present the total value of financial contributions provided by UNICEF, which makes it difficult for the reader to understand the relative importance of this initiative to the organisation. A logframe with results targets is presented at the end of the report and a visual reconstructed Theory of Change model is presented within the findings.

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

Highly Satisfactory
The report clearly explains the purpose of the evaluation (including why the evaluation is needed at this point in time, how the information will be used, and the primary audiences for the evaluation). The evaluation objectives are clearly identified and relate to the evaluation purpose. Additionally, the scope of the evaluation is clearly articulated in terms of thematic coverage (i.e. UNICEF’s contributions to the programme), geographic coverage, and time period.

SECTION C: EVALUATION METHODOLOGY (weight 15%)

Unsatisfactory
The data collection methods and sources are presented but the report does not provide a justification for why these particular methodological choices were made and why the selected data collection methods are the most suitable for addressing the evaluation purpose and objectives. The evaluation criteria and questions are not presented or discussed under the evaluation methodology section of the report (they are only mentioned in the findings section). The questions are not presented within an evaluation matrix and the report does not explain why non-standard evaluation criteria were selected. A list of evaluation limitations is provided and it explains areas where the quality of the data was problematic. However, some mitigation strategies are also presented. The report makes no reference to the ethical obligations of the evaluation team or how ethical safeguards were used to protect participants during the evaluation process.

SECTION D: EVALUATION FINDINGS (weight 20%)

Fair
The findings are logically structured around the evaluation criteria and the evaluation questions. They reference diverse perspectives and data sources and present credible evidence. They discuss both strengths and weaknesses of the programme but do not sufficiently investigate the causal reasons for the non-accomplishment of results (i.e. on p. 29, the report states that "by mid-2016, UNICEF had also completed training and coaching of only 89 health workers of the targeted 400" but does not explain why this was the case). Unexpected findings are identified and discussed under their own evaluation question. However, the evaluation does not provide an assessment of the programme's M&E system or how it is used to inform decision-making.
### SECTION E: EVALUATION CONCLUSIONS & LESSONS LEARNED (weight 15%)

**Unsatisfactory**

The conclusions presented on p. 60 do not provide a holistic overview of the programme's strengths and weaknesses but simply mention some key elements from the evaluation findings. Additionally, they do not describe the foreseeable implications of the findings for the future of the intervention. For example, the conclusions state that "Linkages between livelihood nutrition sensitive and nutrition-specific treatment programmes are weak". However, the report does not discuss the future implications of these weak linkages. A list of "lessons learned" is presented on p. 56 but they are actually findings and conclusions rather than lessons learned, as they highlight the accomplishment and non-accomplishment of results and identify programme strengths and weaknesses. Lessons learned should be insights gathered through the evaluation process that could be useful to similar programmes in other contexts.

### SECTION F: RECOMMENDATIONS (weight 15%)

**Fair**

A number of well articulated recommendations are presented. They are based on the findings and appear to be realistic in the context of the intervention. However, the report does not discuss the extent to which stakeholders were involved in developing the recommendations. Additionally, the target group for action for each recommendation is not always clearly articulated. While the recommendations are numbered, they are presented according to the evaluation criteria. This makes the priority order in which they should be implemented less clear.

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

**Fair**

The report's opening pages include all of the required basic information. The report is clearly structured and easy to navigate. However, the conclusions are presented after the recommendations when they are normally presented prior to them. The report includes an extensive amount of information within the annexes (including the ToRs, data collection tools, information on the evaluation team, etc.), which adds credibility to the evaluation. However, the evaluation matrix is not included and many of the documents included in the annexes are inaccessible as they are embedded documents that can not be accessed (i.e. the links to the documents are broken).

### SECTION H: EVALUATION PRINCIPLES (weight 15%)

**Fair**
The report thanks stakeholders for their involvement in the evaluation at the beginning of the report in the acknowledgements section but does not explain how stakeholders were involved in the evaluation process apart from providing information as data sources (i.e. stakeholder involvement could be through the formation of an evaluation reference group, through consultations with stakeholders, etc.). The report does not explicitly frame the evaluation around a human rights framework and does not use human rights language. However, equity and gender equality considerations are integrated through a dedicated evaluation question and by mainstreaming gender and equity considerations throughout some of the other evaluation questions. The report is strong at assessing the extent to which the programme's design and implementation is gender sensitive and at discussing the need to further involve fathers in the initiative. The report's equity considerations would have been stronger had the evaluation better disaggregated groups of beneficiaries to identify their unique needs and perspectives.

SECTION I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (weight 5%)

Satisfactory

The Executive Summary is well written and is an appropriate length (7 pages) to inform decision makers. It includes all of the main sections of the report and does not reference information that is not already included in the rest of the report. This being said, the conclusions and recommendations are mixed together and the Executive Summary would be even stronger if the two were clearly separated.

Does the evaluation meet UN SWAP evaluation performance indicators?

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Recommendations for improvement

Section A

The report could be strengthened by further disaggregating sub-groups of rights holders to identify any differing needs of women and children in the Karamoja region. Additionally, it is useful to present the total value of financial contributions provided by UNICEF to help the reader understand the relative importance of this initiative to the organisation.

Section B

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

Section C

It is important that the evaluation report not only present the selected data collection methods and sources but to also explain why these methodological choices were made and how they are appropriate for addressing the evaluation purpose and objectives. It is also important to explain why non-standard evaluation criteria were used to frame the evaluation. Simply referencing the ToRs is insufficient as it is the responsibility of the evaluation team to confirm the appropriateness of the selected evaluation criteria as a framework for addressing the evaluation purpose and objectives. It also adds credibility to the report to include an evaluation matrix where the evaluation questions and corresponding data collection methods and sources are presented. The report should also include a sub-section that discusses how the evaluation team followed UNEG Ethical Standards, including how the evaluation team implemented their ethical obligations and how they ensured that ethical safeguards were used to protect participants during the evaluation process.
Section D

It is important that findings not only present information on results but that they also investigate the causal reasons for the accomplishment or non-accomplishment of results. This analytical discussion helps readers to understand what programming elements are going well and should be continued and where changes should be made to the programme. Specifically, whenever planned results are not accomplished, the evaluation should provide a discussion around the factors that led to the non-accomplishment of results so that the evaluation can identify areas for programme improvement. Additionally, it is standard practice to assess the object of evaluation's M&E system and how it is used to inform decision-making. One way of ensuring that the M&E system is assessed is to include a specific evaluation question to address this theme.

Section E

It is important for conclusions to provide a holistic synthesis of the evaluation findings and to identify the programme's primary strengths and areas for improvement. To learn more about how to develop synthesized and analytical conclusions, please see: http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/synthesize_value. Lessons learned should present information that can be applied to similar programmes in other contexts. For guidance on how to correctly formulate lessons learned, please see the following resource: http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/resources/guide/identifying_documenting_lessons_learnt

Section F

It is important for the report to discuss the extent to which stakeholders were involved in developing the evaluation recommendations (i.e. consulted during the development of the recommendations, consulted to validate them, etc.), as this provides the recommendations with additional credibility. In order to make the recommendations more actionable and user-friendly, it is essential that each recommendation clearly articulate the target group for action and for the recommendations to be presented in priority implementation order.

Section G

Conclusions should be presented prior to the recommendations, as they are usually used to inform the recommendations. Additionally, it is very important to include the evaluation matrix as an annex. This information helps the reader to understand what data collection methods and sources were used to answer the evaluation questions. In order to ensure that all of the information attached to the report as annexes is accessible, it is best to attach the documents directly rather than inserting document links (which run the risk of being defective).

Section H

It is a good idea for an evaluation report to include a section that discusses how stakeholders were involved in the evaluation process itself (in terms of management and consultation) in addition to providing information as data sources. The report could be strengthened by framing the evaluation around human rights principles (i.e. the right to proper nutrition, etc.) and by disaggregating groups of rights holders to identify their unique needs and perspectives.

Section I

It is easier for the reader to distinguish between conclusions and recommendations when they are presented within their own separate sections and are not mixed together.