## Executive Feedback

**Title of the evaluation**
Evaluation of the Project on "Strengthening Capacity for Child-sensitive Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation of Socio-Economic Development Plans".

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sequence No</th>
<th>2018/002</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>EAPR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office</td>
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<td>Coverage</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
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**Evaluation Type**
Project

**Year of Report**
2018

### OVERALL RATING

- **Satisfactory**

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

### SECTION A: BACKGROUND (weight 5%)

- **Satisfactory**

- The report provides a strong description of the object of evaluation including the timeframe, budget, goals and objectives, activities, and Theory of Change. Stakeholders and project beneficiaries are identified. However, the report could be strengthened by providing a more detailed description of the needs of the beneficiaries (i.e. government representatives as well as children). The report would also benefit from a more elaborate description of the national context surrounding child rights and the status of the national legal frameworks that uphold them.

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

- **Satisfactory**

- The purpose of the evaluation (including who will use the information generated and to what ends) is clearly outlined. Evaluation objectives are also clearly stated. While the report identifies what is to be included in the evaluation, it does not explicitly mention what elements lay beyond the evaluation scope.

### SECTION C: EVALUATION METHODOLOGY (weight 15%)

- **Satisfactory**


The evaluation is designed around relevant OECD/DAC criteria and uses clear evaluation questions to guide it. It uses a strong methodology that draws on a document review, interviews, and case studies (with a counterfactual). This being said, GEROS standards require reports to not only describe a strong methodology but to also explicitly justify why the selected evaluation approach and methodology are appropriate for addressing the evaluation purpose. While the report mentions triangulation, it does not provide a detailed description of the analysis methods used to develop evaluation findings. While it is good practice to state that the evaluation follows the UNEG ethical evaluation standards, it is also expected that the report will provide a brief summary of the ethical obligations of evaluators as well as ethical safeguards implemented during the evaluation process to protect participants.

SECTION D: EVALUATION FINDINGS (weight 20%)

**Satisfactory**

Findings are presented per evaluation criterion and directly answer each evaluation question. They include a strong assessment of the extent to which the SEDP M&E system is sensitive to child related issues. They are structured around the project's results framework and ToC, and assess performance against the project's established targets. The report does not include an assessment of any unexpected results.

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

**Fair**

The report provides analytical conclusions per evaluation criterion that add insight and analysis beyond the findings. They are well structured and informative. However, further emphasis could be placed on describing the foreseeable implications of the findings for the future of the intervention (for instance, what implications, if any, does having an overly ambitious project goal have on the future of the project?). The report provides some lessons learned but it would be useful if they were broken down into distinct and separate lessons. They are also quite specific to the object of evaluation and could be more useful if the report were to indicate what wider relevance they may have on similar projects operating in other contexts.

SECTION F: RECOMMENDATIONS (weight 15%)

**Fair**

The recommendations are logically derived from the findings and conclusions and are logically divided into two categories: strategic and operational. This being said, the action points associated with each recommendation lack detail around how they can be operationalized. They are also not clearly prioritized, which makes it difficult for a reader to know which recommendations are most important or should be implemented first. While the report states that recommendations were derived from discussions with relevant stakeholders, it does not explain how stakeholders were actively involved in the development and/or validation of recommendations.
SECTION G: EVALUATION STRUCTURE/PRESENTATION (weight 5%)

Highly Satisfactory

The evaluation report is clearly written and logically structured following a traditional evaluation report format. The opening pages contain all of the required information and the annexes are extensive and provide considerable added value. Annexes include the ToRs, an Evaluation Matrix, copies of the evaluation tools, the ToC, the project's results framework, lists of data sources and stakeholders interviewed, additional project information and information on the evaluation methodology, and information about the evaluators.

SECTION H: EVALUATION PRINCIPLES (weight 15%)

Fair

The report is based on a human rights framework and addresses the extent to which the project was able to support child sensitive planning. While issues of equity are examined, there is still room to provide a more in-depth assessment of the different needs and experiences of equity groups (rural, urban, minorities, children with disabilities, etc.) and those of girls and boys. The ToRs state that the evaluation was to be guided by an Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) but the report itself does not mention the ERG or describe how stakeholders were involved in the evaluation process itself apart from serving as sources of information.

SECTION I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (weight 5%)

Satisfactory

The Executive Summary is a very accessible length (3 pages) and provides a good overview of the project, evaluation approach, and evaluation findings and recommendations. It is, however, missing findings around impact (since this was included as an additional evaluation criterion) and conclusions.

Does the evaluation meet UN SWAP evaluation performance indicators?

| 6 | Approaches requirements |

Recommendations for improvement

This evaluation report is based on a strong methodology and presents grounded findings that answer the evaluation questions. While the conclusions are strong overall, they could further identify implications that the findings may have on the future of the intervention. Lessons learned could also benefit from a description as to how they may be relevant to similar initiatives in other contexts. Recommendations are logically derived from the findings and conclusions but could be made more actionable by having them presented in priority order and by providing a more detailed description of how each one could be implemented. While the report is based on human rights principles, the evaluation could have more explicitly and thoroughly applied an equity and gender equality approach. The level of involvement by stakeholders, including the Evaluation Reference Group (ERG), in the evaluation process should be more clearly outlined in the evaluation report.

Lessons for managing future evaluations:
| Section A | The report's background information could provide the reader with a stronger analytical base if the needs of the beneficiaries (including government officials as well as children from different backgrounds and realities) were discussed in greater detail. The report would also benefit from a more elaborate description of the national context surrounding child rights and the status of the national legal frameworks that uphold them, and how this context affects the design and implementation of the object of evaluation. |
| Section B | It is good practice to not only identify those elements that lay within the evaluation scope but to also outline any elements that fall outside of the scope to provide a transparent explanation of the evaluation process. |
| Section C | It is good practice to not only provide a description of the chosen evaluation approach and methodology but to also explicitly explain why their selection is appropriate for fulfilling the evaluation purpose (i.e. why is this approach and methodology more appropriate than other alternatives?). It is also good practice to clearly outline how the data and evidence collected during the evaluation process was analyzed to produce the evaluation findings. There are multiple methods of analysis available to evaluators to draw from and it is therefore important to determine which methods were used and to explain why they were appropriate. Finally, it is expected that evaluation reports will not only reference the UNEG Ethical Guidelines but will also provide a brief summary of what the evaluators understood as their ethical obligations in addition to the ethical safeguards that were used to protect participants. |
| Section D | Even though an assessment of unexpected results was not included in the Evaluation Matrix, it is often good practice to include such an assessment to understand the full effects of the project and whether it has generated any unexpected results (either positive or negative). |
| Section E | It is good practice to provide in the conclusions some forward-looking analysis that discusses the foreseeable implications of the findings for the future of the intervention (positive, negative, risks, opportunities, etc.). The conclusions are an opportunity to draw some high level analysis that can be useful to decisionmakers and to highlight important information that emerged from the findings. Lessons learned should be clearly stated and should include a description of how they may be relevant to similar initiatives in other contexts. |
| Section F | It is important for evaluation recommendations to be actionable. The recommendations in this report could be made more actionable by providing a detailed description of how each recommendation could potentially be implemented and by clearly stating the priority order for addressing them. It is also good practice to actively engage stakeholders in the development and/or validation of recommendations. This is often done through a Stakeholder Validation Meeting or some kind of workshop between key stakeholders and the evaluation team to either collaboratively develop recommendations or validate recommendations already developed by the evaluation team. It is important for the report to explain how this collaborative process was executed. For more information on how to conduct a participatory evaluation, please see: http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/participatory_evaluation |
| Section G | This section reflects good practices. No further improvement is required. |
The evaluation could have provided a more thorough assessment of equity and gender equality considerations by more systematically collecting and presenting disaggregated data. Additionally, the evaluation methodology could have included specific elements to ensure that minority and women's voices would be heard (for example, including mechanisms that ensure that women and minority groups feel comfortable participating in the evaluation process). To learn more about how to conduct gender and equity sensitive evaluations, please see: http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/resources/guide/gender-responsive_evaluation_handbook and http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/node/4427. Additionally, GEROS standards require evaluation reports to explain how stakeholders were involved as active members in the evaluation process and not only as sources of information. To learn more about how to conduct participatory evaluations, please see: http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/participatory_evaluation

An Executive Summary is intended to reflect the most crucial elements of the evaluation report to inform decision makers. While this Executive Summary is strong overall and presents a very succinct synthesis, it could be further strengthened by including a summary of key findings around the criterion of impact (since this was included as an additional evaluation criterion) and by providing a high-level summary of the evaluation conclusions.