



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
27 December 2021

Original: English

For Decision

United Nations Children's Fund

Executive Board

First regular session 2022

8–11 February 2022

Item 7 of the provisional agenda*

Management response to the evaluation report

Joint evaluability assessment of the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All

Summary

UNICEF, a signatory to the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All (GAP), was engaged to conduct a joint evaluability assessment of the GAP with the other signatory agencies. The assessment identified six recommendations for all participating agencies and all the recommendations were agreed to by the agencies, including UNICEF, at a meeting of the Principals held on 14 September 2020. UNICEF and its partners in the GAP are implementing the recommendations to ensure that the GAP can be effectively evaluated as planned in 2023.

Elements of a decision for consideration by the Executive Board appear in section III.

* E/ICEF/2022/1.

Note: The present document was processed in its entirety by UNICEF.



I. Overview

1. The revised evaluation policy of UNICEF ([E/ICEF/2018/14](#)), approved by the UNICEF Executive Board at its annual session in 2018, committed UNICEF to collaboration with other United Nations entities on system-wide evaluations and to seeking opportunities for joint evaluations with other United Nations entities.

2. UNICEF is one of the 12 founding members¹ of the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All (GAP), whose goal is to align the working methods of the signatory agencies to reduce inefficiencies and provide more streamlined support for countries. Through the GAP, the signatory agencies support countries to deliver on the health-related Sustainable Development Goals and related international commitments on health, including the commitments made at the high-level meeting on universal health coverage, held in New York in 2019, and the Global Conference on Primary Health Care, held in Astana in 2018.

3. A joint evaluability assessment of the GAP was commissioned and jointly managed by a steering group comprising the evaluation offices of all 12 initial GAP signatory agencies, thus embodying the commitment to enhanced collaboration set out in the GAP. The assessment, which was carried out between March and June 2020, constituted an early, rapid and light-touch diagnostic of the key strategic and technical elements needed for the partnership to succeed so as to preemptively identify outstanding gaps and enable the signatory agencies to address them before they became problems in advance of the proposed independent evaluation of the GAP in 2023.

4. The overall findings of the assessment showed that the GAP was not yet sufficiently evaluable in a way that would enable the ongoing monitoring and evaluation efforts to provide meaningful lessons for the partners or facilitate continued improvement and mutual accountability among them.

5. The management response to the assessment was reviewed by all 12 signatory agencies, including at the technical level, and approved by the Principals in September 2020. The GAP secretariat has engaged with all the signatory agencies to implement the assessment's six recommendations. UNICEF is committed to working together with the partner agencies to implement the recommendations in preparation for the proposed evaluation of the GAP in 2023.

¹ The 12 founding agencies are: Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance; Global Financing Facility for Women, Children and Adolescents; Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria; International Drug Purchase Facility; Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS; United Nations Development Programme; United Nations Population Fund; United Nations Children's Fund; United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women); World Bank Group; World Food Programme; and World Health Organization. The International Labour Organization joined as the thirteenth collaborating organization in February 2021. Therefore, it was not party to the joint evaluability assessment or the initial management response.

II. Key recommendations of the joint evaluability assessment of the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All and update on the implementation of the management response

The joint evaluability assessment provides six recommendations and a road map for sequentially addressing them. The recommendations were reviewed by the agency focal points of the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All (GAP) and the GAP secretariat. A management response was agreed among the agencies in November 2020.

The table summarizes the recommendations and provides an update on the implementation of the management response.^a

	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Agreement</i>	<i>Update on the implementation of the management response</i>
1	<p>Jointly review and revisit the purpose and shared objectives to clarify how the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All (GAP) is intended to operate and add value to what is already in place. This would allow agreement on specific questions such as:</p> <p>(a) Where the GAP intends to position itself on the spectrum between enabling change (in a facilitating, back-office role), and driving change (in a highly visible, accountable and attributable way by leveraging the collective resources of the 12 signatories);</p> <p>(b) Given the importance of country ownership and engagement, how the GAP will work at country level and how that will build on what is already there responding to the differing context and capabilities in each country;</p> <p>(c) How the purpose and objectives of the partnership might be revisited in light of COVID-19.</p>	Agreed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Implemented – Positioning paper entitled “Positioning the SDG3 GAP for country impact in the COVID-19 era” approved by Principals (November 2020) – Updated positioning paper entitled “SDG3 GAP: supporting an equitable and resilient recovery towards the health-related Sustainable Development Goals”, with a focus on further deepening and scaling up country implementation, agreed by Principals (November 2021)
2	<p>Based on this discussion, articulate a clear and detailed theory of change corresponding to the agreed way forward, including:</p> <p>(a) Detailed assumptions on factors that can accelerate progress to the health-related Sustainable Development Goals;</p> <p>(b) How the GAP mechanism can impact on those factors through its role in supporting countries.</p>	Agreed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Implemented – GAP theory of change approved by Principals (November 2020)^b
3	<p>Make the GAP more concrete and accountable by:</p> <p>(a) Accelerating progress on mapping out the agreed activities for GAP partners;</p>	Agreed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Implemented

	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Agreement</i>	<i>Update on the implementation of the management response</i>
	(b) Restarting the process on indicator development; (c) Strengthening accountability through consistent involvement of senior leaders across all 12 agencies and following through into workplans and time allocations of their staff.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – GAP monitoring framework developed and agreed (May 2021). Pilot is currently under way, with an initial focus on low-income and lower-middle-income countries. – Monitoring framework will inform the 2022 progress report on the GAP.
4	<p>Review the overall resourcing of GAP activities alongside decisions on recommendation 1 on scope/role/priorities in order to achieve a better balance between what resources overall the GAP signatories can feasibly bring to this in the current environment and what priorities are taken forward. This review and its outcomes would seek to:</p> <p>(a) Get beyond “volunteerism” for staff leading in the signatory agencies; (b) Provide support to each working group in a realistic way; (c) Provide support in moving the focus of the GAP to the country level.</p>	Agreed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Initiated – Principals discussed the individual agencies’ contributions to the implementation of the strategy to support an equitable and resilient recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic in countries (November 2021).
5	Revisit the linkages between and among the accelerator working groups to help them to support each other to full effect, and at the same time clarify what is realistically expected from each group within the overall approach and scope of work agreed from discussions in follow-up to recommendation 1.	Agreed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Implemented – Country implementation supported by (a) cross-accelerator work (e.g., joint mission of the primary health care accelerator partners and the sustainable financing accelerator partners in Pakistan); (b) the participation of colleagues from other accelerators in the country-led discussion on the primary health-care accelerator; and (c) the definition each year of one important challenge jointly by the equity cluster, which comprises the determinants of health accelerator, the community and civil society engagement accelerator and the gender equality working group.
6	<p>Map out the steps to the 2023 evaluation and ensure these are well understood. These would be agreed with the Steering Group of the 12 signatory agencies’ evaluation offices and should include:</p> <p>(a) A clear process for following up on the recommendations of the joint evaluability assessment, including a management response to be developed and tracked by the Sherpa group; (b) Ensuring that technical aspects of evaluability are addressed following agreement on purpose and shared objectives and the theory of change (as per recommendations 1 and 2), and that the specific</p>	Agreed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Implemented/in progress. – Management response to the joint evaluability assessment has been developed and agreed (November 2020) and regular tracking of progress through updates by the GAP secretariat to the Principals has been initiated. – Discussion with the evaluation offices of the signatory agencies on the midterm review has been initiated. – The 2023 independent evaluation has or will be included in the evaluation work plans of the evaluation offices.

	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Agreement</i>	<i>Update on the implementation of the management response</i>
	gaps identified in the monitoring and evaluation framework (e.g., developing indicators for the intermediate outcomes) are addressed; (c) Undertaking a midterm review at the end of 2021, by which time the strategic and technical elements discussed in the joint evaluability assessment report would be expected to be fully in place and working well.		

^a https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/global-action-plan/sdg3-gap-management-response-to-jea-for-website.pdf?sfvrsn=9bb7d70a_4.

^b https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/global-action-plan/sdg3-gap-toc-for-website.pdf?sfvrsn=355ae22c_4.

III. Draft decision

The Executive Board

Takes note of the joint evaluability assessment of the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All, its summary ([E/ICEF/2022/4](#)) and its management response ([E/ICEF/2022/5](#)).
