

EVALUATION OFFICE

UNICEF-Adapted UNEG Evaluation Reports Standards



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UNEG STANDARDS FOR UNICEF GLOBAL EVALUATION QUALITY OVERSIGHT SYSTEM

Adapted UNEG Standards

1. THE REPORT STRUCTURE

1.0 The report is well structured, logical, clear and complete.

1.1 Report is logically structured with clarity and coherence.

- The structure is easy to identify and navigate (for instance, with numbered sections, clear titles and sub-titles)
- Context, purpose and methodology would normally precede findings, which would normally be followed by conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations

1.2 The title page and opening pages provide key basic information.

- Name of the evaluation object
- Timeframe of the evaluation and date of the report
- Locations (country, region, etc.) of the evaluation object
- Names and/or organizations of evaluators
- Name of the organization commissioning the evaluation
- Table of contents which also lists Tables, Graphs, Figures and Annexes
- List of acronyms

1.3 An executive summary is provided that can inform decision-making.

- The executive summary is of relevant conciseness and depth for primary intended users
- Includes all necessary elements (overview of the intervention, evaluation purpose, objectives and intended audience, evaluation methodology, key findings, key conclusions, key recommendations)
- Includes all the necessary information to understand the intervention and the evaluation
- Does not contain information not already included in the rest of the report

1.4 Annexes increase the credibility of the evaluation report. They may include, inter alia:

- ToRs
- List of persons interviewed and sites visited
- List of documents consulted
- More details on methodology, such as data collection instruments, including details of their reliability and validity
- Evaluators biodata and/or justification of team composition
- Evaluation matrix
- Results framework

2. OBJECT OF EVALUATION

2.0 The report presents a clear and full description of the ‘object’ of the evaluation (what is being evaluated).

2.1 The **scale and complexity of the object** of the evaluation are clearly described:

- The **geographic location(s)** and boundaries (such as the region, country, and/or landscape and challenges where relevant)
- The **timeline** of the intervention
- The total resources from all sources, including **human resources and budget(s)** (e.g. concerned agency, partner)
- The number of **components in the intervention**, if more than one, and the size of the budget and population each component is intended to serve, either directly or indirectly
- The **implementation status** of the object, including its phase of implementation and any significant changes (e.g. plans, strategies, logical frameworks) that have occurred over time and explains the implications of those changes for the evaluation

2.2 The **logical model and the expected results chain** (inputs, outputs, and outcomes) of the object are clearly described.

- The **purpose and goal** of the object are described
- The **results (or performance management) framework** is included
- The **theory of change** (assumptions about the causal links between results) is explained or reconstructed
- Clear and relevant description of **numbers of stakeholders intended to be benefitted or influenced** for each result disaggregated by:
 - o Type (i.e., institutions/organizations; communities; social groups...)
 - o Human rights roles (duty bearers, rights holders)
 - o Gender groups (as appropriate to the purpose of the evaluation)
 - o Geographic location(s) (i.e., urban, rural, particular neighbourhoods, town/cities, sub-regions...)

2.3 The **context of key social, political, economic, demographic, and institutional factors** that have a direct bearing on the object is described.

- Relevance to **partner government’s strategies and priorities**, international, regional or country development goals, strategies and frameworks
- Relevance to **UNICEF’s corporate goals and priorities**, as appropriate (e.g. in terms of size, influence, or positioning)
- Clear and relevant description (where appropriate) of the **status and needs of the target groups** for the intervention
- An **equity analysis** of structural marginalisation, and social and cultural patterns, affecting groups targeted by the evaluation object; and a discussion of gender, power and human rights considerations in the design of the object
- Explanation of **how the context relates** to the implementation of the intervention

2.4 The **key stakeholders involved** in the object implementation, including the implementing agency(ies) and partners, other key stakeholders and their roles.

- Identification of implementing agency(ies), development partners, primary duty bearers, secondary duty bearers, and rights holders (disaggregated by gender) involved in the intervention
- Identification of the specific **resource-contributions and roles** of key stakeholders (financial or otherwise), including UNICEF
- The **organization/management** arrangements of the object

3. EVALUATION PURPOSE, OBJECTIVE(S) AND SCOPE

3.0 The evaluation's purpose, objectives and scope are fully explained (why is it being evaluated).

3.1 The **purpose of the evaluation** is clearly described, including:

- Why the evaluation was **commissioned** at this point in time (what information is needed)
- Identification of appropriate **primary intended users** of the evaluation (who needed the information)
- Specific identification of how the evaluation is intended to be used and to **what this use is expected to achieve**

3.2 The report provides a clear explanation of **the evaluation objectives**:

- Clear and complete description of **what the evaluation seeks to achieve** by the end of the process with reference to any changes made to the objectives included in the ToR
- The evaluation requires an assessment of the extent to which an intervention being evaluated has been guided by UNICEF and system-wide objectives on gender equality and human rights, including child rights and equity
- Description of **how the objectives will achieve the purpose**

3.3 The report provides a clear explanation of the **evaluation scope** including:

- **What will and will not be covered** (thematically, chronologically, geographically with key terms defined)
- The **reasons for this scope** (e.g., specifications by the ToRs, lack of access to particular geographic areas for political or safety reasons at the time of the evaluation, lack of data/evidence on particular elements of the intervention)
- Main **evaluation questions** including both standalone and mainstreamed issues of gender and human rights including child rights
- The evaluation analyses how equity and gender equality mainstreaming principles were included in the intervention design and how results for children have been achieved
- A description of the process of how the evaluation questions were agreed

4. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

4.0 The report presents a transparent description of the design and methods used in the evaluation that clearly explains how the evaluation addresses the evaluation criteria, yields answers to the evaluation questions, and achieves evaluation purposes (how is it being evaluated).

4.1 The report describes and provides an explanation of the chosen **evaluation criteria**, performance standards, or other criteria used by the evaluators:

- Provides a relevant **list of evaluation criteria** that are explicitly justified as appropriate for the purpose of the evaluation. UNICEF evaluation standards refer to the OECD/DAC criteria
- Definition of the evaluation criteria, including **mainstreaming of gender equality and human rights** norms and standards. Gender equality and human rights dimensions are integrated into all evaluation criteria as appropriate and/or criteria derived directly from human rights principles are used (e.g. equality, participation, social transformation, inclusiveness, empowerment, etc.)
- If not all OECD/DAC criteria are relevant to the evaluation objectives and scope this should be explained and the exclusion of these criteria **justified**¹

4.2 Clear and relevant presentation of the **evaluation framework** including:

- Clear evaluation **questions** used to guide the evaluation linked to the evaluation criteria that include standalone and mainstreamed questions of gender equality and human rights
- Appropriate **indicators** for each evaluation question
- **Gender responsive and human-rights based indicators** (disaggregated, gender-specific, gender-distributive, gender-transformative)
- **Rubric** (reference indicators and benchmarks to denote success) are included where relevant
- A clear link between the indicators and the **sources of evidence**/evaluation tools

4.3 The report describes the **evaluation design and methods**, the rationale for selecting them, and their strengths and limitations for addressing the evaluation's purpose, objectives and scope:

- Clear and complete description of a relevant **evaluation design/approach** (see www.BetterEvaluation.org)
- Qualitative and quantitative **data collection** methods and tools
- Qualitative and quantitative **data analysis** methods and tools and the links to answering the evaluation questions, including triangulation of multiple lines and levels of evidence (if relevant)
- Reference to the use of a rights-based framework, and/or Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and/or Core Commitments for Children (CCC), and/or the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and/or other rights related benchmarks in the design of the evaluation
- Description of how the methods employed are appropriate for analysing gender and human rights issues including child rights issues identified in the evaluation scope

¹ Standard OECD DAC Criteria include: Relevance; Effectiveness; Efficiency; Sustainability; Impact. Evaluations should also consider equity, gender and human rights (these can be mainstreamed into other criteria). Humanitarian evaluations should consider Coverage; Connectedness; Coordination; Protection; Security."

- 4.4 The report describes the **data sources**, the rationale for their selection, and their limitations.
- **Sampling** methods
 - The report includes discussion of how the mix of data sources was used to: obtain a diversity of perspectives (or if not, provide reasons for this), ensure data accuracy, mitigate data limitations
 - The report describes the sampling frame – area and population to be represented, rationale for selection, mechanics of selection, numbers selected out of potential subjects, and limitations of the sample
 - During data screening and data analysis, special attention is paid to data and information that specifically refer to gender equality and human rights issues in the intervention, and make the best possible use of these in the overall assessment of the intervention
- 4.5 The evaluation report gives a complete description of stakeholder’s participation in the evaluation including the rationale for selecting the level and approach to engagement.
- Mixed-method approaches are preferred to make visible diverse perspectives and promotes participation of women and men, boys and girls, from different stakeholder groups
- 4.6 Ethical issues and considerations are described and guided by the UNEG ethical standards for evaluation. As such, the evaluation report should include:
- Explicit reference to the obligations of evaluators (independence, impartiality, credibility, conflicts of interest, accountability)
 - Description of ethical safeguards for participants appropriate for the issues described (respect for dignity and diversity, right to self-determination, fair representation, compliance with codes for vulnerable groups, confidentiality, and avoidance of harm)
 - **ONLY FOR THOSE CASES WHERE THE EVALUATION INVOLVES INTERVIEWING CHILDREN:** explicit reference is made to the UNICEF procedures for Ethical Research Involving Children
- 4.7 The report gives a clear and complete description of limitations and constraints faced by the evaluation, including gaps in the evidence that was generated and mitigation of bias.
- The report presents evidence that adequate measures were taken to ensure data quality, including evidence supporting the reliability and validity of data collection tools (e.g. interview protocols, observation tools etc.)

5. FINDINGS

5.0 Findings respond directly to the evaluation criteria and questions detailed in the scope and objectives section of the report; and are based on evidence derived from data collection and analysis methods described in the methodology section of the report.

- 5.1 The evaluation clearly presents multiple lines (including multiple time series) and levels (output, outcome, and appropriate disaggregation) of **credible evidence**.
- **Triangulation** of data is done to ensure that the voices from stakeholders and of women, men, boys and girls are heard and used

5.2 Findings are derived from the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of the best available, impartial, reliable and valid data, and by **accurate quantitative and qualitative analysis** of evidence. They are impartially reported based on this evidence.

- Findings are clearly supported by and **respond to the evidence** presented, including both positive and negative
- Findings are based on clear performance **indicators, standards, benchmarks**, or other means of comparison
- Reference to the intervention's **results framework** is made in the formulation of the findings

5.3 Reported findings marshal sufficient levels of evidence to systematically **address all the evaluation questions and criteria** (such as efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, impact and relevance) defined in the evaluation framework, including gender equality and human rights dimensions.

- **Gaps and limitations** in the data are reported and discussed
- The findings clearly address all evaluation **objectives and scope**
- The evaluation findings reflect a **gender analysis** of the disaggregated effects of the intervention on different social and cultural groups and on the relations between groups

5.4 The **causal factors** (contextual, organizational, managerial, etc.) leading to achievement or non-achievement of results are clearly identified.

- For theory-based evaluations, findings analyse the **logical chain** (progression -or not- from implementation to results)
- **Reasons for accomplishments and failures**, especially continuing constraints, are identified as much as possible
- **Unexpected effects** (positive and negative) are identified and analysed

5.5 The evaluation assesses and uses the intervention's **Results Based Management** system.

- Clear and comprehensive assessment of the intervention's **monitoring system** (including completeness and appropriateness of results/performance framework -including vertical and horizontal logic; M&E tools and their usage)
- Clear and complete assessment of the **use of monitoring data** in decision making

5.6 Overall findings are presented with **clarity, logic and coherence**.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

6.0 Conclusions present reasonable judgements based on findings and substantiated by evidence and provide insights pertinent to the object and purpose of the evaluation.

6.1 The conclusions reflect an impartial overall assessment of the intervention based on reasonable evaluative judgements relating to key evaluation questions.

- Conclusions are well substantiated by the evidence presented and are logically connected to evaluation findings
- Conclusions make clear references back to the sources of evidence in the findings and do not introduce new evidence

- Clear and complete description of the strengths and weaknesses of the intervention that adds insight and analysis beyond the findings
- Strengths and weaknesses of the intervention are based on the evidence presented and take due account of the views of a diverse cross-section of stakeholders

6.2 Stated conclusions provide insights into the identification and/or solutions of important problems/issues pertinent to the prospective decisions and actions of evaluation users.

- Description of the foreseeable implications of the findings for the future of the intervention (if formative evaluation or if the implementation is expected to continue or have additional phase)
- The gender quality and human rights implications of the conclusions are clearly presented

6.3 Lessons learned are correctly identified and generalized beyond the immediate intervention being evaluated to indicate what wider relevance there might be.

- Lessons add to general knowledge
- Correctly identified lessons stem logically from the findings, and present an analysis of how they can be applied to different contexts and/or different sectors
- Lessons take into account evidential limitations such as generalizing from single point observations.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.0 Recommendations are relevant to the object and purpose of the evaluation, are supported by evidence and conclusions, and were developed with involvement of relevant stakeholders.

7.1 Recommendations are **firmly based on evaluative evidence** and a process of validation including appropriate consultation with stakeholders.

- Recommendations are **logically derived** from the findings and/or conclusions – and make reference back to sources of evidence
- A clear **description of the process** for developing recommendations, including a relevant explanation if the level of participation of stakeholders at this stage is not in proportion with the level of participation in the intervention and/or in the conduct of the evaluation

7.2 Recommendations are **relevant to the objectives and purpose** of the evaluation.

- Recommendations are **useful to primary intended users** and uses (relevant to the intervention and provide realistic description of how they can be made operational in the context of the evaluation)
- Recommendations are **actionable** and reflect an understanding of the commissioning organization and potential constraints to follow up
- Recommendations explicitly address the implications of the conclusions and findings regarding **gender equality and human rights**

7.3 Recommendations are **clearly presented** to support use.

- Recommendations clearly **identify the target group** for each recommendation (or clearly clustered group of recommendations)
- Recommendations are clearly stated with **priorities for action** and/or classification of recommendations made clear

8. GENDER AND HUMAN RIGHTS, INCLUDING CHILD RIGHTS

8.0 The report illustrates the extent to which the design and implementation of the object, the assessment of results and the evaluation process incorporates a gender equality perspective and human rights based approach, including child rights.

8.1 The evaluation **design and style** consider incorporation of the UN and UNICEF commitment to a human rights-based approach to programming, gender equality, and equity.

- Stylistic evidence of the inclusion of these considerations can include: using human-rights language; gender-sensitive and child-sensitive writing; disaggregating data by gender, age and disability groups; disaggregating data by socially excluded groups
- Clear description of the level of participation of key stakeholders in the conduct of the evaluation, and description of the rationale for the chosen level of participation (for example, a reference group is established, stakeholders are involved as informants or in data gathering)
- Clear proportionality between the level of participation in the intervention and in the evaluation, or clear explanation of deviation from this principle (this may be related to specifications of the ToRs, inaccessibility of stakeholders at the time of the evaluation, budgetary constraints, etc.)

8.2 The evaluation **approach and data collection and analysis methods** are gender equality, and human rights --including child rights—responsive. They are also appropriate for analyzing the gender equality, human rights issues including child rights identified in the scope.

- The report assesses if the design, implementation, monitoring and results of the object of the evaluation, were based on a sound gender analysis, and human rights analysis including child rights
- The evaluation assesses the extent to which the implementation of the intervention addressed gender, equity & child rights
- Identification and assessment of the presence or absence of equity considerations in the design and implementation of the intervention
- Explicit analysis of the involvement in the object of right holders, duty bearers, and socially marginalized groups, and the differential benefits received by different groups of children

8.3 The evaluation meets or exceeds **UN-System Wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP)** evaluation performance indicator criteria.

- GEEW is integrated in the Evaluation Scope of analysis and Indicators are designed in a way that ensures GEEW-related data will be collected
- Evaluation Criteria and Evaluation Questions specifically address how GEEW has been integrated into the design, planning, implementation of the intervention and the results achieved
- A gender-responsive Evaluation Methodology, Methods and tools, and Data Analysis Techniques are selected
- The evaluation Findings, Conclusions and Recommendation reflect a gender analysis

This updated version has been revised to reflect UNEG Norms and Standards (2016) and the GEROS evaluation quality assessment tool (2016).

Available at: UNICEF GEROS (www.unicef.org/evaluation/index_GEROS.html)

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