

Joint Statement

Executive Board of UNFPA

Annual report on the UNFPA evaluation function 2021, Agenda Item 12

ANNUAL SESSION 2022

7 June 2022, New York

Madam President

I make this statement on behalf of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Finland, Norway, Nigeria, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Spain, Sweden, Türkiye, Ukraine and my own country, Switzerland.

We thank the UNFPA Evaluation Office for its annual report, the programme of work and budget of the Evaluation Office in 2022, and the corresponding management response.

First and foremost we commend the Evaluation Office on its continued flexibility to adapt the evaluation function to the needs in the COVID-19 context and to enable the evaluations to function as an accelerator to recovery from the COVID-19 crisis.

We also commend the Evaluation Office for the development of the quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan 22-25, the evaluation strategy 22-25, as well as the strategy to enhance the evaluation use through communications and knowledge management. These three evaluation frameworks will be key to make the evaluation function fit to support the delivery of the new strategic plan 22-25.

We thank the Evaluation Office for its excellent performance in this again highly challenging year, achieving almost all the targets of the key performance indicators, as for example regarding evaluation coverage, the quality of evaluation reports, the management response submission and implementation, as well as the use of evaluation in programme development.

We note that the decentralized evaluation system has been further strengthened, which resulted in a high implementation rate of evaluations of good quality. We however agree with the highlighted remaining challenge of ensuring the timely delivery of high-quality decentralized evaluations and appreciate the Evaluation Office's continued engagement in order to address this challenge.

We also recognize the continued progress in terms of use of decentralized evaluations for programme development and centralized evaluations for strategic planning, in particular for the design of the new strategic plan.

We particularly appreciate the strong push for involving youth in various parts of the evaluations including as evaluators. We also want to commend the EO office for the first ever developmental evaluation, leading to the development of a more adaptive management with results based management principles and standards.

At the same time, we also welcome UNFPA's continued efforts to strengthen national evaluation capacities and systems in the advancement of the SDGs and evidence-based decision-making and learning.

We appreciate the UNFPA management's continued commitment to provide the financial and human resources needed to support the evaluation function. While we generally welcome the steady increase of UNFPA's evaluation expenditure ratio from 2014 to 2019, which was getting closer to the 1.4 to 3% of total program expenditure as defined target in the UNFPA evaluation policy, we however take note of a stagnation since 2020. We note the specific reasons for this recent stagnation, but we nevertheless encourage UNFPA to continue to increase investments in the evaluation function. We are looking forward to continuing the discussion on the adequate funding of the evaluation function.

On a final note: We welcome UNFPA's Evaluation Office's continued commitment and active support to the reform agenda and system-wide and joint evaluations on the central, regional and country level.



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Let me close by re-iterating our commitment to the precious work of the evaluation office in promoting institutional learning and accountability thereby contributing to increased programme effectiveness.