



Organizational unit: Lesotho **Year of report:** 2023

Title of evaluation report: UNFPA Lesotho Country Programme Evaluation: 7th Country Programme 2019-2023

Overall quality of report: Very good **Date of assessment:** 13 March 2023

Overall comments: This is a thorough evaluation of the UNFPA Lesotho Country Programme 2019-2023. The report's executive summary provides a solid overview of the evaluation, and the context and constraints of the program are clearly described. The evaluators reconstructed the theory of change by analyzing the causal links of the interventions and strategies across the results chain, although a shortcoming of the ToC is that outcomes are expressed as outputs and activities are not defined which makes it more difficult to see causal linkages. Data was collected using standard methods, including KIs, focus group discussions, direct observation during field visits, and desk review of existing literature. The findings are very detailed and show the perspectives of different stakeholder groups, and the stakeholder map shows stakeholders categorized into different groups. The data analysis methods used in the evaluation are clearly described, and findings cover cross-cutting issues gender, human rights, and disability. Recommendations appear to be impartial and cover issues related to GEEW, equity, and human rights, but disability is not covered. Although the presentation could have been improved by decreasing the density of the text in some places and using more visual aids, overall, this evaluation appears to provide a strong assessment of the UNFPA Lesotho Country Programme.

Assessment Levels

Very Good	strong, above average, best practice	Good	satisfactory, respectable	Fair	with some weaknesses, still acceptable	Unsatisfactory	weak, does not meet minimal quality standards
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Quality Assessment Criteria *Insert assessment level followed by main comments. (use 'shading' function to give cells corresponding colour)*

1. Structure and Clarity of Reporting	Yes No Partial	Assessment Level:	Good
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To ensure the report is comprehensive and user-friendly

1. Is the report structured in a logical way? Is the report easy to read and understand (i.e. written in an accessible language appropriate for the intended audience) with minimal grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors? Is there a clear distinction made between analysis/findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned (where applicable)?	Partial	The report's structure is generally good, however, there are some areas of dense text, such as paragraphs that are half a page long (e.g. p. 31). Additionally, there are several grammatical errors and typos, and some of the methodology appears to be in future tense, indicating it may not have been updated since the inception report. Several graphics also have incorrect numbering. Overall, the report could have been improved with final proofreading and more graphics to effectively convey key information.
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2. Is the report of a reasonable length? (maximum pages for the main report, excluding annexes: 60 for institutional evaluations; 70 for CPEs; 80 for thematic evaluations)	Yes	At little more than 69 pages, the report is reasonable in length for a CPE.
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3. Do the annexes contain – at a minimum – the ToRs; a bibliography; a list of interviewees; the evaluation matrix; methodological and data collection tools used (e.g. interview guides; focus group notes, outline of surveys)?	Partial	All elements are included. However, the ToR attached does not open due to missing link.
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Executive summary

4. Is an executive summary written as a stand-alone section, presenting the i) Purpose; ii) Objectives, scope and brief description of interventions; iii) intended audience; iv) Methodology; v) Main results; vi) Conclusions and Recommendations?	Yes	The executive summary includes all required elements and is written as a standalone document providing a good overview of the report.
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5. Is the executive summary reasonably concise (e.g. with a maximum length of 5 pages)?	Yes	At 5 pages, the executive summary is reasonable in length.
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2. Design and Methodology	Yes No Partial	Assessment Level:	Very good
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To ensure that the evaluation is put within its context

1. Is the development and institutional context of the evaluation clearly described and constraints explained?	Yes	The development and institutional context of the evaluation are clearly described. The constraints are explained, including the geographical and political context, development challenges related to SRHR, adolescent health, GEEW, population dynamics in Lesotho, COVID-19 context, and the role of external assistance.
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2. Does the evaluation report discuss and assess the intervention logic and/or theory of change?	Partial	The evaluators assessed the CP's theory of change and reconstructed it, however, there are shortcomings. The text on pp 2-3 is somewhat confusing as, after the evaluators provided a narrative assessment of the ToC of the 7th CP, it was then mentioned that the 1st CP did not have a ToC and so they reconstructed that one as well; however, the reasons for this and its location in the document is unclear. Moreover, the ToC presented in Annex 9 identifies CP outcomes as outputs and does not clearly identify the outputs leading to these outcomes, limiting the clarity of the causal connections between interventions and outcomes. It would be beneficial to provide a more detailed and clear analysis of the program's theory of change and the causal connections between outputs and outcomes.
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To ensure a rigorous design and methodology

3. Is the evaluation framework clearly described in the text and in the evaluation matrix? Does the evaluation matrix establish the evaluation questions, assumptions, indicators, data sources and methods for data collection?	Yes	The evaluation matrix is discussed in the report body and attached in the annex. It contains assumptions to be assessed, indicators, sources of information, methods and tools for data collection, as well as key findings.
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4. Are the tools for data collection described and their choice justified?	Yes	Data collection tools used in the evaluation are clearly described. They include key informant interviews, focus group discussions, direct observation during field visits, and desk review of existing literature. The rationale behind their selection is also detailed.
5. Is there a comprehensive stakeholder map? Is the stakeholder consultation process clearly described (in particular, does it include the consultation of key stakeholders on draft recommendations)?	Yes	The stakeholder map provided in Annex 7 identifies various stakeholders involved in the evaluation. The stakeholders are organized into different categories including implementing agencies, rights holders, government, local NGOs, international NGOs, women's rights organizations, other UN agencies, and academia. It is noted that recommendations were formulated in consultation with key stakeholders. The Evaluation Reference Group (ERG), comprising key stakeholders also served as a quality assurance mechanism and provided inputs on evaluation deliverables at different stages of the process.
6. Are the methods for analysis clearly described for all types of data?	Yes	The data analysis methods used in the evaluation are clearly described. Evaluators used content analysis for qualitative data, contribution analysis to assess the extent of the Country Programme's contribution to expected results, and descriptive statistics for quantitative data obtained from secondary sources.
7. Are methodological limitations acknowledged and their effect on the evaluation described? Does the report discuss what was done to minimize such issues?	Yes	Limitations as well as their mitigations strategies are clearly described. These were mainly related to data collection. For example, short time for field visits, language barrier for Team Leader, and qualitative data collected from limited sources.
8. Is the sampling strategy described?	Yes	The evaluators used purposive sampling to select respondents for key informant interviews (KIs) and group interviews. The selection of stakeholders was based on various criteria, including association with ongoing and completed activities, geographic location, and involvement in activities with both national and direct execution modality. Limitations regarding purposive sampling were also noted. The annexed list of evaluation respondents provides their designation, sex, place, and thematic area, but there is no cumulative presentation of the total number of evaluation participants.
9. Does the methodology enable the collection and analysis of disaggregated data?	Yes	The report provides disaggregated data where available and notes gaps in the documentation and utilization of sex-disaggregated data, as well as age- and disability-disaggregated data.
10. Is the design and methodology appropriate for assessing the cross-cutting issues (equity and vulnerability, disability inclusion, gender equality and human rights)?	Yes	EQ3 (Effectiveness) assesses the integration of human rights, gender perspectives, and disability inclusion in the country program and EQ7 (Coverage) relates to human rights, specifically the extent to which UNFPA's humanitarian interventions reached vulnerable and marginalized groups, including women, adolescents, and youth, and LGBTQI populations. Additionally, data collection tools have probe questions focusing on vulnerability, gender, disability and human rights.
3. Reliability of Data		
	Yes No Partial	Assessment Level: Very good
<i>To ensure quality of data and robust data collection processes</i>		
1. Did the evaluation triangulate data collected as appropriate?	Yes	The evaluators ensured triangulation by using primary qualitative data from multiple sources and cross-checking it with secondary quantitative data from national surveys and thematic evaluations conducted by development and humanitarian partners.
2. Did the evaluation clearly identify and make use of reliable qualitative and quantitative data sources?	Yes	Data sources including qualitative and quantitative appear to be wide and reliable. A total of 82 respondents (36 male, 43 female, and 3 LGBTQI individuals) were engaged through key informant interviews and focus group discussions. In addition, Annex 3 provides a list of 53 documents and reference materials that were reviewed as part of the evaluation process.
3. Is there evidence that data has been collected with a sensitivity to issues of discrimination and other ethical considerations?	Partial	It is noted that the evaluation followed norms outlined in the UNFPA Evaluation Handbook and UNEG guidance. Data collection tools indicated that the evaluation team assured participants of the confidentiality of information exchange and that the information would only be used for the purpose of analysis. However, it would have been useful to clearly describe application of ethical considerations in the methodology section of the report. Additionally, it is good practice to have specific instructions in protocols for FGDs with beneficiaries on step taken to ensure an inclusive and ethical approach was followed.
4. Analysis and Findings		
	Yes No Partial	Assessment Level: Very good
<i>To ensure sound analysis and credible findings</i>		
1. Are the findings substantiated by evidence?	Yes	The findings are backed up by both qualitative and quantitative sources.
2. Is the basis for interpretations carefully described?	Yes	Evaluators are careful in interpreting data. For example, effectiveness section provides examples of how UNFPA's support for the development of GBV registers at health facilities, the training of healthcare workers to produce quality data, and the alignment of national GBV reporting tools with international guidelines impacted health system and statistics systems.
3. Is the analysis presented against the evaluation questions?	Yes	The analysis is presented according to the evaluation questions, and a summary at the beginning provides an overall picture of key findings for each.

4. Are the cause and effect links between an intervention and its end results explained and any unintended outcomes highlighted?	Yes	Evaluators provide causal linkage between outputs and outcomes. For example, under effectiveness criteria it is noted that training on data collection tools resulted in improved reporting of GBV cases and determination of the prevalence of GBV in households. Similarly, it is noted that the 24-hour hotline service improved reporting of GBV cases, and officers trained on reporting and referral mechanism for GBV survivors led to more informed and sensitive police officers who were likely to offer psychosocial support to survivors and refer cases to health centers and courts. Section 4.9.2 provides very general comments on unintended consequences.
5. Does the analysis show different outcomes for different target groups, as relevant?	Yes	This is done. For example, under effectiveness criteria it is noted that "UNFPA promoted the inclusion of the LGBTQ+ and PWDs in the service delivery, including advocating for their access to the services. There was however a confirmation from interviews with stakeholders that there was inadequate integration of PWDs in programming which may need to be enhanced." Additionally, the perspectives of different stakeholders groups are shown, including by the inclusion of direct quotes from respondents.
6. Is the analysis presented against contextual factors?	Yes	The findings section presents analysis against contextual factors. For example, under sustainability criteria it is noted that while the government supports policies and laws there are limitations on their capacities to ensure effective implementation and oversight. Additionally, it is noted that in the context of a patriarchal society, more advocacy is required to ensure that laws and policies are effectively implemented.
7. Does the analysis elaborate on cross-cutting issues such as equity and vulnerability, disability inclusion, gender equality and human rights?	Yes	The report provides adequate analysis of cross-cutting issues, including equity and vulnerability, disability inclusion, gender equality, and human rights.
5. Conclusions	Yes No Partial	Assessment Level: Very good
<i>To assess the validity of conclusions</i>		
1. Do the conclusions flow clearly from the findings?	Yes	Conclusions are clearly based on findings and note the EQs they are based on.
2. Do the conclusions go beyond the findings and provide a thorough understanding of the underlying issues of the programme/initiative/system being evaluated and reflect as appropriate cross-cutting issues such as equality and vulnerability, disability inclusion, gender equality and human rights?	Yes	Conclusions are well formulated and useful. They cover Adolescent and Youth, Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, as well as disability-inclusion issues.
3. Do the conclusions appear to convey the evaluators' unbiased judgement?	Yes	Conclusions appear to be unbiased as they are clearly based on well-evidenced findings.
6. Recommendations	Yes No Partial	Assessment Level: Good
<i>To ensure the usefulness and clarity of recommendations</i>		
1. Do recommendations flow logically from conclusions?	Yes	Recommendations are based on conclusions. Evaluators also note the associated EQs and conclusions for each recommendation.
2. Are the recommendations targeted at the intended users and action-oriented (with information on their human, financial and technical implications)?	Yes	Recommendations are targeted at the intended users and come with operational implications.
3. Do recommendations appear balanced and impartial and address, as relevant, key cross cutting issues such as equity and vulnerability, disability-inclusion, gender equality and human rights?	Partial	Recommendations appear to be impartial and cover issues including GEEW, equity, and human rights. However, disability is not covered.
4. Are the recommendations prioritized?	No	The prioritization of recommendations is unclear since all are listed as High. This is particularly an issue because there are 13 recommendations, which is more than what is generally considered an easily manageable number.
7. Gender	0 1 2 3 (**)	Assessment Level: Very good
<i>To assess the integration of Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW) (*)</i>		

<p>1. Is GEEW integrated in the evaluation scope of analysis and indicators designed in a way that ensures GEEW-related data to be collected?</p>	<p>a. Does the evaluation include an objective specific to assessment of human rights and gender equality considerations or was it mainstreamed in other objectives? (Score: 0-3) Cross-cutting issues, such as human rights; gender equality, disability are covered under scope. =3</p> <p>b. Was a standalone criterion on gender and/or human rights included in the evaluation framework or mainstreamed into other evaluation criteria? (Score: 0-3) Gender is covered in evaluation questions as well as under assumptions in Evaluation Matrix. =3</p> <p>c. Is there a dedicated evaluation question or sub-question regarding how GEEW was integrated into the subject of the evaluation? (Score: 0-3) Gender is covered under two sub-questions within the effectiveness and coverage criteria. =3</p> <p>d. Does the evaluation assess whether sufficient information was collected during the implementation period on specific result indicators to measure progress on human rights and gender equality results?(Score: 0-3) The report presents gender disaggregated data, while also highlighting gaps in the documentation and use of data that is disaggregated by age and disability. =3</p>
<p>2. Is a gender-responsive methodology used, including gender-responsive methods and tools, and data analysis techniques?</p>	<p>a. Does the evaluation specify how gender issues are addressed in the methodology, including: how data collection and analysis methods integrate gender considerations and ensure data collected is disaggregated by sex? (Score: 0-3) Evaluators note consideration of gender aspects in selection of participants and probing for gender issues during interview sessions to ensure gender perspectives were captured. However, it would have been useful to more explicitly describe how a gender-responsive approach was ensured in data collection and analysis methods, or whether any accommodations were made based on gender particularly for the FGDs with beneficiaries. =2</p> <p>b. Does the evaluation methodology employ a mixed-methods approach, appropriate to evaluating GEEW considerations (collecting and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data, and ensuring the appropriate sample size)? (Score: 0-3) Evaluation uses a mixed-methods approach appropriate to evaluating GEEW considerations. It is noted that FGDs were aimed to be composed of at least 5 -8 participants ensuring balance in terms of sex and focus area the overall sample appears adequate.=3</p> <p>c. Are a diverse range of data sources and processes employed (i.e. triangulation, validation) to guarantee inclusion, accuracy and credibility? (Score: 0-3) Key informant interviews (KIs) were conducted with UNFPA CO staff, officials from government line ministries, representatives of UN agencies, strategic partners, and national and international NGOs as implementing partners. Focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with a wide variety of stakeholders, including herd boys, beneficiaries of husband schools, Mokhotlong district health facility staff, and teachers who benefited from the UNFPA CP support. =3</p> <p>d. Do the evaluation methods and sampling frame address the diversity of stakeholders affected by the intervention, particularly the most vulnerable, where appropriate? (Score: 0-3) The annexed list of evaluation respondents indicate that there was representation from vulnerable groups such as sex workers, organizations working on SRHR, and LGBTQI+ individuals. =3</p> <p>e. Were ethical standards considered throughout the evaluation and were all stakeholder groups treated with integrity and respect for confidentiality? (Score: 0-3) Evaluators note that evaluation adhered to guidance outlined in the UNODC evaluation handbook. Similarly data collection tools include note on confidentiality, however, evaluators could have been more specific about their application to rightsholders =1</p>
<p>3. Do the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations reflect a gender analysis?</p>	<p>a. Does the evaluation have a background section that includes an intersectional analysis of the specific social groups affected by the issue or spell out the relevant normative instruments or policies related to human rights and gender equality? (Score: 0-3) The background section discusses various aspects related to gender equality and women's empowerment (GEEW), including the high levels of gender inequality and violence against women in Lesotho, the representation of women in leadership positions, and the prevalence of child marriage. Additionally, it provides information on Lesotho's Gender Inequality Index and Gini index for inequality, as well as the country's adherence to the SADC protocol on Gender and Development and the enactment of the sexual offenses act. =3</p> <p>b. Do the findings include data analysis that explicitly and transparently triangulates the voices of different social role groups, and/or disaggregates quantitative data, where applicable? (Score: 0-3) The findings section includes analysis covering issues related to different social groups, including vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities (PWDs), sex workers, herd boys, and LGBTQI+ individuals. Section 4.3.2 specifically covers gender equality and women's empowerment. Similarly, EQ3 covers gender and human rights perspectives in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the child protection program. However, there is limited use of disaggregated data, which has been acknowledged in the limitations section. =3</p> <p>c. Are unanticipated effects of the intervention on human rights and gender equality described? (Score: 0-3) The report presents two unintended outcomes. However, they are linked to the improvement of practical skills and increased engagement of teachers through teacher training programs, as well as the enhanced performance of students in the classroom due to their participation in the course. It would have been useful to describe any unanticipated effects of the intervention on human rights and gender equality. =2</p> <p>d. Does the evaluation report provide specific recommendations addressing GEEW issues, and priorities for action to improve GEEW or the intervention or future initiatives in this area? (Score: 0-3) Conclusions and recommendations cover disability, human rights, as well as GEWE. Specially there are 2 recommendations covered under GEWE. The two recommendations for GEWE focus on: (i) Strengthening policy and legal engagement, and implementing policies and strategies to ensure GEWE, and eliminating harmful practices affecting women and girls in Lesotho. (ii) Increasing evidence-based GBV response mechanisms, improving access to justice for survivors, and engaging men and boys in preventing GBV and empowering women and girls. =3</p>

(*) This assessment criteria is fully based on the UN-SWAP Scoring Tool. Each sub-criteria shall be equally weighted.
(**) Scoring uses a four point scale (0-3).

Overall Evaluation Quality Assessment				
Quality assessment criteria (scoring points*)	Assessment Levels (**)			
	Very good	Good	Fair	Unsatisfactory
1. Structure and clarity of reporting, including executive summary (7)		7		
2. Design and methodology (13)	13			
3. Reliability of data (11)	11			
4. Analysis and findings (40)	40			
5. Conclusions (11)	11			
6. Recommendations (11)		11		
7. Integration of gender (7)	7			
Total scoring points	82	18		

Overall assessment level of evaluation report	Very good			
The evaluation integrates adequately cross cutting issues of gender equality, human rights and disability inclusion, even though is not included as part of the evaluation objective.				
Consideration of significant constraints (e.g. COVID-19 or civil unrest)				
The quality of this evaluation report has been hampered by exceptionally difficult circumstances: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No				
If yes, please explain:				