

EQA for UNFPA Turkmenistan Country Programme Evaluation (2010-2015)



Title of Evaluation Report: Country Programme Evaluation (CPE) Turkmenistan 2010 – 2015

Overall Quality Rating: Good

Overall Assessment: The report is prepared according to the requirements of ToR, although there is no chapter on “Transferable Lessons Learned” as requested. The report structure is designed as recommended, and the executive summary is a stand-alone document and contains all required information. The design and methodology chapter provides clear and detailed explanation of evaluation approach to ensure reliable data collection processes and data quality. Evaluation design and methodology, the reliability of data, as well as the findings and analysis derived from the data are strengths of the report. The evaluators conducted rigorous data analysis, including document review and interviews with stakeholders. The conclusions are divided into Strategic and Programmatic categories and are based on findings. Recommendations are clearly based on the conclusions and are presented in priority order.

Quality Assessment criteria	Assessment Levels			
	Very good	Good	Poor	Unsatisfactory
<p>1. Structure and Clarity of Reporting <i>To ensure report is user-friendly, comprehensive, logically structured and drafted in accordance with international standards.</i> Checklist of minimum content and sequence required for structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • i) Acronyms; ii) Exec Summary; iii) Introduction; iv) Methodology including Approach and Limitations; v) Context; vi) Findings/Analysis; vii) Conclusions; viii) Recommendations; ix) Transferable Lessons Learned (where applicable) • Minimum requirements for Annexes: ToRs; Bibliography; List of interviewees; Methodological instruments used. 	<p>Good The report structure is designed as required, although chapter 1.3 Methodology and Process is included in the Introduction and there is no chapter “Transferable Lessons Learned” that is requested by the ToR. Minimum requirements for Annexes are satisfied: The report has ToRs, List of interviewees, Bibliography, and data collection documentation.</p>			
<p>2. Executive Summary <i>To provide an overview of the evaluation, written as a stand-alone</i></p>	<p>Good The Executive Summary has a relevant structure & and meets</p>			

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<p><i>section and presenting main results of the evaluation.</i> Structure (paragraph equates to half page max):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Purpose, including intended audience(s); ii) Objectives and Brief description of intervention (1 para); iii) Methodology (1 para); iv) Main Conclusions (1 para); v) Recommendations (1 para). Maximum length 3-4 page. 	<p>recommended content. While it effectively summarizes the report, this section is five and a half pages long and could have been summarized more effectively; however, this is not a significant issue and does not affect the quality of this section.</p>			
<p>3. Design and Methodology <i>To provide a clear explanation of the following elements/tools</i> Minimum content and sequence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explanation of methodological choice, including constraints and limitations; Techniques and Tools for data collection provided in a detailed manner; Triangulation systematically applied throughout the evaluation; Details of participatory stakeholders' consultation process are provided; Details on how cross-cutting issues (vulnerable groups, youth, gender, equality) were addressed in the design and the conduct of the evaluation. 	<p>Very Good Design and Methodology chapter provides clear and detailed explanation of evaluation approach. Minimum content and sequence is fully satisfied. The description of the Design and Methodology could be a model for other evaluations. One minor issue is that this section is included into the Introduction "1.3.1 Methods for Data Collection, Sources and Analysis" and there is no corresponding annex "Methodological instruments used," but the chapter in the report provides a comprehensive overview of the evaluation design and methodology that explains well how data were acquired. The section explains methodological choices very clearly: "Due to the limited availability of time in the field and the inability to access a list of service users..., a judgmental sample of beneficiaries was used...The evaluation also made use of the monitoring reports... The following planned data collection exemplified the mix methods that were employed... Analysis of quantitative data was based on the availability of primary and secondary data." The methodology has a separate sub-chapter which explains how the field sites were chosen including a clear explanation of how a purposive sample was drawn. Constraints and limitations are reflected in the sub-chapter "Evaluability Assessment and Limitations." Triangulation was systematically applied throughout the evaluation: "Validation was achieved through stakeholder meetings, such as debriefing meetings with UNFPA staff and the members of ERG. The evaluation team used a variety of methods to ensure the validity</p>			

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	<p>of the data collected.” These methods were explained in detail. Techniques and Tools for data collection are provided in a detailed manner: e.g. “The collection of data was carried out through a variety of techniques that ranged from direct observation to informal and semistructured interviews and focus groups discussions.” Details of participatory stakeholders’ consultation process are provided and explained in paragraphs “Selection of stakeholders and study sample” and “Stakeholders’ participation.”</p> <p>Cross-cutting issues (vulnerable groups, youth, gender, equality) were addressed in the design and the conduct of the evaluation “Direct Beneficiaries of the programme,...including women, men and young people, pregnant mothers, Y-PEER volunteers, youth and teachers were interviewed. Due to the time and other logistical limitations, selection of some of these target beneficiaries (e.g. pregnant mothers, those who seek FP services, etc.) were based on those who were present during the evaluators’ visit to the health facility.”</p>			
<p>4. Reliability of Data</p> <p><i>To clarify data collection processes and data quality</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sources of qualitative and quantitative data have been identified; • Credibility of primary (e.g. interviews and focus groups) and secondary (e.g. reports) data established and limitations made explicit; • Disaggregated data by gender has been utilized where necessary. 	<p>Good</p> <p>Data collection processes were carefully designed and methods to ensure data quality. Sources of qualitative and quantitative data are provided in the Annex 4 List of people met and interview guides and Annex 5 List of references. Credibility of primary and secondary data is established and limitations are made explicit. Credibility of data was ensured by “regular communication with the Country Office for clarification and additional information.”</p> <p>The evaluators say that “primary data was mainly qualitative in nature.” Due to the limitations, a “judgmental sample of beneficiaries was used to gather information on service quality and its accessibility and utility.” The evaluators applied the content analysis and comparative assessment when necessary. In terms of sources of data for sustainability, this was assessed mainly on respondents’ perceptions.</p>			

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	The key limitation was that evaluators did not master all of the languages in use in country and that caused “delays and lack of clarity in expected outputs and reporting.” The solution was to recruit “two national consultants with language proficiency and knowledge in subject matter as well as UN system operation.” Disaggregated data by gender are also presented in the Annexes 4 and 5.			
<p>5. Findings and Analysis <i>To ensure sound analysis and credible findings</i></p> <p><u>Findings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Findings stem from rigorous data analysis; • Findings are substantiated by evidence; • Findings are presented in a clear manner <p><u>Analysis</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpretations are based on carefully described assumptions; • Contextual factors are identified. • Cause and effect links between an intervention and its end results (including unintended results) are explained. 	<p>Good</p> <p>The evaluators conducted rigorous data analysis, including document review and interviews with stakeholders. The report could be used as a model on how to assess the project’s Effectiveness – sub-chapter 4.2, which is usually the most important element in an evaluation, and which received the greatest attention. The text includes tables with indicators per each output, baseline data, target and actual values, including major achievements under the output. The findings are supported systematically by qualitative and quantitative data and are specific. The report also contains the evaluators’ consideration and description of Facilitating and Constraining Factors. The evaluation team’s interpretations in the report include references or links to the sources of information e.g. chapter 4.1.3 (SRH Education and Youth - Relevance) “According to the “National Programme of Turkmenistan on Response to HIV for 2012-2016” and the “National Strategy on Reproductive Health in Turkmenistan for 2011 – 2015,” peer education approach is relevant and behavior change communication that is supported in UNFPA.”, and this is consistent approach for all findings. A minor issue is that some interpretations lack ‘SMART-ness’ (e.g. specific, measurable etc). For instance, the report says “Interview feedback and document review reveal that the interventions under the Population and Development work plan for 2010-2014 respond to national needs with fairly high degree of relevance.” It is not said which kind of interventions were assessed and how the evaluators obtained the finding “fairly high degree of relevance.” However, this does not undermine the overall quality</p>			

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	<p>of this section.</p> <p>Some findings lack references on the source of information, for instance, chapter 4.1.3 SRH Education and Youth – Relevance: “The Turkmenistan education system believes that teachers' professional development is a dynamic process, extending from initial preparation over the course of an entire career. There is no reference on the documents from which the evaluators concluded that “system believes.”</p> <p>Interpretations are based on carefully described assumptions which are explained in the Annex 2: Evaluation Matrices. The matrix includes indicators, sources of information, and methods and tools for data collection. Contextual factors are identified, for instance, free education which is “almost universal for both boys and girls, and the adult literacy rate is nearly 100 percent,” and “The Government promotes a pro-natalist policy,” and others.</p> <p>Cause and effect links between an intervention and its end results (including unintended results) are explained clearly. For instance, “Strategies adopted [in support of the census] to achieve results were: advocacy dialogues, capacity development and evaluations on compliance with international standards. Assessment of the numerous activities accomplished to conduct the census and feedback from relevant stakeholders revealed that the census was completed successfully and according to international standards.”</p>			
<p>6. Conclusions</p> <p><i>To assess the validity of conclusions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conclusions are based on credible findings; • Conclusions are organized in priority order; • Conclusions must convey evaluators’ unbiased judgment of the intervention. 	<p>Good</p> <p>Conclusions are divided into Strategic and Programmatic and conclusions are based on findings, although there are no direct links between conclusions chapter and findings chapter.</p> <p>Conclusions are numbered and are presented according to the evaluation criteria. Conclusions are based on credible findings, but the style of description of conclusions is the narrative discussion, and at times lack detail, for instance, “Mature programmes like reproductive health show</p>			

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	<p>signs of sustainability”; “The coordination with other UN agencies has shown positive results” but there is no reference to evidence; “Within a fairly small UN representation...” (no detail on the number); “...UNFPA Country Office input in technical cooperation and coordination.” (no detail on the input).</p> <p>In a few cases, the conclusions lack specificity, although they are supported by the findings: for example, how the evaluators came to note that UNFPA interventions were “well aligned with UNDAF...The activities were viewed as a good fit... a great added value to the development community... strong presence...signs of sustainability...There is more room to establish partnerships and mobilize resources.”</p> <p>Even though the evaluators build the conclusions on the findings occasionally the source of information is not always clear. For example, “Recent UNDAF evaluation findings noted the limitations in UNDAF’s flexibility and lack of participation of national partners in the 2010-2015 UNDAF preparation process in 2009.” Priority is not explicitly given for conclusions but can at times be inferred e.g. “The added value of UNFPA as a development partner is high, particularly where UNFPA has acted as a facilitator.”</p>			
<p>7. Recommendations</p> <p><i>To assess the usefulness and clarity of recommendations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations flow logically from conclusions; • Recommendations must be strategic, targeted and operationally-feasible; • Recommendations must take into account stakeholders’ consultations whilst remaining impartial; • Recommendations should be presented in priority order 	<p>Good</p> <p>Recommendations are divided into strategic and programmatic and are based on the conclusions. Recommendations are presented in priority order and assigned a priority level (e.g. “Priority level: High.”)</p> <p>Recommendations are strategic, targeted and operationally-feasible and clearly linked with the conclusions. For instance, the recommendation I is linked to Conclusion 3, 4,5,6,9 “Undertake a Capacity Assessment of the Country Office to strengthen the human resource capacity to meet the change in focus on upstream advocacy.”</p> <p>The evaluators state that the recommendations were developed according to the feedback and suggestions from stakeholders.</p>			

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8. Meeting Needs To ensure that Evaluation Report responds to requirements (scope & evaluation questions/issues/DAC criteria) stated in the ToR (ToR must be annexed to the report). In the event that the ToR do not conform with commonly agreed quality standards, assess if evaluators have highlighted the deficiencies with the ToR.	Good The evaluation report is prepared according to the requirements of ToR. Nevertheless, there is no chapter “Transferable Lessons Learned” that is required by TOR.			

Quality assessment criteria (and Multiplying factor *)	Assessment Levels (*)			
	Very good	Good	Poor	Unsatisfactory
1. Structure and clarity of reporting (2)		2		
2. Executive summary (2)		2		
3. Design and methodology (5)	5			
4. Reliability of data (5)		5		
5. Findings and analysis (50)		50		
6. Conclusions (12)		12		
7. Recommendations (12)		12		
8. Meeting needs (12)		12		
TOTAL	5	95		

(*) Insert the multiplying factor associated with the criteria in the corresponding column e.g. - if “Finding and Analysis” has been assessed as “good”, please enter the number 50 into the “Good” column. The Assessment level scoring the higher number of points will determine the overall quality of the Report

OVERALL QUALITY OF REPORT: Good