

UNFPA Management Response to Evaluation

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE	
Country, Region or HQ division/unit that commissioned the evaluation	China-ASIA
Evaluation Title	UNFPA Country Programme Evaluation: CHINA
Year of the evaluation	2014
Type and/or focus area of evaluation	CountryProgEval
MR submission date	June 17, 2015
Approved By	
Evaluation Manager	Ren Yanan, National Programme Associate, China
General Management Response	All the recommendations of CPE (a total of 9) have been reviewed, discussed and accepted by the UNFPA China Office. The CPE recommendations will be well taken into account in the next country programme (CP8) design and implementation. The key actions for implementation with deadlines and responsible team(s) have been developed in response to each recommendation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

<p>Recomendation 1</p>	<p>Actively contribute to UN joint efforts and lead UN strategic thinking on UNFPA mandated areas in China.</p> <p>1) UNFPA should continue leading strategic thinking and building good working relationships with other UN agencies on population dynamics, SRH and gender equality. The UN adds value through its normative role, its power to convene, impartiality, and international expertise.</p> <p>2) While maintaining active participation in the UNCT, and pursuing UN joint efforts on the promotion of international norms and standards, UNFPA should continue to demonstrate its expertise in helping to improve Chinese policy and institutional leadership on RH, PD and GE.</p> <p>3) The likelihood of resource constraints in UN agencies, including UNFPA, requires a continued search for efficiencies. It also requires enhanced use of more flexible interventions and modalities, and greater leverage of partnership relationships in order to achieve high returns on limited investment.</p>
<p>Management Response</p>	<p>Accepted</p>
<p>Comments</p>	

No.	Key Action(s)	Deadline	Responsible unit(s)	Semiannual implementation status updates (reports will be generated on June 30 and December 31)	
				Status	Comments
1.1	Chair the UN Subgroups on ageing and youth (under the UNTG on Poverty Reduction and Equitable Development) and co-chair the UNTG on Health.	December 31,2015	Representative/Deputy Rep, with support of PD, SRH and Youth teams	June 17,2015	
1.2	Develop CP8 Action Plan and the project documents considering use of more flexible programme modalities and greater leverage of partnership support and resources (link to key actions 4.2 and 8.1).	December 31,2015	UNFPA senior management, with support of Programme, OM and communication teams	June 17,2015	

Recomendation 2	<p>Strengthen UNFPA's unique expertise, in particular for RH and PD, and maintain its credibility and objectivity in China.</p> <p>1) For the added value sought by partners of GoC, UNFPA should continue to explore changes to project arrangements and modalities. This is with a view to providing enhanced access to international expertise and international experience in RH and PD.</p> <p>2) It is important for any UN agency to be well versed in providing brokerage of technical assistance, ensuring meticulous development of TORs that set clear objectives and outputs, setting rigorous performance requirements, and creating and implementing performance assessments.</p> <p>3) Particular care is also required in meeting IPs' related requests for greater exposure to international experience. Strong design is essential to ensure access to key bodies, people and sites in international study tours, as well as international opportunities such as conferences that also offer value for money. Reports in writing and clear identification of follow up actions to be taken by beneficiary institutions as a result of such international experiences are essential.</p> <p>4) During the end of programme review process in 2015, a closer look should be given to what capacity building has achieved in terms of sustainability.</p>
Management Response	Accepted
Comments	

No.	Key Action(s)	Deadline	Responsible unit(s)	Semiannual implementation status updates (reports will be generated on June 30 and December 31)	
				Status	Comments
2.1	Develop CP8 Action Plan and the project documents with a greater focus on international exchange and SSC.	December 31,2015	UNFPA senior management, with support of Programme, OM and communication teams	June 17,2015	
2.2	Develop the UNFPA CO's SOP for the management of technical assistance including assessment of technical assistance performance (link to key action 7.1.2 under recommendation 7).	October 31,2015	Deputy Rep, with support of programme team and OM team	June 17,2015	

2.3	Develop the CO's SOP on UNFPA supported international study tours and participation in international conferences/seminars, taking into account the CPE recommendation on strong design, reporting and follow-up actions.	October 31,2015	Deputy Rep, with support of programme team and OM team	June 17,2015	
2.4	Review the CP7 achievements in capacity development during the end of programme review process in 2015 and, where applicable, document how these achievements will be sustained and/or scaled up.	March 31,2016	Programme team	June 17,2015	
Recommendation 3			<p>Continue to be highly responsive and adaptive to the evolving situation in China in order to remain relevant and able to respond to emerging population issues.</p> <p>1) In its positioning, UNFPA China will need to continue to be strategic in building partnerships, be adaptive to emerging issues, and maintain its key strengths in normative work. It will further build on its acknowledged objectivity, strong convening ability, and access to international experience and expertise.</p> <p>2) Building on its good position attained through CP7, UNFPA needs to further its partnership strategy by bringing project achievements into upstream policymaking.</p> <p>3) UNFPA should also focus on developing key results criteria to be applied when considering policy impacts and sustainability.</p>		
Management Response			Accepted		
Comments					

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3.1	Strengthen the CO's capacity and skills in policy engagement, environment scanning and Interest Group Analysis, and make these an essential part of the CP8 to ensure timely programme response to emerging population issues.	June 30,2016	UNFPA CO senior management, APRO	June 17,2015	
3.2	Develop CP8 Action Plan and the project documents, emphasizing how advocacy and policy work will build on the CP7 projects achievements.	December 31,2015	UNFPA senior management, with support of Programme, OM and communication teams	June 17,2015	

	3.3	While developing CP8 Action Plan and the component project documents, develop SMART indicators and milestones of key results in policy engagement and advocacy.	December 31,2015	UNFPA senior management and Programme team, with TA support of M&E adviser of APRO	June 17,2015	
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<p>Recomendation 4</p>	<p>Continue strengthening the Country Office's capacity for advocacy, policy advisory services and SSC. This includes a thorough review of its current organizational structure, possible funding sources and project delivery modalities.</p> <p>1) To further enhance upstream programming and to better play a brokerage role in providing policy advisory assistance, the UNFPA CO's organigram and skills profile require timely analysis and review.</p> <p>2) The possibility of greater limitations on UNFPA resources may require that the CO examine the scope for operational efficiencies.</p> <p>3) The CO also needs explore the possibilities of external financing from new funding sources and co-financing. The existing examples of subnational partners of GoC investing in projects supported by the CP7, e.g. SRB in Changfeng and urbanization/migration in Zhengzhou, have suggested that it is not only feasible, but also necessary, to identify and combine GoC's institutional strengths and financial resources with UNFPA's expertise in the design of the next CP. Government's investment ensures its commitment to the end results of projects, including exploration for further scalability.</p> <p>4) The use of a traditional project-based approach to deliver the entire CP needs reconsideration. CP7's experience suggests that fewer more broadly-based and integrated projects may be desirable, and that they should be less scattered than the current 45 sites.</p>
<p>Management Response</p>	<p>Accepted</p>
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4.1	Conduct the review and alignment of the CO's human resources to respond to the CP8 priorities, and develop staff training plan on upstream programming skills.	December 31,2015	Representative, Deputy Representative and OM, with support from DHR and APRO	June 17,2015	
4.2	In line with the preferred modes of engagement commensurate with programming in a middle-income country, such as China, explore and adopt the right mix of programme implementation modalities.	December 31,2015	UNFPA senior management, with support of Programme and OM teams	June 17,2015	

4.3	Develop a resource mobilization strategy in conjunction with strategic partners to leverage additional resources for CP8.	December 31,2015	UNFPA senior management, with support of Programme, Communication and Operations teams, DMS, DCS, SPB, APRO	June 17,2015	
4.4	Develop a limited number of CP8 project documents, with a stronger integration of substantive issues and geographic coverage.	December 31,2015	UNFPA senior management, with support of Programme, Communication and Operations teams	June 17,2015	

Recomendation 5

Ensure that the next country programme continues to be highly relevant by emphasizing the use of evidence-based advocacy and policy advice. This should address national needs and priorities, and respond to sustainable development goals and the emerging role of China as a global player.

1) The CPE recommends that the next country programme be aligned with national priorities such as the 13th Five-Year Plan on Economic and Social Development and the 13th Five-Year Plan on Population and Development. It should also be aligned with UNDAF (2016-2020) and the UNFPA Strategic Plan (2014-2017).

2) The country programme should continue to give strong attention to advancing evidence-based policymaking in China. It should take account of useful studies and quality data so as to ensure responsiveness of policies and plans to population needs.

3) Further improvement of quality and accessibility of data and research results need to be pursued. Two aspects of this exercise should be considered: a) improving the quality and use of data in the national statistics system; b) improving the local levels of data gathering and record keeping.

4) Further support at bridging data gaps, especially sex-disaggregated data, data on fertility trends, VAW, youth, vulnerable people, etc., is highly recommended in a future CP.

5) UNFPA should continue engagement with the GoC at the level of policy analysis and development on priority population issues such as urbanization and ageing. CP7 interventions have helped contribute to greater use of both demographic data and socio-economic research in policymaking. Joining this contribution to broader socio-economic and sectoral analysis will enhance its use in advocacy.

6) A stronger focus on rights-based programming is highly recommended in a future CP. This could

	<p>strengthen on-going efforts in policy integration between RH, FP, GE and PD resulting from the 2013 institutional merger of the NHFPC.</p> <p>7) The future country programme should adopt a more multi-sectoral and strategic approach to supporting young people. This particularly relates to ASRH through the use of ICT and the broader participation of society.</p>
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5.1	Develop the 8th CP Document (2016-2020), the programme Action Plan and the project documents of CP8 in line with national priorities including the 13th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development (2016-2020), the UNFPA global Strategic Plan (2014-2017) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for China (2016-2020).	December 31,2015	UNFPA senior management, with support of Programme, Communication and Operations teams	June 17,2015	
5.2	Develop the PD component of CP8 with a strong emphasis on the policy dialogue to advocate for quality and access to age- and sex-disaggregated data on population dynamics, SRH, youth , gender and the environment.	December 31,2015	UNFPA senior management, with support of Programme, Communication and Operations teams	June 17,2015	

5.3	Develop the PD project documents on priority population issues such as urbanization and ageing.	December 31,2015	UNFPA senior management, with support of Programme, Communication and Operations teams	June 17,2015	
5.4	Integrate a rights-based and gender-sensitive approach in all CP8 projects.	December 31,2015	UNFPA senior management, with support of Programme, Communication and Operations teams	June 17,2015	

	5.5	Develop youth projects, focusing on ASRH, youth participation, multi-sectoral collaboration and the use of ICT.	December 31,2015	UNFPA senior management, with support of Programme, Communication and Operations teams	June 17,2015	
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<p>Recomendation 6</p>	<p>Continue making significant contributions to key GoC policy considerations and improving coherence, integration and the level of pragmatism in future programming.</p> <p>1) UNFPA should seize opportunities to further contribute to policy upstream.</p> <p>2) Mainstreaming of gender equality in UNFPA future programming should be addressed through the promotion of SRHR, initiative on masculinities, efforts at PD and FP improvements, and collection and use of sex-disaggregated data.</p> <p>3) The CPE recommends that the future CP should focus more on youth related issues, in particular ASRH. Sexuality education in and out of schools has suffered difficulties with progress, and this may be an area in which future investigation is needed on how to successfully advocate for CSE.</p> <p>4) Whether the reforms (the pilots of EVAW and SRB model) are more broadly replicable needs to be studied. Prevention of GBV and gender-biased sex selection (GBSS) requires communication strategies to advance policy development and broader attitudinal change as it relates to gender equality, violence and 'son preference.</p> <p>5) The CP7's outcomes and outputs were, in retrospect, somewhat ambitious. A relatively small organization such as UNFPA needs to be pragmatic in a large country like China with regards to the contributions it can make towards desired reforms.</p> <p>6) Programmatic coherence is also critical, and future programming is to be more focused. There needs to be stronger integration between the substantive areas covered and geographical spread. This also suggests fewer locations where local governments have the will, the ability and the resources to work together.</p>
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6.1	Develop the CP8 Action Plan and the project documents considering all specific thematic recommendations mentioned, accompanied by the results and resources framework with SMART indicators.	December 31,2015	UNFPA senior management, with support of Programme, Communication and Operations teams	June 17,2015	
6.2	Conduct a feasibility study on the replication of the CP7 pilot models of prevention of GBV and SRB.	June 30,2016	Gender team	June 17,2015	

6.3	Together with NCC, identify major institutional project leads. Organize regular meetings to discuss strategic orientation and internal coherence of the programme, and integration of activities in a limited number of programme sites.	December 31,2015	UNFPA senior management, with support of Programme, Communication and Operations teams	June 17,2015	
Recomendation 7			<p>Continue effective modalities through improving quality assurance in research, management of technical assistance and the use of strategic communication.</p> <p>1) UNFPA should continue to strengthen its effective modalities of quality assurance mechanisms for research, as well as processes for assessing technical assistance performance and advocacy efforts.</p> <p>2) The strategic communication undertaken by UNFPA needs to be further capitalized on by building working relationships with mass media and social media organizations. This will enhance information dissemination, capacity building, publicity on SRH services and population dynamics issues, particularly with young people. It should also enhance interaction with stakeholders through exploring innovative approaches, such as the use of ICT, mobile applications, and social media, etc.</p>		
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7.1	Update the UNFPA CO's SOP for quality assurance in population research.	December 31,2015	UNFPA senior management, with support of Programme team, APRO, TD	June 17,2015	
7.2	Develop the CP8 communication strategy, to further expand the outreach by UNFPA and its partner organisations to advance the ICPD agenda.	December 31,2015	Communication team, with support of UNFPA senior management and Programme team, APRO	June 17,2015	

Recomendation 8	<p>Adopt a more strategic approach to partnerships to strengthen ownership</p> <p>1) The CPE recommends a review of existing partnerships with a view to developing a more strategic approach aligned with future CP priorities. Assessment of the performance and capacity of existing partners and the opportunities for new partnerships is required; Relationships with primary partners like NDRC, NHFPC, CNCA and NBS need to be deepened. New partnerships may also be needed, including with the private sector. To continue support for evidence-based policymaking, provide value-added support to strong partnerships. Also, provide this support for local level governments that have demonstrated their strong commitment to the UNFPA mandate. Better operational liaison by IPs at local levels is required. More regular and deeper strategic level engagement and dialogue is required with key partners, as opposed to operational level engagement.</p> <p>2) It is important to strengthen ownership and coherence of the next CP by establishing a twice-yearly strategic management policy dialogue with key leading partners in the GoC.</p> <p>3) It is also important to enhance project coordination mechanisms at subnational level through an annual IP's forum to discuss programme results.</p>
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Comments	

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8.1	Develop the CP8 partnership plan aligned with CP8 priorities and new modalities of engagement with the GoC.	December 31,2015	UNFPA senior management	June 17,2015	
8.2	Together with NCC, establish CP8 coordination mechanism for regular strategic dialogue between UNFPA, relevant national government entities and other key partners. Actively contribute to and participate in the annual high-level policy dialogue between the GoC and the UN. (Notes: An annual high-level meeting between the GoC and the UNCT is envisioned to jointly review the annual progress of UNDAF (2016-2020) .)	December 31,2016	UNFPA senior management	June 17,2015	

<p>Recomendation 9</p>	<p>Pursue SSC opportunities in PD, gender, youth and SRH, including in relation to RH commodities.</p> <p>UNFPA should continue pursuing SSC opportunities in consultation with the GoC and in partnership with other UN agencies. Such opportunities may encompass provision of technical assistance, knowledge exchange and research on population and development issues. UNFPA's continuing participation in annual dialogues on China-Africa health collaboration will offer ways to enhance SSC opportunities, in particular in the areas of reproductive health, population and development. One of UNFPA's first initiatives to deepen SSC can be building mutual learning and institutional cooperation in fields such as reproductive health commodities and PD data systems. For example, UNFPA can support initiatives on the most appropriate strategies to ensure provision of quality lifesaving reproductive health commodities, in line with international standards and agreements.</p>
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9.1	Incorporate SSC as one of the modes of engagement in the CP8 CPD and Action Plan.	December 31,2015	UNFPA senior management, with support of Programme team, APRO	June 17,2015	
9.2	Develop project documents focusing on SSC.	December 31,2016	UNFPA senior management, with support of Programme team, APRO and other ROs and COs, TD, PD	June 17,2015	