



Organizational unit: **El Salvador Country Office** Year of report: **2020**

Title of evaluation report: **Final Evaluation of the 8th Country Programme of UNFPA in El Salvador (2016 - 2020)**

Overall quality of report: **Very Good** Date of assessment: **2020 May**

Overall comments: This report provides a comprehensive assessment of UNFPA El Salvador's 8th Country Programme results, which have been notable. The strengths of the evaluation were in the analysis and findings, which presented a clear and theory-based analysis of CP results, drawing cause-and-effect links, assessing UNFPA contributions, and presenting data which was well validated. The conclusions add additional value to the findings, clearly bringing the findings together to present an in-depth understanding of the country programme and context. Recommendations are coherently linked to findings and conclusions, and are clearly actionable and prioritized, and target users. However, more attention could be given to defining and explaining the evaluation design and methodology and more clearly incorporating GEEW considerations. It was not clear to what extent ethical principles were followed in the collection of data, and more findings drawn from diverse stakeholders, such as rights holders engaged in focus group discussions, would have strengthened the presented findings.

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

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:	Very good
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To ensure the report is comprehensive and user-friendly

1. 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?	Yes	The report is well-written, using accessible language with minimal grammatical or spelling errors.
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 73 pages, excluding the annexes, the report is slightly over the maximum page length for country programme evaluations but this does not distract from the report quality.
3. Is the report structured in a logical way? Is there a clear distinction made between analysis/findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned (where applicable)?	Yes	The report is logically structured, first presenting the methodology and country programme background and context, before highlighting findings, conclusions, best practices and lessons, and recommendations. The findings are organized by the evaluation criteria and questions, including text boxes to highlight key findings under each criterion as well as tables to clearly communicate quantitative results.
4. Do the annexes contain – at a minimum – the ToRs; a bibliography; a list of interviewees; the evaluation matrix; methodological tools used (e.g. interview guides; focus group notes, outline of surveys) as well as information on the stakeholder consultation process?	Yes	The annexes are comprehensive (305 pages) and contain all the required information.

Executive summary

5. Is an executive summary included in the report, written as a stand-alone section and presenting the main results of the evaluation?	Yes	The executive summary presents the main conclusions of the evaluation, and highlights the recommendations drawn as a result. It is well-written and serves as a standalone section for the end users of the summary.
6. Is there a clear structure of the executive summary, (i.e. i) Purpose, including intended audience(s); ii) Objectives and brief description of intervention; iii) Methodology; iv) Main conclusions; v) Recommendations)?	Yes	The executive summary includes all of the required information and follows a clear structure. The main conclusions and recommendations are organized at the programmatic and strategic levels.
7. Is the executive summary reasonably concise (e.g. with a maximum length of 5 pages)?	Yes	At four pages, the executive summary is within the required page limits.

2. Design and Methodology	Yes No Partial	Assessment Level:	Fair
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To ensure that the evaluation is put within its context

1. Does the evaluation describe the target audience for the evaluation?	Yes	The target audience is clearly described and includes UNFPA country and regional offices, the Government of El Salvador, national partners and other benefiting stakeholders.
2. Is the development and institutional context of the evaluation clearly described and constraints explained?	Yes	The development and institutional context of the evaluation is clearly described within the chapter on the national context, which highlights high rates of violence/crime, gender-based violence, early marriage and teen pregnancy and laws/policies restricting human rights.
3. Does the evaluation report describe the reconstruction of the intervention logic and/or theory of change, and assess the adequacy of these?	Yes	The evaluation report describes how the evaluation team reconstructed the theory of change in detail and includes a graphic depiction. The evaluation team used what are referred to as 'hypotheses' included in the CPAP, which draw cause-and-effect links between outputs, outcomes, and impacts to reconstruct a theory of change. In addition, the evaluation team considered development and contextual challenges and implementation modalities detailed in programme documents in the theory.
<i>To ensure a rigorous design and methodology</i>		
4. 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 framework is not fully described in text, but the questions are presented on page 14 with a rationale for streamlining questions from those previously identified in the ToR. An additional annex (Annex 4) provides further details on the rationale for revisions to evaluation questions. The evaluation matrix provided in Annex 5 includes the evaluation questions, assumptions, indicators, data sources and methods for data collection, as well as collected data in response to the questions. The evaluation discusses the adequacy of the evaluation questions and the CPAP indicators, and addressed the gaps in each by incorporating suitable questions and indicators in the evaluation matrix in order to support the analysis of programme effectiveness as well as gender and human rights outcomes.
5. Are the tools for data collection described and their choice justified?	Yes	The data collections tool and rationale for their selection are clearly described in a table on page 16. Techniques include the content analysis of a documentary film, individual and group semi-structured interviews with 70 people from UNFPA LACRO and national counterparts in government institutions and technical working groups, as well as field visits, observation checklists, and focus group discussions with beneficiary groups and partners, including community-based organizations and benefiting students of diploma programmes. The justification for the tools is briefly mentioned in the table, and can also be gleaned from the discussion of limitations and risks.
6. 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 process for developing a stakeholder map, and the types of stakeholders included, are described. Most stakeholders engaged were government partners, followed by social organizations, representatives from UNFPA, other cooperation agencies, and beneficiaries. The process for incorporating stakeholder feedback on the report findings and recommendations is also mentioned within the methodology section. While the total universe is not described in terms of numbers (and an associated stakeholder map from which the sample is drawn) within the evaluation report, the evaluation notes reaching a total of 139 stakeholders identified in the mapping process and the map is included in the annexed inception report.
7. Are the methods for analysis clearly described for all types of data?	Yes	The methods of data analysis are not clearly described in the main text, though a description of the assessment methodology and focus on contribution does suggest the use of contribution analysis and a more extensive discussion of methodology is provided in Annex 5. In addition, the discussion under each criterion has a section analyzing the potential 'causal factors' contributing to results.
8. Are methodological limitations acknowledged and their effect on the evaluation described? (Does the report discuss how any bias has been overcome?)	Yes	The methodological limitations are clearly articulated and actions to mitigate and reduce these limitations are also provided. Notably, there was a transition in government during the time of evaluation so the evaluation team increased the number of stakeholders interviewed to engage both current and past government stakeholders.
9. Is the sampling strategy described?	Partial	The evaluation team used the stakeholder mapping exercise to draw a purposive sample, and sought representation from each type of stakeholder. The types of stakeholders were classified as those receiving direct financial support for activities, collaborators on soft aid activities that do not receive financial support, cultural and political allies, and ultimate beneficiaries of the activities/interventions. Field visits were selected in each of the geographical regions of the country, with specific areas selected based on the concentration of interventions in the area. There was no discussion included on how a purposeful approach could introduce bias, nor details on how bias was addressed in this sense, though the report does mention some bias as it relates to contextual factors (which was overcome).
10. Does the methodology enable the collection and analysis of disaggregated data?	Partial	The report is not explicit about how the methodology will enable data collection and analysis of disaggregated data, though the methods chosen are sufficient to do so, nor is the list of stakeholders sex disaggregated. The findings present some disaggregated data: For example, the percentage reduction in adolescent pregnancies is disaggregated by age groups.
11. Is the design and methodology appropriate for assessing the cross-cutting issues (equity and vulnerability, gender equality and human rights)?	Yes	The primarily qualitative design is appropriate for assessing cross-cutting issues of equity, vulnerability, gender equality and human rights. The evaluation framework explicitly includes indicators for assessing cross-cutting issues, and this is also noted within the methodology section. Respondents included interviews with diverse beneficiaries, including adolescent scholarship recipients of the adolescent pregnancy program, young beneficiaries of the UNFPA camps, health personnel, and pastors receiving a diploma in 'pastoral action against violence against women and adolescent pregnancy'.

3. Reliability of Data	Yes No Partial	Assessment Level:	Good
<i>To ensure quality of data and robust data collection processes are used in the findings</i>			
1. Did the evaluation triangulate data collected as appropriate?	Yes	The evaluation notes the use of triangulation as a means to ensure data validity and reliability, ensuring each finding presented was supported by at least two sources.	
2. Did the evaluation clearly identify and make use of reliable qualitative and quantitative data sources?	Yes	Based on the list of stakeholders included in the and available citations in the report, it appears the evaluators were able to reach and access data from an indicative sample. However, the report primarily relies on documents and there are few references to the focus groups conducted with participants/rights holders from UNFPA camps, for example, and so it is not clear the extent to which data from these sources was used. For the most part, it is clear that reliable qualitative and quantitative data sources were used.	
3. Did the evaluation make explicit any possible limitations (bias, data gaps etc.) in primary and secondary data sources and if relevant, explained what was done to minimize such issues?	Yes	The evaluation noted three primary limitations: (1) limited precision in the Programme Results Framework and CPAP indicators; (2) the timeline of the evaluation respective of the programme timeline, which has one year remaining; (3) transition of government parties at the time of the evaluation and subsequent discontinuity in accessible stakeholders. Strategies for minimizing these limitations were noted and sufficient.	
4. Is there evidence that data has been collected with a sensitivity to issues of discrimination and other ethical considerations?	Partial	It is noted in the report that the evaluators incorporated indicators into the evaluation matrix which measured the extent to which interventions adopted principles of human rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women. However, there is not clear evidence of how issues of discrimination and other ethical considerations were incorporated into the evaluation process, and specifically data collection processes. To note, the citations in the evaluation report specifically name the person quoted from interviews and focus groups, and there is not a clear description of whether consent was received for this.	
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 evaluators consistently substantiate findings with evidence using footnotes to note sources, which were primarily documents.	
2. Is the basis for interpretations carefully described?	Yes	This is well done throughout the Findings section across evaluation criteria. Findings are clearly drawn from the data collected and carefully interpreted.	
3. Is the analysis presented against the evaluation questions?	Yes	The relevant evaluation questions are listed at the beginning of the discussion of each criterion, and the analysis is structured accordingly.	
4. Is the analysis transparent about the sources and quality of data?	Yes	The evaluation team referenced sources in footnotes, although the more frequent use and citation of direct quotes from interviews and focus groups could improve the strength of the analysis, particularly in the effectiveness section (which are available and included in the annexed evaluation matrix). The analysis is transparent about the sources and quality of data.	
5. Are cause and effect links between an intervention and its end results explained and any unintended outcomes highlighted?	Yes	The evaluation clearly frames findings within the effectiveness section against the reconstructed theory of change. The findings under 'effectiveness' first present the quantitative data on outputs achieved against targets, then include a clearly structured narrative which explains the cause-and-effect links between what was done and what was achieved as a result of UNFPA's work at multiple levels (e.g. institutional change, socio-behavioral and norm change). Unintended effects are integrated into sections on findings.	
6. Does the analysis show different outcomes for different target groups, as relevant?	Yes	The evaluation findings present different outcomes for different target groups, as relevant. For example, the report highlights where interventions did not reach certain populations or where populations did not experience change as a result of the interventions (e.g., younger populations still experiencing higher rates of teenage pregnancy as a result of sexual violence).	
7. Is the analysis presented against contextual factors?	Yes	Findings present a clear and relevant analysis of contextual factors, notably changing government administrations and insecurity.	
8. Does the analysis elaborate on cross-cutting issues such as equity and vulnerability, gender equality and human rights?	Yes	As mentioned previously, the analysis elaborates on cross-cutting issues through the report, including noting where the needs of specific groups are not sufficiently addressed.	
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	The conclusions are clearly drawn from the findings. The evaluators have specified the respective evaluation questions linked to each conclusion.
2. Do the conclusions go beyond the findings and provide a thorough understanding of the underlying issues of the programme/initiative/system being evaluated?	Yes	The conclusions are very well-written and clearly bring together the findings across evaluation questions and criteria to present an overarching analysis of the country programme progress and the country context. The conclusions are categorized as strategic or programmatic. In addition, the evaluation report includes clear lessons learned and good practices which can be extended to other countries in the LACRO region with a 'yellow' classification.
3. Do the conclusions appear to convey the evaluators' unbiased judgement?	Yes	The conclusions are clearly based on evidence from the findings and therefore do not convey bias.
6. Recommendations		
	Yes No Partial	Assessment Level: Very good
<i>To ensure the usefulness and clarity of recommendations</i>		
1. Do recommendations flow logically from conclusions?	Yes	The recommendations flow logically from the conclusions and are directly linked to conclusions by the evaluators through the use of numbers, as well as through a clear description of the rationale for each recommendation.
2. Are the recommendations clearly written, targeted at the intended users and action-oriented (with information on their human, financial and technical implications)?	Yes	The recommendations are clearly targeted and action-oriented, explicitly defining the overall responsible institutional body (country office, regional, etc.) as well as operational guidelines for implementing them. Information on the human and technical implications of recommendations are analyzed within the operational guidelines.
3. Do recommendations appear balanced and impartial?	Yes	The recommendations flow clearly from the findings and conclusions without any evidence of bias.
4. Is a timeframe for implementation proposed?	Yes	The recommendations proposed a timeframe for implementation in terms of the next country programme and they are prioritized.
5. Are the recommendations prioritized and clearly presented to facilitate appropriate management response and follow up on each specific recommendation?	Yes	The classification into high and medium seems appropriate to facilitate management response. Like the conclusions, the recommendations are also organized around the strategic and programmatic.
7. Gender		
	0 1 2 3 (**)	Assessment Level: Good
<i>To assess the integration of Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW) (*)</i>		
1. Is GEEW integrated in the evaluation scope of analysis and indicators designed in a way that ensures GEEW-related data to be collected?	3	<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) The evaluation does not define a specific objective related to human rights and gender equality, though it is mainstreamed into the objective requiring an assessment of progress against the 2030 Agenda (Score = 2).</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) While there is no standalone criterion on gender and/or human rights, it is mainstreamed into other evaluation criteria through the assumptions and indicators defined within the evaluation framework. (Score = 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) GEEW was integrated into evaluation questions, notably questions under relevance and effectiveness. (Score = 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) While the efficiency of monitoring and evaluation systems in turning data to support decision-making is comprehensively assessed, the evaluation does not clearly assess whether sufficient information was collected during the implementation period to measure human rights and gender equality results. (Score = 2).</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) The evaluation methodology was gender responsive with regards to the methods and tools for data collection. How data collection efforts integrated gender considerations beyond gender-sensitive indicators is not made clear. In addition, data collected is not disaggregated by sex. (Score=1).</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) The evaluation employed a mixed methods approach appropriate for evaluating GEEW considerations, ensuring an appropriate sample size and the use of both qualitative and quantitative data. (Score = 2).</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) The methodology notes that triangulation is applied through inclusion of diverse methods and sources. However, data drawn from focus groups is infrequently referenced, primarily drawing data from documents and occasionally interviews. (Score = 2)</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 sampling frame ensured representation from diverse stakeholders, including both duty bearers and rights holders. However, since the sampling process engaged participants based on convenience, it is not made clear how the most vulnerable were included in the evaluation design. (Score = 2).</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) The ethical standards for maintaining participant integrity and respect for confidentiality are not made clear. (Score = 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 evaluation report has a background section that includes an intersectional analysis of specific social groups affected and highlights normative instruments, frameworks and policies in El Salvador. (Score = 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) While the findings include data analysis that explicitly triangulates the voices of different groups, this is not consistently done. Quantitative data is used especially in the tables that show achievements against baselines and targets, and age disaggregated data is presented, where available. However, there is minimal use of quotes or stories to highlight the voices of different groups, particularly participants and rights holders. The findings draw extensively on secondary data sources and interviews with duty bearers and programme staff (Score = 2).</p> <p>c. Are unanticipated effects of the intervention on human rights and gender equality described? (Score: 0-3) The unanticipated effects of the intervention are integrated into the findings though not clearly drawn out in their own section, which would have been useful. (Score = 1).</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) The evaluation report provides several recommendations for addressing GEEW issues. (Score = 3).</p>

(*) This assessment criteria is fully based on the UN-SWAP Scoring Tool. Each sub-criteria shall be equally weighted (in correlation with the calculation in the tool and totaling the scores | 11-12 = very good, 8-10 = good, 4-7 = Fair, 0-3=unsatisfactory).

(**) Scoring uses a four point scale (0-3).

0 = Not at all integrated. Applies when none of the elements under a criterion are met.

1 = Partially integrated. Applies when some minimal elements are met but further progress is needed and remedial action to meet the standard is required.

2 = Satisfactorily integrated. Applies when a satisfactory level has been reached and many of the elements are met but still improvement could be done.

3 = Fully integrated. Applies when all of the elements under a criterion are met, used and fully integrated in the evaluation and no remedial action is required.

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	69	18	13	
Overall assessment level of evaluation report	Very Good			
	Very good very confident to use	Good confident to use	Fair use with caution	Unsatisfactory not confident to use

- (*) (a) Insert scoring points associated with criteria in corresponding column (e.g. - if 'Analysis and findings' has been assessed as 'Good', enter 40 into 'Good' column.
(b) Assessment level with highest 'total scoring points' determines 'Overall assessment level of evaluation report'. Write corresponding assessment level in cell (e.g. 'Fair').
(c) Use 'shading' function to give cells corresponding colour.

If the overall assessment is 'Fair', please explain

• How it can be used?

• What aspects to be cautious about?

Where relevant, please explain the overall assessment Very good, Good or Unsatisfactory

While there were a few issues that could have been dealt with better, such as the clear description of GEEW and ethical considerations taken during data collection, most of the evaluation met all of the quality criteria.

Consideration of significant constraints

The quality of this evaluation report has been hampered by exceptionally difficult circumstances:

Yes No

If yes, please explain: