



Statement by Joel Rehnstrom

Director ad interim , Independent Evaluation Office

United Nations Population Fund

on

Item on evaluation

Multi-year costed evaluation plan, 2026-2029

UNFPA/UNDP/UNOPS Executive Board

First Regular Session 2026

Thank you, Mr. President,

Distinguished Members of the Executive Board,

The Multi-Year Costed Evaluation Plan presents the proposed centralized and decentralized evaluations to be carried out from 2026 to 2029. It addresses evidence gaps, combines accountability and organizational learning, and prioritizes stakeholder consultation to ensure relevance for decision-making.

Allow me to highlight key features of the plan.

The plan covers two categories of evaluations: centralized evaluations, managed and conducted by the Independent Evaluation Office; and decentralized evaluations, commissioned by country and regional offices.

With respect to centralized evaluation, over the four-year period the plan anticipates 42 evaluations and evaluative exercises. Together, these provide comprehensive coverage of the UNFPA Strategic Plan, encompassing all four strategic outcomes as well as key organization-wide issues.

Geographical and country programme coverage is ensured through decentralized evaluations, that include 71 country programme evaluations and six regional programme evaluations. These evaluations are drawn from costed evaluation plans developed by country and regional offices.

Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates,

To deliver high-quality, credible, and timely evaluations, the evaluation function must be supported by predictable and adequate resources. The plan assesses the resource implications for each evaluation, ensuring efficiency while leveraging existing capacities and partnerships.

The estimated total cost of implementing the multi-year plan is US\$22.75 million. This includes \$16.67 million for the Independent Evaluation Office and centralized evaluations, of which \$15.17 million is expected to be covered through the integrated budget, complemented by \$1.50 million from other resources, and costs for decentralized programme evaluations, estimated at \$6.08 million.

In a landscape of protracted crises and UN80 driven reforms, high-quality evaluations are vital for evidence-based decision-making. To navigate this volatility and optimize organizational performance, the plan introduces specific innovations designed to enhance evaluation rigour and efficiency.

First, the plan introduces a recalibrated evaluation management approach—Evaluation Forward, which pilots new modalities to strengthen cost-efficiency and rigour. This marks a strategic shift for the Independent Evaluation Office toward active leadership and co-authorship with external thematic experts.

Second, evaluations will be adaptive and innovative, making responsible and ethical use of artificial intelligence and other methods to enhance analytical depth and efficiency.

Third, to strengthen performance assessment and learning in humanitarian settings, the plan includes targeted evaluations of UNFPA's response to level-3 emergencies, alongside the systematic integration of humanitarian-development-peace considerations across all centralized evaluations.

Fourth, the Independent Evaluation Office will continue to engage strategically in joint, inter-agency, and system-wide evaluations, in line with United Nations development system reform commitments. Over the next four years, 19 centralized evaluations and evaluative exercises, representing 45% of the portfolio, will be joint or inter-agency exercises.

Fifth, the plan proposes a mix of internal and joint evidence syntheses to maximize learning across joint, corporate and programme-level evaluations.

Finally, and importantly, recognizing UNFPA's dynamic operating environment, the plan remains flexible and responsive to change. This allows for necessary adjustments to internal and external developments and shifts, and broader United Nations system-wide reforms.

Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates,

The Independent Evaluation Office will closely monitor implementation of the plan and will keep the Executive Board informed through the annual report on the evaluation function.

I thank the Executive Board for their continued support, and I remain at your disposal for any questions.

Mr. President, this concludes my statement.
