

Costed Evaluation Plan Asia and the Pacific Regional Office

Programme cycle	United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Asia and the Pacific Regional Programme (2026-2029)
Indicative budget	US\$ 93 million (Regular resources: 58 million; Other resources: 35 million)
Regional programme priority areas (outcomes)	<p>Outcome 1: By 2029, accelerate the reduction of preventable maternal deaths.</p> <p>Outcome 2: By 2029, accelerate the reduction of unmet need for family planning.</p> <p>Outcome 3: By 2029, accelerate the reduction of all forms of gender-based violence and harmful practices.</p> <p>Outcome 4: By 2029, adaptation to demographic change has strengthened the resilience of societies for current and future generations, while upholding individual rights and choices.</p>
Previous regional programme evaluation	<p>Period covered: Regional Programme (2022-2025)</p> <p>Year of completion: 2024</p> <p>Evaluation quality assessment rating: Fair</p>
Gap mapping/analysis of relevant evaluative evidence and knowledge gaps that are strategically important to inform the design and implementation of the upcoming country programme	<p>The costed evaluation plan for the Asia and the Pacific Regional Programme (2026-2029) is based on a comprehensive analysis of the following centralized and decentralized evaluations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formative Evaluation of the UNFPA Asia and Pacific Regional Programme 2022-2025 • Independent Evaluation of the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-2025 • Joint Evaluation of Phase II (2020–2023) of the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage • Formative Evaluation of UNFPA Support to Adolescents and Youth (2015-2022) • Evaluation of UNFPA Support to Population Dynamics and Data (2014-2022) • Mid-term Evaluation of the Maternal and Newborn Health Thematic Fund – Phase III 2018-2022 • Recent country programme evaluations with programme cycles partially overlapping with the Regional Programme 2022-2025 (China, Malaysia, Timor-Leste, Indonesia, Philippines, Bhutan and Cambodia) • Evaluation of UNFPA Support to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (2012-2020) • A Synthesis of UN System Evaluations of SDG 5 (2024) • Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls • Evaluation of the UNFPA Capacity in Humanitarian Action (2012-2019) <p>Outcome 1: By 2029, accelerate the reduction of preventable maternal deaths</p> <p>Existing evaluations provide a solid evidence base for effective and sustainable strategies to improve midwifery education, midwifery-led care, and supply chain management of essential sexual and reproductive health (SRH) commodities (including contraceptives – linked to Outcome 2) to increase women's and girls' access to maternal and newborn health services. However, knowledge gaps still persist regarding how UNFPA's support contributed</p>

	<p>to respectful and good quality of care, integrated SRH services for better health outcomes, health systems reforms, including the expansion of the emergency obstetric and newborn care network, efficient referral systems and accountability mechanisms. The regional programme interventions include support to countries in strengthening health systems for improved quality of care and access.</p> <p>The regional programme evaluation (RPE) (2026-2029) will provide the necessary evidence to identify sustainable, effective and efficient solutions across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus that can be scaled up to reduce preventable maternal deaths.</p> <p>Outcome 2: By 2029, accelerate the reduction of unmet need for family planning UNFPA's strategies on family planning typically focus on reducing unmet need for family planning through strengthened supply chain management of contraceptives in high fertility contexts. Countries in the Asia and the Pacific region are highly diverse, with many experiencing rapid population ageing, declining fertility rates, and widening inequalities. Across the region, young people, especially unmarried adolescent girls and young women, the poor, those living in remote areas, and marginalized groups have the highest unmet need for family planning. Evaluative evidence on effective strategies in these complex and diverse contexts, where structural barriers limit access to family planning services, pushback against human rights is increasing, and pronatalist policies are proliferating, remains scarce. There is also a gap in understanding how UNFPA's strategies can be better tailored to address the different barriers faced by women, girls, and young people more broadly.</p> <p>The RPE (2026-2029) will assess the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of the regional programme's efforts to address these structural barriers. It will provide evidence on support to influence fertility preferences, advocacy for rights-based family planning policies and regulatory frameworks especially in low-fertility contexts, assistance to improve financing and protection mechanisms for accessing family planning services by all, and the piloting and scaling up innovative partnerships and investments to reduce unmet need for family planning.</p> <p>Outcome 3: By 2029, accelerate the reduction of all forms of gender-based violence and harmful practices Existing evidence on UNFPA's programming to address gender-based violence (GBV) primarily focuses on the relevance and effectiveness of GBV response strategies, with particular emphasis on the health sector response and, to a lesser extent, social services. However, significant knowledge gaps remain, especially in areas such as case management and mental health and psychosocial support services. Evaluations also demonstrate that evidence on the extent to which UNFPA's GBV prevention efforts have contributed to a reduction in GBV is limited. While more evidence and lessons learned are available regarding efforts to address child marriage – particularly through the UNICEF-UNFPA joint programme – evaluations have identified persistent gaps related to social protection mechanisms and financing strategies for tackling child marriage. Furthermore, evaluations note challenges in the design and implementation of programming to address discriminatory social and gender norms that perpetuate GBV and harmful practices, as well as increasing social and cultural pushback towards gender-transformative and rights-based programming in several countries across the region. Evidence on what works, what does not, why and for whom in such complex and diverse country contexts remains scarce.</p> <p>The RPE (2026-2029) will provide evidence to support countries in developing and piloting programmatic approaches and models to empower women and girls, promote positive masculinities, and introduce comprehensive sexuality education for out-of-school youth as a strategy to prevent GBV and harmful practices. In addition, it will evaluate the relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, and coherence of the regional programme's support to countries in strengthening multi-sectoral GBV service provision, with particular attention to underdeveloped areas such as GBV case management.</p> <p>Outcome 4: Population dynamics and demographic change Gaps remain in the existing evaluative evidence regarding UNFPA's positioning on critical demographic shifts, including ageing and low fertility – both high priorities for many countries in Asia and the Pacific – as well as on the demographic dividend and migration. Based on existing evaluations, there</p>
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is limited evidence on the extent to which UNFPA has influenced policy options, addressed sensitive issues, and navigated pushbacks on human rights, particularly in contexts of aging and low fertility. UNFPA's normative role is not yet fully defined, and there is a lack of evidence on lessons learned from the implementation of strategies to address demographic shifts across diverse contexts, including decentralized governance systems, transitions to middle-income status, persistent inequalities, and complex geopolitical dynamics — all of which require tailored support from the regional programme. Furthermore, there is a shortage of evidence on the linkages between climate change and UNFPA's mandate areas, and on how UNFPA's strategies can better integrate climate action into its programming.

To address these knowledge gaps, the RPE (2026-2029) will assess the regional programme's support to countries in understanding, anticipating and responding to demographic shifts and adapting to climate change. In particular, it will examine efforts to strengthen evidence, analyses and policy options in light of global trends such as ageing populations, fertility transitions and demographic dividends, and initiatives to integrate SRH and GBV into climate change and disaster risk reduction policies and plans.

Cross-cutting areas

Financing. While evaluations documented UNFPA's pivot from funding to financing for SRH, there is limited evidence on how these efforts translated effectively at country level, where the transition is inhibited by pushbacks, conceptual ambiguities, misconceptions, cultural factors, and operational constraints. The regional programme prioritizes strengthening evidence-based and rights-based advocacy and policy dialogue, including through the use of economic analyses, and will actively pursue strategies to mobilize new domestic resources from governments and to leverage additional financing for SRH and for addressing GBV and harmful practices, particularly child marriage.

The RPE (2026-2029) will draw lessons learned from these innovative financing strategies and identify effective and sustainable strategies to leverage financing and investments across the diverse contexts of countries in the region.

Humanitarian preparedness and response. Existing evaluations provide evidence on UNFPA's capacity and lessons learned to deliver life-saving SRH and GBV services in humanitarian settings. However, examples of successful experiences within the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and evidence of humanitarian programming in protracted crises remain limited. Although some evidence is emerging on innovative interventions, such as cash and voucher assistance, evaluations largely lack assessment of other approaches and interventions that are increasingly prominent in humanitarian preparedness and response efforts at regional and country levels, including anticipatory actions, accountability to affected populations, climate-smart preparedness, humanitarian-development-peace nexus programming, as well as early warning and early action systems.

The regional programme includes humanitarian response, anticipatory action, accountability to affected populations, as well as climate-smart preparedness and resilience. The RPE (2026-2029) will generate evidence on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of these humanitarian preparedness and response interventions to inform decision-making and programming.

Evaluations

Evaluation title	Intended use of evaluation findings	Type of evaluation	Humanitarian evaluation (yes; partially; no)	Joint evaluation (yes; no), including partners where applicable	Programme/ project budget in US\$	Evaluation estimated budget and source of funding (regular resources (RR); other resources (OR)) in US\$	Timeframe (month and year)	Evaluation manager
Regional Programme Evaluation (2026-2029)	Inform the design of the new regional programme; include interventions of a catalytic nature contributing to country-level results in the new regional programme; determine the discontinuation of interventions under the new regional programme; inform decision-making and the strategic positioning of UNFPA in the region; enhance accountability towards UNFPA country offices, national governments, donors, and rights holders	Regional programme evaluation (RPE)	Partially	No	93 million	120,000 (RR)	Preparation phase: October - December 2027 Implementation phase: January - September 2028	APRO Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor

Evaluation Capacity Development						
Evaluation capacity development activity	Objectives of evaluation capacity development activity	Category of evaluation capacity development (internal; national)	Type of evaluation capacity development (individual; institutional; enabling environment)	Targeted stakeholders	Estimated budget and source of funding (regular resources (RR); other resources (OR)) in US\$	Timeframe (month and year)

Participation in IEO-led cross-regional evaluation capacity building workshop	Develop the knowledge and skills of regional planning, monitoring and evaluation staff to provide capacity development, technical assistance and quality assurance for country-level evaluations, in particular country programme evaluations	Internal	Individual	APRO Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor	3,200 (RR)	June 2026
Facilitation of the UNEDAP joint evaluation training for country-level evaluation managers	Develop the knowledge and skills of country office evaluation managers from 11 United Nations Evaluation Development Group for Asia and Pacific (UNEDAP) agencies to manage country-level evaluations	Internal	Individual	CO Monitoring and Evaluation Focal Points	4,000 (RR) (1,000 per year over the four-year period covered by the regional programme)	May 2026-2029