

Costed Evaluation Plan South Africa Country Office

Programme cycle	United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) South Africa 6th Country Programme (2026-2030)
Indicative budget	US\$ 11.5 million (Regular resources: 6.5million; Other resources: 5 million)
Country Programme priority areas	Output 1: By 2030, strengthened capacity to formulate and implement future-fit policies, legal frameworks and programmes that close gaps in the intersection of sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights and prevention of and response to gender-based violence for all population groups. Output 2: By 2030, national and subnational institutions demonstrate enhanced capacity to mobilize, align, and sustain domestic and blended financing for SRHR, adolescent health, teenage pregnancy prevention and GBVF, through the use of evidence-based investment cases, strategic public-private partnerships, and integrated financing frameworks that prioritize efficiency, equity, and impact Output 3: By 2030, strengthened capacity of individuals, communities and institutions to address gender discrimination and harmful social and gender norms to advance gender equality, bodily autonomy and reproductive rights.
Previous programme evaluation	Period covered: 5th Country Programme (2020-2025) Year of completion: 2024 Evaluation quality assessment rating: Satisfactory
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	The costed evaluation plan for the UNFPA South Africa 6th Country Programme (2026-2030) is based on a comprehensive mapping -- Evaluative Evidence Mapping: UNFPA South Africa 6th Country Programme (2026–2030) of available evidence from centralized and decentralized evaluations and other studies, conducted to ensure that the Country Programme Document (2026-2030) rests on a strong foundation of past evaluation results. Building on this mapping, the CEPlan identifies areas where evaluative evidence is lacking entirely, requires deepening, or needs to be complemented. The evaluations included in the CEPlan, including the country programme evaluation (CPE), are designed to address these gaps, providing critical evidence to accelerate progress towards UNFPA's transformative results. For Output 1, while strides have been made in advancing Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), evidence gaps persist regarding the effectiveness of UNFPA's strategic contributions that enable the reduction of preventable maternal deaths in diverse and hard-to-reach contexts within South Africa. This includes adolescents, marginalized groups (like those with disabilities in rural areas), and populations in humanitarian or climate-affected settings. While evidence points to progress in reducing the unmet need for family planning (FP), the pace of decline remains insufficient, particularly among marginalized and underserved populations. There is a knowledge gap in understanding the factors behind this slow progress, including systemic barriers and persistent “policy-to-practice” gaps that limit equitable FP access. Given the new programme's strategic focus on systemic change, policy advocacy, and innovative financing, UNFPA's role in achieving this output is primarily through strengthening the enabling environment, policies, and

health systems, rather than direct service delivery. Therefore, the CPE (2026 - 2030) will directly assess the effectiveness of this catalytic approach and generate evidence on:

- The effectiveness of UNFPA's policy advocacy and systemic capacity-building efforts aimed at strengthening resilient health systems, and their demonstrable contribution to the reduction of preventable maternal deaths and further reducing unmet need for FP. (*This is the specified, narrower scope for assessing effectiveness*)
- The cost-effectiveness of UNFPA's strategic support for the integration of care models, including digital health innovations, and how this strengthens the enabling environment for improved maternal health outcomes across varied socio-economic strata.
- How effectively UNFPA's thought leadership and policy advocacy contribute to creating an enabling policy environment that facilitates the reduction of unmet family planning needs, particularly by overcoming "policy-to-practice" gaps and navigating socio-political complexities unique to South Africa.

For **Output 2**, while evaluations report significant progress in advancing the evidence base for population dynamics and data, a critical gap in evaluative evidence persists concerning the long-term impact and sustainability of UNFPA's systemic support to enhance demographic resilience within South Africa. This deficit means there is a lack of evidence demonstrating how UNFPA's technical assistance successfully translates into sustainable national planning, budget allocation, and adaptation strategies necessary to secure the demographic dividend. The CPE (2026-2030) will therefore focus its investigation on tracing UNFPA's influence over these upstream institutional changes, by providing evidence on:

- UNFPA's contribution to evidence-based policy: How UNFPA's support for data generation and analysis has influenced national policy, resource allocation, and planning to leverage the demographic dividend
- Influence on strategic investments for youth: The effectiveness of UNFPA's partnerships in influencing programmatic approaches that successfully contribute to investments in education, health, and job creation for youth
- Integration of climate and human rights in demographic policies: How UNFPA's advocacy and technical assistance have contributed to integrating climate action and human rights (including reproductive rights) into national policies on demographic change.

For **Output 3**, despite advancements in policy and legal frameworks, gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF) and harmful practice remain widespread. Critical evidence gaps regarding UNFPA's strategic influence and partnership facilitation to address GBVF and harmful practices still exist. The critical knowledge gaps that the CPE (2026 - 2030) is designed to fill are concentrated in three areas: (1) assessing how UNFPA's thought leadership has helped institutionalize community-based interventions and secure domestic funding for national scale-up; (2) understanding the systemic coherence and effectiveness of multi-sectoral GBV response services for the most marginalized groups; and (3) generating evidence on the effectiveness and sustainability of integrating GBV risk mitigation strategies into broader climate adaptation and humanitarian responses, a crucial area where existing evidence is critically lacking despite the increasing frequency of climate-related crises in South Africa

.Cross-cutting areas

Financing (Domestic resource mobilization and innovative financing). Given South Africa's middle-income status, a significant evaluative evidence gap exists on effective strategies for boosting domestic investment in SRHR and GBV and for leveraging innovative financing mechanisms (e.g., blended

finance, public-private partnerships, local private sector investment). The CPE (2026 - 2030) will therefore need to examine which approaches have successfully generated tangible increases in national funding and sustainable financing models, while addressing underlying political and economic barriers. The CPE (2026 - 2030) will assess the effectiveness of implemented strategies for increasing domestic resource allocation, strengthening financing mechanisms, and improving fund utilization for SRHR (including adolescent SRHR and GBVF) within broader primary health care and universal health coverage frameworks.

Humanitarian preparedness and response (including climate change). While the Country Office has expanded its humanitarian response capacity, there is a critical lack of evidence on how UNFPA's strategic efforts contribute to scaled and sustainable impact, especially for young people and other marginalized groups in South African humanitarian contexts. This includes understanding the effectiveness of integrating SRH/GBV services into provincial and national disaster preparedness and response plans, and how capacity development of local women- and youth-led organizations genuinely contributes to improved SRHR access in crises. The CPE (2026 - 2030) will utilize process tracing in affected provinces to evaluate the effectiveness of these integration models, specifically determining if and how capacity support to local women's and youth-led groups translated into sustained SRHR service delivery during climate-induced shocks.

Strategic Partnerships. With the shift to systemic change and thought leadership, there's a need to evaluate the effectiveness of UNFPA's strategic positioning as a thought leader and convener. This includes assessing the impact of partnerships with government (e.g., Presidency, National Treasury, Parliament), academia, the private sector, and influencers in shaping policy, driving evidence-based action, and mobilizing resources beyond direct funding (e.g., brainpower, conducive environment). The CPE (2026 - 2030) will specifically engage process tracing and stakeholder analysis to validate the efficiency of this catalytic positioning, measuring the extent to which UNFPA's thought leadership translated into policy adoption and the mobilization of national resources. The CPE (2026 - 2030) will distinguish between the technical assistance provided and the measurable institutional shifts in partners' resource allocation and planning priorities. This evidence will validate UNFPA's new operating model by demonstrating the non-financial return on investment (ROI) achieved through the leveraging of key partners' resources and influence.

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

Country Evaluation (2026-2030)	Programme (6th cycle,	Inform the design of the new country programme; include interventions of a catalytic nature contributing to country-level results in the new programme; determine the discontinuation of interventions under the new programme; inform decision-making and the strategic positioning of UNFPA in the country; enhance accountability towards the, national government, donors, and rights holders	Country Programme Evaluation (CPE)	Partially	No	11.5 million	85 000 (RR)	Preparation phase: October - December 2028 Implementation phase: January - September 2029	Monitoring and Evaluation Focal Point
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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 CO staff to plan, manage, conduct, disseminate and use a country programme evaluation	Internal	Individual	Monitoring and Evaluation Focal Point	2,500 (RR)	June 2028