

GEROS Evaluation Quality Assurance Tool

Version: February, 2020

Evaluation of UNICEF Zambia's Capacity Development Interventions 2016–2018

REPORT RATING SUMMARY			
Overall Rating		96%	Highly Satisfactory
● ● ● ●	Highly Satisfactory (87.5% - 100%)	4	Exceeds UNICEF/UNEG standards for evaluation reports and decision makers may use the evaluation with a high degree of confidence
● ● ● ●	Satisfactory (62.5% - 87.49%)	3	
● ● ● ●	Fair (34.76% - 62.49%)	2	
● ● ● ●	Unsatisfactory (0% - 34.75%)	1	
REPORT DETAILS			
Title of the evaluation report		Evaluation of UNICEF Zambia's Capacity Development Interventions 2016–2018	
Report sequence number		Zambia/63/2019/8926	
Region		ESAR	
Year of report		2019	
Office		UNICEF Zambia	
Coverage (countries)		Zambia	
ToRs present		Yes	
Date of review (dd/mmm/yyyy)		August 25, 2020	
Name of review firm		AIMS	
CLASSIFICATION OF EVALUATION REPORT			
Management of evaluation (Managerial control and oversight of evaluation decisions)		Jointly managed with Country	
Unicef Goal Areas			
Every child survives and thrives		Yes	
Every child learns		Yes	
Every child is protected from violence and exploitation		Yes	
Every child lives in a safe and clean environment		Yes	
Every child has an equitable chance in life		Yes	
Gender equality (cross-cutting)		Yes	
Humanitarian action (cross-cutting)		No	
Evaluation object		Strategy	
Evaluation type		Formative	
Evaluation strategy		Mixed methods	
Evaluation design (primary method used)		Theory-based	
Evaluation level		Outcome	
Geographic Scope		National	
Primary SDG(s) covered (number)		SDG 1, 3, 4, 5, 6	
EQA Summary: <i>The rater will provide top line issues for this evaluation relevant for feedback to senior management (positive and negative), summarizing how the evaluation report meets or fails to meet all criteria. As relevant, the rater will highlight best practice/added value elements and the level of complexity of the evaluation.</i>			
<p>The report meets the requirements of UNICEF evaluations. The background discusses the importance of Capacity Development (CP) in effective delivery of foreign aid, CP in the Zambian context, the cost/budget of recent/ongoing interventions, and the need for UNICEF Zambia to create empirical evidence on what works, understand whether CD interventions led to the desired improvements, as well as for creating evidence on the uptake and sustainability of activities. The evaluators note they use qualitative methods to examine the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, perceived impacts, equity, and sustainability of the CD interventions. The methods section presents a concept of an assessment framework and discusses limitations, constraints and how the evaluators went about mitigating these. It describes data sources and the sampling strategy for each of the 5 CD interventions. The findings are supported by evidence collected from programme functionaries, key stakeholders and other informants. There are both positive and negative findings that reflect evaluative judgement, and the evaluators note triangulation was used to verify the accuracy and promote greater reliability of the evidence. The conclusions are relevant to the intervention and describe implications for the future of the intervention in Zambia, more broadly. Recommendations stem from the findings and are adequately articulated for a management response. The report is easy to read and navigate.</p>			
Recommendations for Improvement: <i>The rater will identify topline recommendations that would improve the evaluation, and be specific to the sections of the report where shortcomings were found. Cite resources that may assist evaluation managers in overseeing future evaluations as relevant.</i>			
<p>The suggestions primarily focus on presentation. The background section in the report could have presented more information on Zambian political structures, socio-economic conditions, ethnic composition of the nation (as relevant), along with a sketch of the system identifying actors/stakeholders. The methodology section could have provided concise information on the level of stakeholder participation in the evaluation and the role of any ERG. While the report answered the key questions, it could have introduced a dedicated section on lessons learned.</p>			
SECTION RATINGS			
SECTION A:	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (weight 5%)	83%	Comments on Rating (include explanations for any criterion not rated)
Question 1.	Can the executive summary inform decision-making?	83%	
	i An executive summary is provided that is of relevant conciseness and depth for primary intended users (Maximum of approximately 5 pages unless otherwise specified in ToR).	Yes	The Executive Summary is of relevant conciseness and depth.
	ii Includes all necessary elements (overview of the intervention, evaluation purpose, objectives and intended audience, evaluation methodology, key findings, key conclusions, key recommendations) as per the ToR.	Partially	Most of the elements are present, though the evaluation methodology could only be identified in the main report.

	iii	Includes all the necessary information to understand the intervention and the evaluation AND does not contain information not already included in the rest of the report.	Yes	It includes all necessary information to understand the intervention and the evaluation.
SECTION B: BACKGROUND (weight 5%)			83%	Comments on Rating (include explanations for any criterion not rated)
Question 2.		Is the object of the evaluation clearly described?	100%	
	i	Clear and relevant description of the intervention, including: location(s), timelines, cost/budget, and implementation status.	Yes	The report provides a description of the intervention, including Ministries, timeline, cost and as regards implementation.
	ii	Clear and relevant description of intended beneficiaries by type (i.e., institutions/organizations; communities; individuals...), by geographic location(s) (i.e., urban, rural, particular neighbourhoods, town/cities, sub-regions...) and in terms of numbers reached (as appropriate to the purpose of the evaluation).	Yes	It has a description of intended beneficiaries, by institution. The intended beneficiaries are local governments, national institutions, and members of civil society. The report notes the outcomes were particular to duty-bearers, rather than children, who were the ultimate beneficiaries but were not the focus of the CD interventions.
Question 3.		Is the context of the intervention clearly described?	75%	
	i	Clear and relevant description of the context of the intervention (relevant policy, socio-economic, political, institutional, international factors) and how context relates to the implementation of the intervention.	Partially	The description touches on the capacity development and capacity development in Zambia. The report could have presented additional detail on the political structures, socio-economic conditions, and ethnic composition of the nation, as relevant.
	ii	Clear and relevant description (where appropriate) of the status and needs of the target groups for the intervention.	Yes	The status of capacity development in institutions is described on Page 5. The report provides a discussion on the specific needs of the beneficiaries to create empirical evidence on what works and to understand whether CD interventions led to the desired improvements, as well as create evidence on the uptake and sustainability of activities.
Question 4.		Are key stakeholders and their contributions clearly identified?	75%	
	i	Identification of implementing agency(ies), development partners, primary duty bearers, secondary duty bearers, and rights holders.	Yes	The report identified UNICEF and its partners as implementing agencies, as well as collaborating ministries within the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) as stakeholders and duty bearers. The ToR also referred to women as duty bearers and rights holders.
	ii	Identification of the specific contributions and roles of key stakeholders (financial or otherwise), including UNICEF.	Partially	The report identified the contributions of UNICEF and stakeholders on Page 5. The role of the Ministries was broad, contextualised as partnership activities to improve service delivery, emergency preparedness response and systems-building.
SECTION C: EVALUATION PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE (weight 5%)			92%	Comments on Rating (include explanations for any criterion not rated)
Question 5.		Is the purpose of the evaluation clearly described?	75%	
	i	Specific identification of how the evaluation is intended to be used and to what this use is expected to achieve.	Yes	It is noted that UNICEF Zambia required the evaluation to learn from and provide recommendations about its capacity building strategy.
	ii	Identification of appropriate primary intended users of the evaluation.	Partially	The primary intended user is not identified in the main report, only the Executive Summary.
Question 6.		Are the objectives and scope of the evaluation clear and realistic?	100%	
	i	Clear and complete description of what the evaluation seeks to achieve by the end of the process with reference to any changes made to the objectives included in the ToR (if applicable).	Yes	The description of the specific objective of the evaluation is clear, to assess 5 CD interventions using OECD/DAC criteria, highlight good practices and identify lessons learned.
	ii	Clear and relevant description of the scope of the evaluation: what will and will not be covered (thematically, chronologically, geographically with key terms defined), as well as, if applicable, the reasons for this scope (e.g., specifications by the ToRs, lack of access to particular geographic areas for political or safety reasons at the time of the evaluation, lack of data/evidence on particular elements of the intervention).	Yes	The scope of the evaluation is described. It noted a thematic focus on 5 CD interventions at 3 levels of governance (with rationale) for the period 2016-18.
Question 7.		Is the results chain or logic well articulated?	100%	
	i	Clear description of the intervention's intended results, or of the parts of the results chain that are applicable to the evaluation.	Yes	Information on intended results is presented in the Section 4 Conceptual Framework.
	ii	The causal relationship between outputs and outcomes is presented in narrative and/or graphic form (theory of change, logic model, results chain, evaluation matrix, etc.).	Yes	The report provides the Conceptual Framework in graphic form on Page 10. Whereas Figure 3 links the initial conditions, activities by level, outputs by level, and intended high level outcomes, there is also a narrative discussion.

SECTION D: EVALUATION METHODOLOGY (weight 20%)		100%	Comments on Rating (include explanations for any criterion not rated)
Question 8.	Does the evaluation provide a relevant list of evaluation criteria that are explicitly justified as appropriate for the purpose of the evaluation? UNICEF evaluation standards refer to the OECD/DAC criteria. Not all OECD/DAC criteria are relevant to all evaluation objectives and scopes. Standard OECD DAC Criteria include: Relevance; Effectiveness; Efficiency; Sustainability; Impact. Evaluations should also consider equity, gender and human rights (these can be mainstreamed into other criteria). Humanitarian evaluations should also consider Coverage; Connectedness; Coordination; Protection; Security.	100%	
i	Clear and relevant presentation of the evaluation framework including clear evaluation questions used to guide the evaluation.	Yes	The report presents an assessment framework, noting the relevant OECD/DAC criteria and key evaluation questions. An Evaluation Matrix is provided at Annex C.
Question 9.	Does the report specify methods for data collection, analysis, and sampling?	100%	
i	Clear and complete description of a relevant design and set of methods that are suitable for the evaluation's purpose, objectives and scope.	Yes	The report has a clear description of an evaluation design.
ii	Clear and complete description of the data sources, rationale for their selection and sampling strategy. This should include a description of how diverse perspectives are captured (or if not, provide reasons for this), how accuracy is ensured, and the extent to which data limitations are mitigated.	Yes	The report describes data sources and sampling strategy for each of the 5 CD interventions. The list of who would be interviewed and included in focus group discussions indicated how the diversity of actor / stakeholder / beneficiary perspectives were captured.
iii	Clear and complete description of the methods of analysis, including triangulation of multiple lines and levels of evidence (if relevant).	Yes	The evaluators discuss methods of analysis in sections 4.1-4.2. There is a discussion of the triangulation approach used to ensure accuracy and reliability of the evidence. Table 2 and the Evaluation Matrix at Annex C clarifies where triangulation was applied.
iv	Clear and complete description of limitations and constraints faced by the evaluation, including gaps in the evidence that was generated and mitigation of bias, and how these were addressed by the evaluators (as feasible).	Yes	The report discusses key limitations and constraints of the evaluation and the mitigation strategy for these.
Question 10.	Are ethical issues and considerations described? The evaluation should be guided by the UNEG ethical standards for evaluation. As such, the evaluation report should include:	100%	
i	Explicit reference to the obligations of evaluators (independence, impartiality, credibility, conflicts of interest, accountability).	Yes	A statement was made that the evaluation followed the Code of Conduct of UNEG that required both a conflict- and gender-sensitive approach to research and adherence to the "do no harm" principle, among other key principles. The obligations of evaluators were stated.
ii	Description of ethical safeguards for participants appropriate for the issues described (respect for dignity and diversity, right to self-determination, fair representation, compliance with codes for vulnerable groups, confidentiality, and avoidance of harm). For those cases where the evaluation involves interviewing children, explicit reference is made to the UNICEF procedures for Ethical Research Involving Children.	Yes	The report notes the evaluation team received both AIR IRB and local Zambian IRB research ethics board approvals for its ethical safeguards.
SECTION E: EVALUATION FINDINGS (weight 25%)		100%	Comments on Rating (include explanations for any criterion not rated)
Question 11.	Do the findings clearly address all evaluation objectives and scope?	100%	
i	Findings marshal sufficient levels of evidence to systematically address all of the evaluation's questions and criteria.	Yes	The report presents a detailed discussion on key questions, which indicates the evaluators marshalled substantial level of evidence to address the questions by criteria.
ii	Reference to the intervention's results framework in the formulation of the findings.	Yes	The report noted for the Effectiveness criterion that the evaluation had assessed how the CD interventions under health, WASH, social protection and education sectors had largely achieved intended outcomes, as described in the objectives of each of the CD interventions.
Question 12.	Are evaluation findings derived from the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of the best available, objective, reliable and valid data and by accurate quantitative and qualitative analysis of evidence.	100%	
i	The evaluation clearly presents multiple lines (including multiple time series) and levels (output, outcome, and appropriate disaggregation) of credible evidence.	Yes	The report presents multiple lines and levels of evidence, in particular from interviews and focus groups discussions.

	ii Findings are clearly supported by and respond to the evidence presented, including both positive and negative. Findings are based on clear performance indicators, standards, benchmarks, or other means of comparison.	Yes	The statements of fact build upon the evidence that was collected. Table 2 communicates the range of information sources that were collected and triangulated to answer individual evaluation questions. The evaluators present a sophisticated storyline. They provide a summary for each criterion and identify positive and negative findings.
	iii The causal factors (contextual, organizational, managerial, etc.) leading to achievement or non-achievement of results are clearly identified. For theory-based evaluations, findings analyse the logical chain (progression -or not- from implementation to results).	Yes	The report considers factors relating to achievement and non-achievement of results.
Question 13.	Does the evaluation assess and use the intervention's Results Based Management elements?	100%	
	i Assessment of the adequacy of the intervention's monitoring system (including completeness and appropriateness of results/performance framework -including vertical and horizontal logic; M&E tools and their usage).	Yes	The report notes analysis showed CD contributed to improved access to accurate data, improved data management, and motivation among community volunteers. For example, a scorecard tool was used by district-level staff from the MoGE to provide progress reports to the provincial levels on local schools.
	ii Assessment of the use of monitoring data in decision making.	Yes	There was assessment of decision making. For example, with respect to the WASH intervention, functionaries had increased access to accurate, complete, ground-level data from different districts and wards and this access increased their capacity to monitor sanitation and hygiene-related data and make real-time data-driven decisions simultaneously.
SECTION F:	EVALUATION CONCLUSIONS & LESSONS LEARNED (weight 10%)	100%	Comments on Rating (include explanations for any criterion not rated)
Question 14.	Do the conclusions present an objective overall assessment of the intervention?	100%	
	i Clear and complete description of the strengths and weaknesses of the intervention that adds insight and analysis beyond the findings.	Yes	The report presents a summary of strengths and weaknesses that reflects evaluative judgement.
	ii Description of the foreseeable implications of the findings for the future of the intervention (if formative evaluation or if the implementation is expected to continue or have additional phase).	Yes	The conclusions describe implications of the findings for the future of the intervention in Zambia.
	iii The conclusions are derived appropriately from findings.	Yes	The conclusions appear well supported by the overall analysis and findings.
Question 15.	Are logical and informative lessons learned identified?	100%	
	i Identified lessons that stem logically from the findings, presents an analysis of how they can be applied to different contexts and/or different sectors, and takes into account evidential limitations such as generalizing from single point observations.	Yes	The report provides lessons learned that stem from the findings. These appear to take account of any evidential limitations.
SECTION G:	RECOMMENDATIONS (weight 15%)	100%	Comments on Rating (include explanations for any criterion not rated)
Question 16.	Are recommendations well grounded in the evaluation?	100%	
	i Recommendations are logically derived from the findings and/or conclusions.	Yes	The recommendations stem from the findings.
	ii Recommendations are useful to primary intended users and uses (relevant to the intervention and provide realistic description of how they can be made operational in the context of the evaluation).	Yes	The users and key stakeholders should find the recommendations useful for improving CD strategies and delivering better results for children.
	iii Clear description of the process for developing recommendations, including a relevant explanation if the level of participation of stakeholders at this stage is not in proportion with the level of participation in the intervention and/or in the conduct of the evaluation.	Yes	The report provides a statement on the process for developing recommendations. The AIR research team presented evaluation findings and corresponding recommendations to key stakeholders from UNICEF Zambia on October 2, 2019. UNICEF offered feedback on prioritizing and further refining the recommendations to make them more actionable. The research team then revised the recommendations and prioritized the recommendations, designating who was responsible for implementing each one.
Question 17.	Are recommendations clearly presented?	100%	
	i Clear identification of target group for action for each recommendation (or clearly clustered group of recommendations).	Yes	The recommendations identify target groups responsible for each recommendation.

	ii Clear prioritization and/or classification of recommendations to support use.	Yes	The recommendations are prioritized as medium or high priorities, for immediate, medium or long term action.
SECTION H:	EVALUATION STRUCTURE/PRESENTATION (weight 5%)	70%	Comments on Rating (include explanations for any criterion not rated)
Question 18.	Does the evaluation report include all relevant information?	50%	
	i Opening pages include: Name of evaluated object, timeframe of the evaluation, date of report, location of evaluated object, names and/or organization(s) of the evaluator(s), name of organization commissioning the evaluation, table of contents -including, as relevant, tables, graphs, figures, annexes-; list of acronyms/abbreviations, page numbers.	Partially	Most of the required information is provided. The cover page could have included the names and/or organization of the evaluators and the name of organization commissioning the evaluation.
	ii Annexes should include, when not present in the body of the report: Terms of Reference, Evaluation matrix, list of interviewees, list of site visits, data collection instruments (such as survey or interview questionnaires), list of documentary evidence. Other appropriate annexes could include: additional details on methodology, copy of the results chain, information about the evaluator(s).	Partially	Contains most of the elements. The annexes could have included list of interviewees and list of site visits.
Question 19.	Is the report logically structured?	75%	
	i The structure is easy to identify and navigate (for instance, with numbered sections, clear titles and sub-titles).	Partially	The report is easy to identify and navigate. However, the page numbers in the Table of Contents for the annexes need updating.
	ii Context, purpose and methodology would normally precede findings, which would normally be followed by conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations.	Yes	The background, context, purpose and methodology precedes findings, conclusions and recommendations.
Question 20.	Is the report well presented?	100%	
	i Report is easy to understand (written in accessible way for intended audience) and generally free from grammar, spelling and punctuation errors.	Yes	The report is easy to understand and generally free of errors.
SECTION I:	EVALUATION PRINCIPLES (weight 10%)	94%	Comments on Rating (include explanations for any criterion not rated)
Question 21.	Did the evaluation design and style consider incorporation of the UN and UNICEF's commitment to a human rights-based approach to programming, to gender equality, and to equity?	83%	
	i Reference and use of rights-based framework, and/or CRC, and/or CCC, and/or CEDAW and/or other rights related benchmarks in the design of the evaluation.	Yes	The evaluation noted AIR respects and adheres to the UN Declaration of Human Rights, the UN Refugee Convention, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, as well as other human rights conventions and national legal codes.
	ii Clear description of the level of participation of key stakeholders in the conduct of the evaluation, (for example, a reference group is established, stakeholders are involved as informants or in data gathering).	Partially	There was discussion of UNICEF staff and key stakeholders as informants and as involved in data gathering, though it was not made clear in the main report if an evaluation reference group of some sort had been formed.
	iii Stylistic evidence of the inclusion of these considerations which can include: using human-rights language; gender-sensitive and child-sensitive writing; disaggregating data by gender, age and disability groups; disaggregating data by socially excluded groups.	Yes	The report includes human-rights language and gender-sensitive and child-sensitive writing.
Question 22.	Does the evaluation assess the extent to which the implementation of the intervention addressed gender, equity & child rights?	100%	
	i Identification and assessment of the presence or absence of equity considerations in the design and implementation of the intervention (such as the involvement in the intervention of right holders, duty bearers, and socially marginalized groups, and the differential benefits received by different groups of children).	Yes	The report notes that the evaluators did see qualitative evidence that UNICEF-supported CD interventions consistently sought to include women and men equally.
	ii Clear proportionality between the level of participation in the intervention and in the evaluation, or clear explanation of deviation from this principle (this may be related to specifications of the ToRs, inaccessibility of stakeholders at the time of the evaluation, budgetary constraints, etc.).	Yes	The report noted the level of participation in the intervention and in the evaluation, which appeared to be more or less proportionate.
Question 23.	Does the evaluation meet UN SWAP evaluation performance indicators? (Note: this question will be rated according to UN SWAP standards)	100%	
	i GEEW is integrated in the Evaluation Scope of analysis, and evaluation criteria and questions are designed in a way that ensures GEEW-related data will be collected.	Fully integrated	As requested in the ToR, the evaluation was guided by relevant instruments or policies on human rights, including child rights and gender equality. In addition, 2 of the 23 key evaluation questions were focused on gender. Institutional Review Boards approved the ethical protocols.

	<p>ii A gender-responsive methodology, methods and tools, and data analysis techniques are selected.</p>	<p>Fully integrated</p>	<p>The evaluation design noted the intent was to analyse how the implementation processes, activities, and training content used gender inclusive, rights-based, and equitable approaches. The sampling strategy planned for gender-disaggregated data collection. Evaluation participants were gender disaggregated.</p>
	<p>iii The evaluation Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations reflect a gender analysis.</p>	<p>Fully integrated</p>	<p>Gender is reflected in the findings, conclusions and recommendations.</p>
<p>SWAP Rating Guidance</p>			
	<p>i GEEW is integrated in the Evaluation Scope of analysis, and evaluation criteria and questions are designed in a way that ensures GEEW-related data will be collected.</p> <p>a. 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?</p> <p>b. Does the evaluation include an objective specific to assessment of human rights and gender equality considerations or was it mainstreamed in other objectives?</p> <p>c. Was a standalone criterion on gender and/or human rights included in the evaluation framework or mainstreamed into other evaluation criteria?</p> <p>d. Is there a dedicated evaluation question or sub-question regarding how GEEW was integrated into the subject of the evaluation?</p>		
	<p>ii A gender-responsive methodology, methods and tools, and data analysis techniques are selected.</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?</p> <p>b. Does the evaluation methodology employ a mixed-methods approach, appropriate to evaluating GEWE considerations?</p> <p>c. Are a diverse range of data sources and processes employed (i.e. triangulation, validation) to guarantee inclusion, accuracy and credibility?</p> <p>d. Does the evaluation methods and sampling frame address the diversity of stakeholders affected by the intervention, particularly the most vulnerable, where appropriate?</p> <p>e. Were ethical standards considered throughout the evaluation and were all stakeholder groups treated with integrity and respect for confidentiality?</p>		
	<p>iii 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?</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?</p> <p>c. Are unanticipated effects of the intervention on human rights and gender equality described?</p> <p>d. Does the evaluation report provide specific recommendations addressing GEWE issues, and priorities for action to improve GEWE or the intervention or future initiatives in this area?</p>		