

Evaluation Management Response Document

Region: MENAR

Office: Syria

Evaluation Year: 2021

Evaluation Title: Evaluation of the Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) Programme in Syria

Person In Charge For Follow Up to Management Response: Aya Elbizem

Overall response to evaluation

UNICEF Syria Country Office is grateful for the opportunity to learn and reflect on the Infant and Young Child Feeding Programme [IYCF] programme and the recommendations generated by the evaluation. The IYCF Programme in Syria included actions to support, promote, and protect the optimal practices of infant and young children feeding aged 0-2 years. The activities included capacity building on IYCF, engagement in supporting the development of a nutrition strategy, as well as facility and community-based counseling and awareness-raising and provision of multiple micronutrients supplementation for children under five years old. The evaluation was conducted to assess whether and how the programme achieved the expected results and assess enablers and barriers influencing the results, and to enable UNICEF to design and deliver future IYCF Programming in Syria. Due to challenges with access in Syria for the evaluation team, which was factored into methodological design, the evaluation was limited to a degree in the level of insight it was able to generate. Nevertheless it has provided a number of useful recommendations that align with the IYCF programme's intended aims for the coming years in Syria. Finally, a small number of recommended actions, whilst aligning with the programme's aims for the coming years, are not feasible during the period of implementation covered by this management response and have therefore been excluded due to lack of funds.

Planned Use of the Evaluation

The evaluation's analysis and findings provide useful evidence and perspectives that will be used by the UNICEF Syria Health and Nutrition programme team to inform decision-making and future plans of IYCF programme, including any suggested adjustments to planned approaches. A number of areas of work are already underway and these approaches have been validated by the evaluation's findings. Please note that, as the recommendations section of the evaluation report did not classify the recommendations as per UNICEF evaluation report standards, the recommendations have been instead been organised in this management response in terms of theme and complementarity, to maximise their utility for the programme team.

Recommendations and Actions

No.	Recommendations/Actions	Responsible Section (Action)	Responsible Person Name (Action)	Expected Completion (Action)	Mgt Response / Implementation Stage	Reason/Action Taken
1	Strengthen Results, Monitoring and Evaluation Systems				Agree	
1.1	1.1 The programme should adopt the theory of change and a results framework to track progress and ensure its monitoring.	UNICEF Syria CO	Mhd Nader Aboulebedeh	6/29/2022	Completed	Nutrition narrative and malnut framework developed with UN including IYCF as a determin malnutrition and thus integrate
1.2	1.2 Review the indicators being tracked in the programme; develop and monitor indicators for tracking capacity building of government and NGOs.	UNICEF Syria CO	Mhd Nader Aboulebedeh, (Zendaki, Moh: Taleb	9/29/2022	Completed	The section to consolidate the programmings being collectec prioritization which indicator si partners (ex, WFP) Relevant i consolidated and reported ag
1.3	1.3 The PME and Nutrition section should jointly conduct an exercise to check if data being provided by programme partners could be further strengthened, streamlined and can be relied upon and especially if there are data inconsistencies	UNICEF Syria CO	Mhd Nader Aboulebedeh, (Zendaki, Aya Elbizem, Moh: Taleb	10/13/2022	Completed	Health and Nutrition team atte organised by PME team (May Nutrition and PME team meet data held October 2022. Supp Agenda of IM Training

1.4	1.4 Consider documenting success stories, challenges, and best practices and arrange appropriate dissemination. Evidence of how gender desegregated data has been used to make decisions needs to be explicit. Similarly, data related to vulnerable sections of the society – disability, etc. needs to be included.	UNICEF Syria CO	Mhd Nader Aboulebddeh, / Hawes	10/30/2022	Completed	Success stories are regularly : officers in the field offices. Thi focus on sharing of materials ; breastfeeding week celebratio document: Breastfeeding wee (already shared with RM in re fund), Monthly situation report From weakness to strength; m Breastfeeding Week The story determination to grow a health https://www.unicef.org/syria/st strength-marking-world-breasi potential Education helps Lou. https://www.unicef.org/syria/st potential?fbclid=IwAR1gVgT6 TNbxVje1I6SIWjUOXo Dream Ahmad goes back to school w UNICEF https://www.unicef.org/syria/st future
1.5	1.5 Conduct an in-depth VfM study considering four criteria, namely economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and equity. The study can be extended to estimate costs for sustainability	UNICEF Syria CO	Mhd Nader Aboulebddeh, / Elbizem	4/29/2023	Cancelled	Previous review conducted in been decided that Nutrition is become a separate pillar with The Nutrition team will develo Programme Strategy Note wit and include aspects of VfM in Therefore, no need to have th recommendation is no longer document: VfM internal study
2	Strengthen Programme Quality				Agree	
2.1	2.1 Introduce a monitoring checklist for IYCF services and intensify monitoring activities at the health facility level. Apply IYCF quality standards regarding quality of service and coverage. Assess the knowledge and skills of IYCF and counselling service providers. Introduce monitoring of quality standards at service provision points to assess their contextual effectiveness. Carrying out systematic beneficiary surveys and their findings should be an integral component of the existing MIS to assist decision making.	UNICEF Syria CO	Mhd Nader Aboulebddeh, Hyachits Achen	3/30/2023	Completed	Nutrition indicators are integra which is used by partners for I IYCF technical Working Group appropriate forum for technica monitoring and integration of I standards and coverage and c agreed tools.
2.2	2.2 The UNICEF technical staff need refresher training / orientation on contemporary approaches to address IYCF, including on the new guidelines on BMS, etc. introduced in 2021.	UNICEF Syria CO	Mhd Nader Aboulebddeh	5/30/2022	Completed	Capacity building for IYCF prc UNICEF Nutrition strategy 202 support of RO. Nutrition in Err September 2022 Further capa developed with Regional Offic
2.3	2.3 A strategic approach to capacity building is needed (not just trainings), to create and strengthen an enabling environment, institutional and individual capacities	UNICEF Syria CO	Mhd Nader Aboulebddeh	9/29/2022	Completed	UNICEF, MoH and partners h Nutrition Action Plan (attache
3	Advocacy and Awareness Raising				Partially Agree	
3.0	3.1 Develop a holistic SBCC programme to support IYCF. Consider mapping of existing capacities and recommend contextually relevant communication strategies covering audience, messaging, media landscape, frequency, and channels, etc. Involve community leaders	UNICEF Syria CO	Mhd Nader Aboulebddeh, Hyachits Achen	3/30/2023	Completed	UNICEF Nutrition section prov contributed their reflection on the recent UNICEF Syria SBC commissioned to inform SBC programmes. The evaluation i activities, including IYCF and presentation documents the e IYCF activities to date. The ev recommendations for UNICEF working with programmes, inc programme, on future strategi approaches, including training development of approaches a which are now being impleme Section.

3.2	3.2 Create an advocacy agenda and a calendar. The agenda could include resource allocation, development of a capacity strengthening framework for government staff; refresher trainings; development of incentive mechanisms, etc.	UNICEF Syria CO	Mhd Nader Aboulebddeh	1/30/2023	Completed	National Nutrition Workplan 2025 advocacy agenda and has been approved by UNICEF and all partners, before approval for the plan.
4	Evidence-based Programme Design				Partially Agree	
4.1	4.1 The IYCF Strategy is drafted but not yet adopted. This needs continued advocacy through the IYCF Technical Group for adoption. Engage stakeholders in the planning of the new programme	UNICEF Syria CO	Mhd Nader Aboulebddeh	8/30/2022	Completed	IYCF operational plan is integrated strategy which has been developed by UNICEF with WHO and MoH. We have finalised the National Nutrition Strategy 2025.
4.2	4.2 Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) be considered at health facilities for protecting, promoting, and supporting breastfeeding - early initiation and maintenance of breastfeeding	UNICEF Syria CO	Mhd Nader Aboulebddeh	9/29/2022	Completed	UNICEF trained maternity unit pediatricians on optimal exclusive breastfeeding practices with a two-days training for hospitals in two Governorates of MMS for PLW. Issues of funding discussed with MoH, funding
5	Enhance Coordination and Partnership				Partially Agree	
5.1	5.1 UNICEF and other UN organisations as part of the IYCF Technical Group should expand the membership of the group to include implementing partners as well, as they have critical information from the ground which impacts programme design and implementation	UNICEF Syria CO	Mohamad Yehya, Odai Abdel Rahman	1/30/2022	Completed	The group already includes national partners, which will be maintained in the document: IYCF Technical Group
5.0	5.2 Feedback on issues under consideration and decisions being taken should be communicated back to all stakeholders, to address communication gaps and address undue expectations	UNICEF Syria CO	Mhd Nader Aboulebddeh	12/30/2022	Completed	Health and Nutrition section regularly communicate with implementing partners. Mapping of services has been completed. Information about the intervention is being shared with the IYCF TWG.