



**New!**

## Adapting evaluation questions to the COVID-19 pandemic

Guidance for evaluation managers on how to better assess UNFPA performance during COVID-19 response and recovery

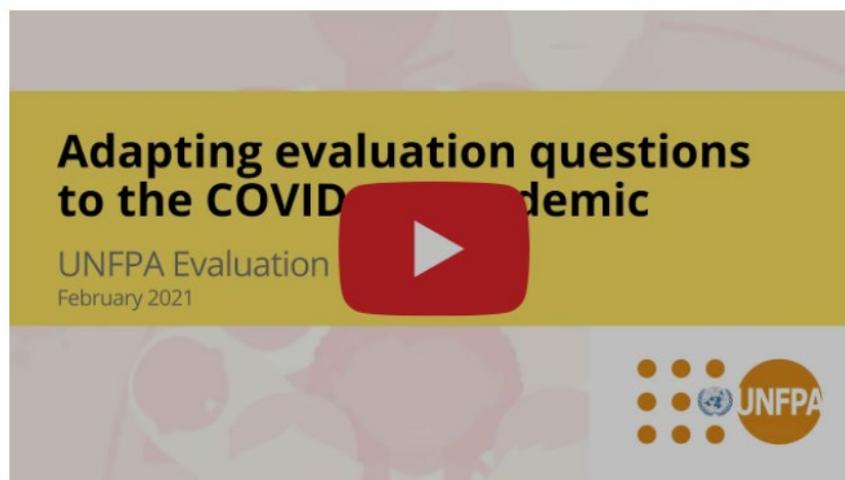
[unfpa.org/evaluation](http://unfpa.org/evaluation)

### From the Director's desk

For equitable and sustainable response to and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, **decisions and programmes** must be guided by **relevant** and **reliable evidence**. Evaluation provides decision makers with evidence and lessons on what works and what does not work, why, and whether interventions are reaching those furthest behind.

To continue to ensure the highest quality of evidence at UNFPA, the Evaluation Office was one of the first in 2020 to develop guidance on how to [adapt evaluations to the COVID-19 pandemic](#). Building on this resource, and in response to the protracted COVID-19 crisis, a companion guidance on [adapting evaluation questions to the COVID-19 pandemic](#) is now available.

Given the protracted crisis and increasingly dynamic contexts, **UNFPA programmes, priorities and modes of engagement have been revisited, redesigned, and repurposed** to better respond to emerging needs and to ensure an equitable and sustainable recovery across development, humanitarian, and fragile contexts. **In response to these changing realities**, evaluators must **rephrase evaluation questions** and subsequent analysis to **ensure integration of COVID-19 related issues**, in order to ensure UNFPA evaluations continue to provide the highest relevance and quality of evidence on UNFPA performance and its response and adaptation to the crisis.



[Learn more about this new guidance](#)

This requires evaluation managers and evaluators to **adapt the areas of inquiry** for assessing the **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and coordination**, and **sustainability** of country programmes and other interventions. Within each of these evaluation criteria, the evaluation must assess whether disadvantaged population groups have been reached and with what results.

I hope this **new guidance** will help us to continue to **deliver the highest quality of evidence** in the rapidly changing environment during the COVID-19 crisis. This evidence is crucial to inform decisions and programmes, in order to help UNFPA deliver more, better and faster for all those left behind in a more sustainable way. We stand ready to support country and regional offices as they continue to adapt evaluations to the crisis and their context.

**Marco Segone**

Director, UNFPA Evaluation Office

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## Adapting evaluations to the COVID-19 pandemic

UNFPA Evaluation Office  
Methods



The COVID-19 pandemic is a health and a socioeconomic crisis, which has threatened global development outcomes achieved. As the pandemic spreads across the world, the impact of COVID-19 is spreading in different ways among countries, with some countries and key populations being more affected than others.

The conduct and management of UNFPA evaluations must be adapted to the unique situation on the ground. To this end, UNFPA Evaluation Office has developed guiding principles for evaluations at the time of COVID-19. Each regional and country office should use these guiding principles to adapt the ongoing and forthcoming evaluations based on their unique response and recovery to the pandemic. Instead of a prescriptive guidance, these guiding principles should be operationalized as a framework that should be tailored to each context. As such, this is a living document and will be updated based on real-time lessons.

These principles were jointly developed by the Evaluation Office and the regional M&E advisors. The regional M&E advisor, in consultation with the Evaluation Office, will be responsible to guide each country office accordingly. The final details on assessment and adjustment of each evaluation must be approved by the Evaluation Office.

### Guiding principles

- ✔ **Evaluation is even more critical at the time of a crisis**, as it provides evaluative evidence on what works, why, for whom and under what circumstances.
- ✔ **Crisis affects different people in different ways**, impacting disadvantaged populations disproportionately. **Human rights-based, equity-focused and gender-responsive evaluations** are more important than ever, to inform interventions focused on leaving no one behind.
- ✔ **Evaluation should always comply with the 'do harm' principle** for all stakeholders involved.
- ✔ **Learn, adapt and share** on an ongoing basis, with the evaluation community within UNFPA, the UN and beyond.
- ✔ **Evaluation should explore the opportunity to strengthen UN coordination, including enhancing national evaluation capacities**. In particular:
  - Explore opportunities for joint and UN system-wide evaluations (see annex).
  - Engage national evaluators including young evaluators and voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluators (VOPEs). This requires assessing your role and potentially moving from being an evaluation manager only, towards taking on a mentoring role.
  - Given the multidimensionality of the crisis, explore opportunity and call for joint/system-wide efforts to enhance national evaluation capacities for countries to evaluate its own response.

Accompanying resource

## Adapting evaluations to the COVID-19 pandemic

### Contact UNFPA Evaluation Office

