

Evaluation of the UNFPA capacity in humanitarian action (2012-2019)



Brief | Read the full report at unfpa.org/evaluation

BACKGROUND

With rising numbers of people affected by more frequent and severe humanitarian crises worldwide, UNFPA is on the ground before, during and after crises, working closely with partners to ensure that sexual and reproductive health and rights and responses to gender-based violence are integrated into emergency responses.

To strengthen the humanitarian action of the organization, the Evaluation Office commissioned an **independent** evaluation of UNFPA humanitarian capacity from 2012-2019.

- ✓ The primary purpose was to assess the organizational capacity of UNFPA in humanitarian action **globally**, in terms of both preparedness and response
- ✓ Humanitarian programming was evaluated for **relevance, effectiveness, coverage, connectedness** and **alignment with humanitarian principles**
- ✓ The evaluation proposed recommendations for **future humanitarian programming priorities** for UNFPA at **country, regional and global** levels

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- UNFPA humanitarian action has **progressively and positively evolved**, reaching multiple times more affected people in 2019 than it did in 2012. However, UNFPA systems and processes remain predominantly geared towards development, and the 2012 humanitarian strategy requires updating.
- There are clear **output-level results of maternal and new-born health** services and some evidence of **gender-based violence** service-delivery effectiveness. However, there is a need for **more robust and comprehensive measurement** of outcomes and impacts.
- In a difficult funding environment, UNFPA has been increasingly successful in mobilizing external **humanitarian resources** at country level, such as pooled funds.
- While UNFPA has **many highly knowledgeable humanitarian experts**, they are too few in number in view of the scope of UNFPA humanitarian accountabilities. There is a **need to increase broad-based humanitarian expertise** organization-wide, including on **protection from sexual exploitation and abuse**.
- UNFPA demonstrates **good practices in delivering commodities** at the beginning of an emergency but can be **slow to reach areas of urgent need**. A renewed focus on **speed and advance positioning** of commodities in key locations is needed.

Evaluation Quick Facts



586 people (60% women) consulted through in-depth interviews and community level focus group discussions



Global and regional interviews with key stakeholders



500+ documents reviewed



Extended desk review, including remote interviews in **11 countries**



4 country case studies



2 Thematic Papers on human resources and humanitarian commodities



Analysis of financial and programme monitoring data

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop a **strategic framework for humanitarian action** accounting for external and internal changes since 2012.
- Review **datasets and monitoring systems** to identify current gaps and bottlenecks and develop a comprehensive data management system to allow reporting of outputs and outcomes at all levels.
- Review the **corporate approach on preparedness for supplies**, including, where necessary, regional stockpiling and national pre-positioning that considers speed as critical as cost and quality.
- Develop a comprehensive **plan for increasing humanitarian expertise** at all levels.
- Survey knowledge and capacity on **protection from sexual exploitation and abuse** at country level to establish the current bottlenecks between global level and country level.