



Statement

**by Dereje Wordofa , UNFPA Deputy Executive Director
(Programme)**

on

**UNFPA management response to the Evaluation of the
UNFPA response to the Syria crisis**

(DP/FPA/2019/5)

Agenda item 10: UNFPA – Evaluation

**Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS
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2019

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

It is my pleasure to present the **management response** to the findings and recommendations of the Evaluation of UNFPA response to the Syria crisis.

UNFPA finds the report **substantive, relevant and timely**.

We have **already made progress** on many issues raised in the report and will **continue pursuing priorities** as outlined in our response posted on the Executive Board page.

In response to Recommendation 1, a series of specific actions were taken to **overcome limitations with monitoring**, including gaps in data management. In particular, the Regional Syria Response Hub has developed a tool for capturing gender-based violence data. In addition, UNFPA is currently piloting a dashboard for Reproductive Health data.

Our team is developing a global humanitarian resource for utilizing population data to support humanitarian activities across Whole of Syria and the neighboring countries with Syrian refugees. And we continue our engagement with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and with the International Organization for Migration to expand the use of population dynamics data in that regard.

We appreciate acknowledgement, noted the Recommendation 2, that the **Syria Regional Response Hub** has a high return on investment in relation to resource mobilization, coordination, and management of gender-based violence data.

2019

To address the need **review the functions of the Syria Regional Response Hub**, and to better align with increased capacity of country offices, UNFPA has revised the Terms of Reference of the Hub. The Hub will continue functioning in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution 2165, and the further revisions of its functions will be informed by the evolving dynamics of the regional crisis and new resolutions of the Security Council.

Our management has partially accepted the **need to clarify the UNFPA position on gender-based violence vis-à-vis men and boys**, as stated in Recommendation 3. UNFPA has already developed a Gender Strategy, which articulates that UNFPA follows the definition of gender-based violence as per General Recommendation 35 of The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

The Fund strongly agreed that **programming for men and boys** is a requirement in any gender-based violence response. However, we would like to note the cost implications associated programming to adequately and appropriate respond to the needs of sexual violence male survivors.

Such funds are currently not available at UNFPA. Thorough analysis is required to assess the financial gap. Given that UNFPA has **less than 50%** of funds required for its humanitarian work, needs and the areas of response must be prioritized.

In response to Recommendation 4, **to increase efficiency of the Syria regional response**, UNFPA is currently reviewing the fast-track procedures, including those for human resources, and has already updated some of them.

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We have systematized and significantly improved the **SURGE response**, reducing turnaround times, though deployment is still affected by the lengthy process for obtaining visas.

Going forward, the Fund will sensitize country offices to comply with surge Standard Operating Procedures, following the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Scale-Up Protocols. This will further ensure coherence with other Humanitarian Agencies.

On stepping up youth programming and coordination across the Syria regional response, as per Recommendation 5, UNFPA will use a phased approach to roll out the Compact for Young People.

We are ready to lead on the Compact and on Security Council Resolution 2250 by developing a “**Youth in Emergencies**” programme, noting that implementation will require support from donors and expanded engagement with partners.

As for the Recommendation 6 on the **resourcing and supporting sexual and reproductive health and rights coordination within the Syria Regional Response to the same level as gender-based violence coordination**, UNFPA has only partially accepted it.

We wish to emphasize that currently **UNFPA is the lead of the gender-based violence Area of Responsibility** of the Global Protection Cluster.

We closely collaborate with the World Health Organization, the Health Cluster Lead Agency, and other agencies to address sexual and reproductive health needs in emergencies, however UNFPA has not been assigned a leading role in sexual and reproductive health coordination.

2019

Furthermore, UNFPA needs **more funding** to adequately support sexual and reproductive health in humanitarian crises. Meanwhile, UNFPA incorporates basic sexual and reproductive health services in all gender-based violence support.

In addition, in the case of the Syria Regional Response Hub, the decision was made that it would be more efficient and effective to utilize the funds for sexual and reproductive health support at the country level and not through the Hub.

We accept the Recommendation 7 to **increase documentation of gender analysis and adherence to international humanitarian principles**, international humanitarian law, international human rights law, and international refugee law in the Syria regional response. We will do the necessary steps to ensure its implementation.

UNFPA is proud that the evaluation recognized and recommended **the Syria gender-based violence sub-cluster coordination mechanism to be a blueprint** for coordination responsibilities globally, as per Recommendation 8.

UNFPA is fully committed to leverage further the best practices of the Syria Regional Response Hub to improve refugee responses in other regional and country offices.

We will use the Syria Regional Response Hub case study report and the experiences of other agencies' regional hubs to develop a blueprint for the establishment of regional hubs in future, as outlined in Recommendation 9.

2019

Let me conclude my remarks by **expressing thanks to the Evaluation Office** for the good work done in analyzing UNFPA's leadership role across gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and youth across Whole of Syria and the neighboring countries with Syrian refugees. I would like to assure you that the Management is fully committed to fully implement the evaluation recommendations.

Thank you.