



Joint Evaluation of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting

MAIN RESULTS

Informal consultation with the EXECUTIVE BOARD

New York, 21 January 2014

Evaluation Office UNFPA and Evaluation Office UNICEF

Agenda

- Introduction
Fabienne Lambert,
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- Overview of the evaluation
results
Alexandra Chambel,
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- Main evaluation findings
- Key Conclusions
- Recommendations
Krishna Belbase,
Joint EMG, Senior Evaluation
Specialist, Evaluation Office, UNICEF
- Dissemination and use
Colin Kirk,
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- Lessons learned

- **Objective:** help reduce the practice of FGM/C among girls aged zero-15 by 40 per cent, and eliminate FGM/C altogether in at least one country by 2012
- **Duration:** 2008-2013
- **Budget:** USD 37 million
- **15 countries joined:**
 - 2008: Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Senegal and Sudan;
 - 2009: Burkina Faso, Gambia, Uganda and Somalia;
 - 2011: Eritrea, Mali and Mauritania
- **Request:** in 2011, by the JP Steering Committee; welcomed by both Agencies

Objectives of the Evaluation

Learning

Evaluation

1. Assess the **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability** of the holistic approach adopted by the JP

2. Assess the **adequacy and quality of the inter-agency coordination mechanisms** at global, regional and country levels.

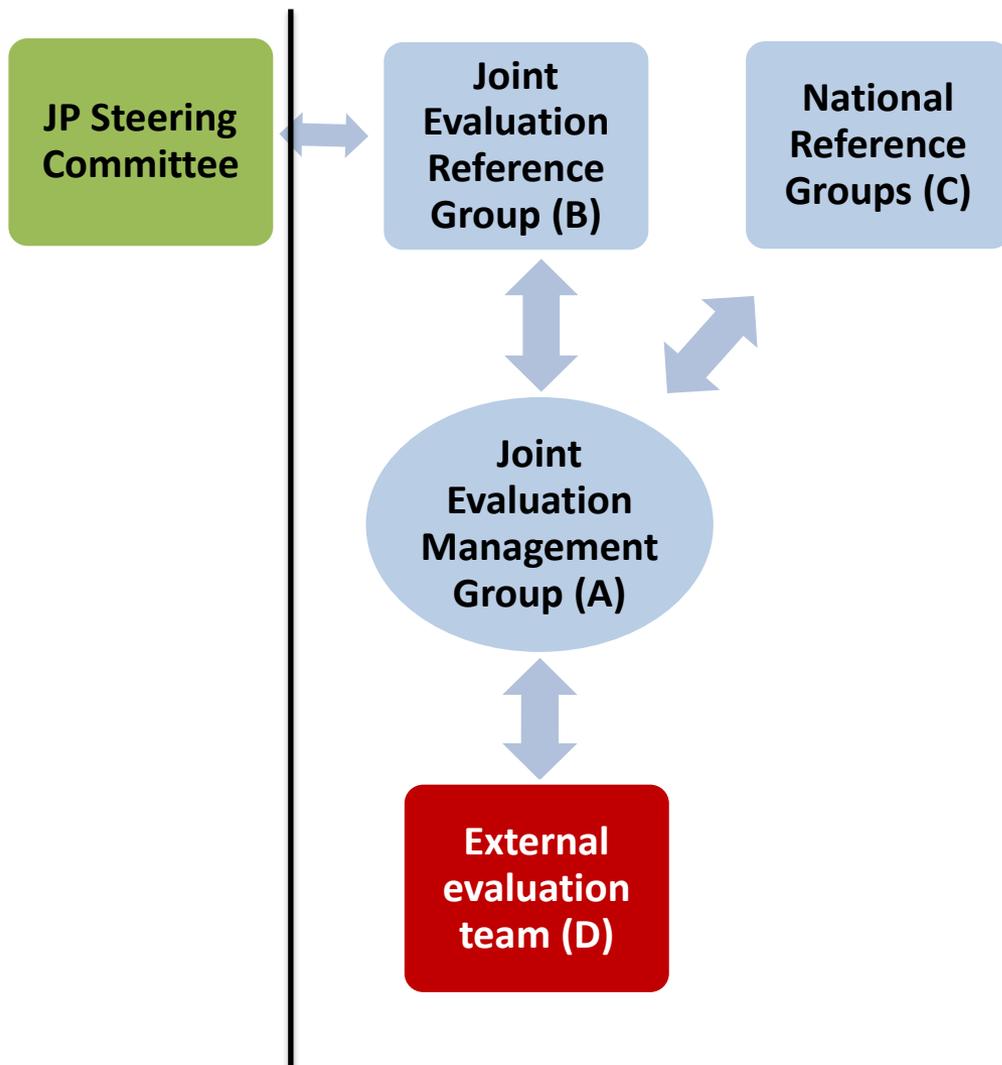
3. Provide **recommendations** for a broader programming and partnership

4. identify **lessons learned**, and generate knowledge

To further accelerate change on FGMC/C

To pursue JP phase II

Accountability



- Evaluation **jointly conducted** by UNFPA and UNICEF Evaluation Offices.
- **(A) Joint evaluation management group** (EMG) led by UNFPA Evaluation Office: main decision-making body
- **(B) Joint evaluation reference group** (ERG): provide technical inputs
- **(C)** National reference groups established in countries where field visits took place: ensure broad participation including civil society
- **(D)** External evaluation team: carried out the evaluation (Universalis)

1) Preparatory (April – July 2012)

- Setting up the joint EMG and joint ERG
- Jointly drafting the terms of reference
- Jointly gathering data and background information on the JP
- Jointly selecting and recruiting the evaluation team (UNFPA led procurement and management of the contract)

2) Design (September – December 2012)

- Reviewing documents and literature
- Piloting the methodology and approach
- Drafting an inception report

3) Data collection (October 2012 – April 2013)

- Performing in-depth document and literature review;
- Conducting field visits (joint EMG join in on all 4 visits: UNFPA – Kenya, Burkina Faso and Senegal; UNICEF - Sudan)
- Consulting with key stakeholders at global and regional levels
- Conducting a web-based survey + virtual focus groups

4) Analysis and Reporting (December 2013 – August 2013)

- Drafting four country case study reports – Kenya, Senegal, Burkina Faso and Sudan
- Producing the final evaluation report

5) Dissemination and Follow-up (October 2013 – March 2014)

- Preparing a joint dissemination note
- Launching the joint management response process
- Organizing dissemination events jointly

Overview of the Evaluation Results



Overall, **positive assessment:**

- Progress towards the achievement of the majority of envisaged outputs - albeit to varying degrees, as well as contributions towards the two outcomes
- Inter-agency coordination and programme management

Key areas for improvement:

- Systematic, longer-term data collection, analysis and link to decision making
- Predictability of funds, longer-term financing and planning
- Operationalization of the regional component (inter-country)
- Institutionalization and system development/capacity development at national and sub-national levels

→ Recommendation:

Pursue a second phase of the JP

Main Findings



EQ 1: The Programme is relevant; its design is sound; its objective somewhat too ambitious

- Pursued in line with national and international commitments; responded to existing gaps/needs; adequately aligned with UNFPA/UNICEF CP and with the priorities of other development partners regarding the human rights of women and girls
- Showed significant design strengths: catalytic, emphasis on holistic, human-rights based and culturally sensitive approach; validated social norms approach
- Used appropriate strategies in view of the underlying theory of change assumptions -- at the same time, too ambitious overall objective
- Findings supported important parts of the theory of change – with data gaps prevailing in relation to transition from changes in social norms to changes in behaviour

EQ 2: The evaluation found significant contributions to Results...

- Reinforced national environment through coordination mechanisms
- Strengthened legal and policy frameworks
- Integrated issues of FGM/C prevention, response and tracking in health sector-specific programmes and plans
- Established and used partnerships with religious groups and other organizations to strengthen local level commitment
- Used simultaneously several complementary strategies and entry points, enhancing chances of influencing collective behavior change
- Supported ongoing changes in public discourse (since 2008, nearly 10.000 communities declared abandonment)

EQ 2: ... With some variations

- Important contributions to enhancing global movement for FGM/C abandonment:
 - e.g. the passing of the UN General Assembly resolution on “Intensifying Global Efforts for the Elimination of FGM”
- No significant contributions were found in relation to:
 - Strengthening regional dynamics
 - JP-generated data not allowing for systematic comparison of long-term results and cost-effectiveness of combinations of diverse strategies and in different contexts

EQ 3: Resources were used strategically – yet their unpredictability was limiting

- JP catalytic nature (i.e. helping to enhance existing resources and activities) provided a good basis for using available resources strategically to achieve results
- At the same time, this potential considerably limited by lack of funding predictability -- Leading to:
 - Limitations to longer-term planning, implementation and monitoring
 - Misperception of the level of expected support by Country Offices and Partners
 - Fewer programming countries

EQ 4: Favorable conditions were in place to support sustainability of Effects

- Helped create a number of favorable conditions likely to support sustainability of achievements
- At the same time, continued efforts and external support needed to ensure that the existing potential for change can be maintained and expanded
- Key threats to sustainability:
 - Remaining gaps in national/local capacity and (financial) resources
 - External factors such as political and economic instability
 - Lack of political commitment; follow up of achievements, e.g. public declarations of FGM/C abandonment
 - influence from conservative groups advocating for the continuation of FGM/C often based on religious arguments

EQ 5-6: Inter-agency coordination and JP management were mainly adequate

- Benefits deriving from the joint structure outweighing JP transaction costs
- Adequate inter-agency coordination at global level and, with nuances, at country level.
- Added value building up on the complementary strengths of both agencies
- Challenges:
 - Coordination work on resource mobilization at the global level
 - Institutionalization of country-level coordination

Key Conclusions and Recommendations



- JP helped
 - Accelerate existing change processes towards FGM/C abandonment at national, sub-national and community levels
 - Contributed to strengthening the momentum for change at the global level
- Available resources of the JP were adequate in light of the JP catalytic nature...
 - ... but insufficient in view of existing needs, expectations and absorptive capacity of the countries
- Lack of predictability of funds limited the potential for using available resources efficiently inherent in this catalytic nature

- Work of both agencies and partners limited by the annual planning, budgeting and reporting cycle, to enable consistent and longer-term implementation
- Benefits and value-added by the JP structure outweighed coordination effort costs
- Holistic and culturally sensitive approach adopted by the JP appropriate in view of its effectiveness and sustainability
- A knowledge and evidence gap remaining regarding the transition from changes in social norms to visible changes in individual and collective behaviours and, in the long term, a decrease in FGM/C prevalence

Taking the JP Approach Further

- R1.** Pursue a second phase of the JP to sustain gains and the existing positive momentum for change towards FGM/C abandonment
- R2.** Further strengthen existing government commitment and leadership, as well as central and decentralized government systems for FGM/C abandonment. Maintain support and involvement of non-governmental change agents
- R3.** Maintain the catalytic nature of the JP. Balance working with established/larger organizations while engaging with emerging/smaller actors
- R4.** Fully operationalize/test theory of change on FGM/C, including assumptions on role of cross-community/border dynamics
- R5.** Ensure that holistic approach taken by JP is better integrated in UNFPA and UNICEF country programmes

Mobilizing Resources

- R6.** Advocate with existing or potential donors to commit to predictable, longer-term financing

Improving Future Inter-agency coordination and JP management

- R7.** Address weaknesses and integrate in future FGM/C-related work the lessons learned from the JP in relation to monitoring and reporting
- R8.** Further improve UNFPA/UNICEF coordination on FGM/C for resource mobilization and joint monitoring of results

Undertaking research and using new knowledge

- R9.** Engage and invest in more in-depth research on social norms change and its linkages to changes in behaviours

Evaluation Dissemination and Use



- **Dissemination:**
 - Regular consultation with the **joint** evaluation reference group
 - National reference group briefings and debriefings at country level
 - Internal/**joint** dissemination within UNFPA and UNICEF (dissemination announcements, webinars)
 - **Joint** management response
 - **Joint** presentation of the main results at the Rome International Conference on FGM/C in October 2013
 - **Joint** presentations at other conferences and network meetings (UNEG meeting in March 2014)
 - UNFPA/UNICEF **joint** presentations to the Executive Boards (2014)
- **Use:**
 - Use in preparation of Phase II of the JP
 - Use in country-level planning

Lessons Learned on Joint Evaluation

- An excellent start due to:
 - Allocation of adequate time for ToR preparation and selection of the country case studies among the two agencies
 - Work with the team on inception report
- Key success factors to ensuring quality and utility of the evaluation
 - Clarity of roles in the joint EMG and the joint ERG, and between the two
 - Good collaboration through the entire process
 - Strong engagement and substantive review by the Joint ERG
- Critical factors in ensuing relevance and quality of the evaluation:
 - The strong commitment and professional involvement of the two Evaluation Offices through the entire evaluation process
 - Including active participation in field missions

Lessons Learned on Joint Evaluation

- External evaluation consultant team
 - Understood the importance of joint spirit
 - Responsive to the advice and guidance offered by the joint EMG
- Joint EMG
 - Prepared a dissemination plan; developed jointly all dissemination products and made joint presentations
 - Involvement of 2 senior experienced evaluation professionals from UNFPA/UNICEF Evaluation Offices ensuring quality and smooth delivery
- Optimal evaluation use: organizing and attending joint events, e.g. FGM/C International Conference and Board sessions
- Push from both agencies and strong/collaboration for timely joint management response